



The Cabletow SPECIAL ISSUE

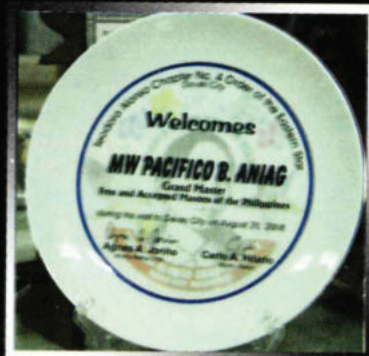
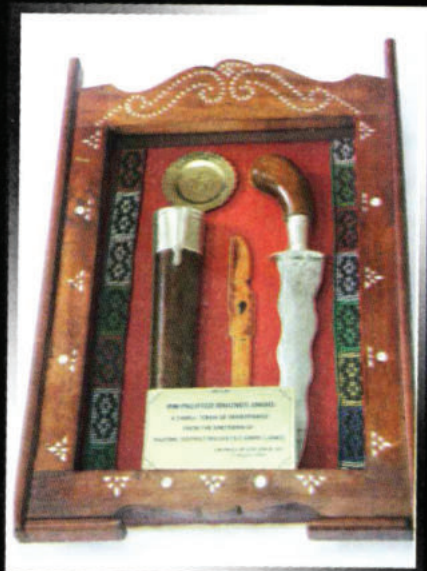
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THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE MOST WORSHIPFUL GRAND LODGE
OF FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS OF THE PHILIPPINES



**MINDANAO
CARAVAN**

TOKENS OF APPRECIATION



CABLETOW SPECIAL ISSUE
MINDANAO CARAVAN



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THIS SPECIAL EDITION, the production of which materialized through proceeds from the advertisement which W. Bro. Eddie Yeo, D.G. Tyler of the District Grand Lodge of the Eastern Archipelago and the General Manager of the Heritage Hotel, which he himself describes as "the home of Masons in the Philippines," posted on the inner back cover of each of five regular issues of this official publication of our Grand Lodge, consists of three parts.

Part 1, "The GLP Perspective," is subdivided into "A Caravan through Mindanao," by WB James A. Olayvar, who was with the Grand Master from the start to the finish of the Caravan, and "MW Aniag Visits Elderly, Ailing Brethren in the Course of the Caravan through Mindanao," by our Editor-in-Chief. These visits were a highlight of the Grand Master's Mindanao Caravan because they were "a touching experience" to the Grand Master, particularly because the brethren he visited were all in tears for having been visited by no less than their Grand Master.

Part 2, "The Hosts' Viewpoints," contains reports by leaders in the different legs of the Grand Master's Caravan. These include the following:

- "Caravan of Masonic Memories," by Bro. Leopoldo P. Lugtu;

- "What We Found in Our Search," by VW Agustin D. Dema-ala, & WM Arnel R. Rodriquez;
- "MW Aniag and Party's Successful Visit to Our Lodge Amidst Volatile Peace and Order Conditions," by WM Cosain I. Abbas;
- "The Grand Master's Visit to MD RX-C," by VW Vincent C. Soledad;
- "MWGM Pacifico B. Aniag's Visit to Masonic District RX-E and RX-F," by VW Alberto R. Lagamon;
- "Mindanao Caravan of MW Pacifico B. Aniag Visited MD RXI-B," by VW Arnold O. Ancog;
- "How We Hosted MW Aniag and His Caravan," by VW Carlo A. Hilario;
- "An Account of the MD RXIII-A leg of the Grand Master's Mindanao Caravan," by VW Franklin A. Calo
- "MD RXII-B: Last Leg of the Mindanao Caravan," by Bro. Normie G. Javier.

Part 3, "Two by One," is composed of two essays by one of the most prolific Masonic writers in Mindanao. His essays are "A General Among the Generals" and "The Cooperative Cooperator Cooperating for Cooperativism."

Parts 2 and 3 provide important insights into Philippine Masonry, particularly Masonry in Mindanao. These insights include the following:

- Members of our Masonic Family hold the Grand Master and his officers in high regard and respect, so that they go out of their way to warmly welcome them, to regally accommodate them, and to extend to them any assistance they need in the course of their travel or visit.
- In all legs of the Caravan, the host brethren and the visiting Grand Lodge officers demonstrated that members of the Masonic family in our grand jurisdiction are people who work together in close harmony and coordination toward accomplishing common goals. There can be no doubt that we brethren can make wonderful things happen when we do and accomplish our projects and activities together with members of our appendant bodies, allied orders and side organizations; when we share together in sincere love and fellowship; and when we demonstrate our pride in the Fraternity not only to one another but to the non Masonic public as well. This point was brought out in bold relief throughout the Grand Master's Caravan through Mindanao. This historic undertaking is, undoubtedly, a striking evidence that members of our widespread Masonic family are, indeed, "linked together by an indissoluble chain of sincere

affection," and that we want to be more strongly cemented by the ties of Brotherly Love by promoting one another's welfare and happiness.

- Members of the Masonic Family in our grand jurisdiction are, generally, leaders in their respective communities. They occupy positions of influence in the government, including the armed services, and in the private sector - in business, in trade and industry, in education, and so forth.
- Lodges and Districts which involve the brethren's families in their Masonic endeavors are vibrant and vigorous,
- The Grand Lodge and its subordinate Lodge have a healthy, strong symbiotic relationship.

There are many other insights that may be gleaned from the first two parts of this special edition. But the foregoing are deemed sufficient to show that the Grand Master's Mindanao Caravan was a showcase for Philippine Masonry, the old glory of which we are trying to recapture.

Part 3 should serve as a stimulus for our brethren in Mindanao, as well as other parts of our grand jurisdiction, to put down their beautiful ideas in writing and to send copies of their essays to our editorial office for probable printing in THE CABLETOW. More essays by the brethren will be published in subsequent editions of this publication.

(WB Olayvar is Charter Master of Grand Sec. Reynold S. Fajardo Memorial Lodge UD, Senior Warden of Kagitingan Lodge No. 286 and a member of the Grand Lodge Committee on Accounts.)

A Caravan Through Mindanao

Introduction

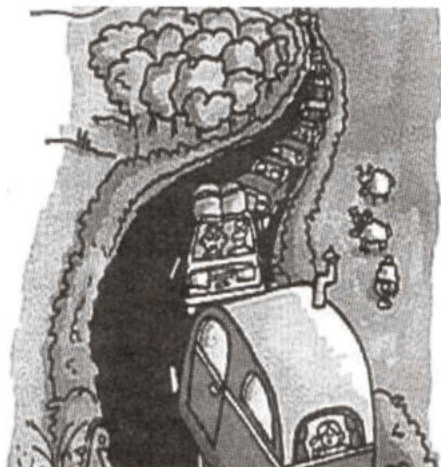
A caravan is a group of merchants, pilgrims, tourists, or the like, riding as separate units, but through difficult or dangerous territory.

The idea of getting Masons, led by their Grand Master and other Grand Lodge officers, to travel in a caravan through Mindanao was hatched two years ago by VW Johnson T. Wee, PDDGM, and other Cotabato brethren. Its realization would enable the Grand Master and his party to bring the Grand Lodge of the Philippines closer to its subordinate Lodges in the area, to personally inspect the temples therein, and to opportunely visit the elderly and ailing brethren who, in their younger days, contributed their respective shares to the enhancement of the Craft in Southern Philippines. Then Senior Grand Warden Pacifico B. Aniang saw

the cogency of the idea advanced by the brethren and, therefore, wasted no time in making it a reality. The idea was given form and substance during the Ancom in Bacolod City where Bro. Aniang was installed as the 91st Most Worshipful Grand Master of the Philippine Jurisdiction.

Eventually, the "Mindanao Caravan" was set for August 15-22, 2008.

Following is a day-to-day account of the historic travel of Masons, as a caravan, through Mindanao.



At about half past high-twelve, accompanied by Grand Sword Bearer Moises S. Roque, Grand Tyler Felix C. Flor Cruz, Chief of Staff Jose A.I. Magbanua, and this reporter, Grand Master Pacifico Anig left the Grand Lodge premises for the Manila NAIA Terminal.

At the airport, we were assisted by P/Supt. Eleodoro C. Ocampo of Mt. Pinatubo Lodge No. 52, the current president of the NAIA Travelers Square & Compass Club, Inc. and Bro. Marco Apollo C. Tecson of NAIA Airport Police.

On arrival at the Cotabato City Airport in Maguindanao Province at 2:15 p.m., we were warmly welcomed by a group of some 35 brethren led by VW Wee, the Mindanao Caravan organizer.¹

Escorted by motorcycle-riding elements of Task Force Usig, fraternally provided by Bro. PA Major G. Rosalito Martines of Sierra Madre Lodge No. 181, we motored from the airport to the city.

After freshening up at the Azaleah Pension House which is owned and managed by Bro. Ibra Cletus and Sister Elaine Carim of host Lodge Kutang Bato No. 110,

we proceeded to the Kutang Bato Masonic Temple.

MW Pacifico Anig and other Grand Lodge officers were formally received by the host Lodge, led by WM Reymond K.



Tan. In his subsequent message, MW Anig explained the why's and wherefor's of the Mindanao Caravan.

Later, the Lodge having been called from labor to refreshment, the Grand Master and other brethren proceeded to the Cotabato City satellite office of Provincial Governor Ibrahim P. Ibay, a Senior DeMolay and member of the host Lodge.

From the Governor's office, the Caravan visited three elderly Masons in their respective residences: WB Moya Yu Ekey, WB Hosain B. Ampatuan and Bro. Gregorio S. Cordero. (The Grand Master's visits of elderly and ailing brethren are described in a separate article published in this special issue.)

We returned to the Masonic Temple on



Pension House which is owned and managed by Bro. Ibra Cletus and Sister Elaine Carim of host Lodge Kutang Bato No. 110,

1. Other welcomers at the Cotabato City Airport:

VW Rodel Riezl S.J. Reyes, JGL for Southern Mindanao; VW Hemington M. Yap, DDGM of MD RXII-A; VW Adonis G. Agreca, DDGM of MD RXII-B; VW Carlo A. Hilario, DDGM of MD RXI-A; VWBs Alexander U. Ampatuan and Palasio U. Ampang, DGLs for MD RXII-A; VW Agustin D. Dema-ala, DGL for MD RXII-B; VW Cesar D. Taleon, PDGL of Koronadal Lodge No. 209; WB Jose Dindo O. Abantao, GL; WM Reymond K. Tan, SW Chowaskee B. Uy; JW Hector A. Emberra, WB Reynald Y. Chua (PGLJ), Bros. Sacruddin A. Masukat, Ibra Cletus O. Carim, Arnold Jim Y. Chua, and Michael Jimmy O. Yap, all of host Lodge Kutang Bato No. 110; SW Samuel C. Fontanilla, WB Abedin A. Kali (PM), WB Tommy M. Brnar (PGLJ), and Bro. Jonathan A. Lim, all of Bantugan Lodge No. 223; WM Graham Nazer G. Dumama, WB Albert G. Tan (PM), Bros. Anthony P. Ross and Noel N. Nuñez, all of Shariff Kabunsuan Lodge No. 266; WM Orlando N. Dela Cruz and Bro. Herminio G. Javier, both of Koronadal Lodge No. 209; WM Arge R. Rodriguez of Sultan Kudarat Lodge No. 348; and WB Narciso L. Ner, Jr. (PM) of Shangri-La Lodge No. 196. Also there to meet us was Bro. Benny T. Dionson, Jr. of Jacques DeMolay Lodge No. 305 who planed in ahead.

time to witness the conferral of the 3rd degree of Masonry on Bro. Henry C. Lu, a development worker with the Ayala Foundation. In the 2nd section, the candidate's own blood brother and father, Bros. Harold John and Hermenegildo, acted as Conferral Master and Junior Warden, respectively; in the 3rd section, JW Hector A. Emberga acted the part of Most Excellent King Solomon.

The conferral over, WB Orlando N. Dela Cruz of Koronadal Lodge No. 209 announced that brethren who would register on or before September 15 for the Multi-District Convention to be held in Koronadal City on November 24-25, 2008 would each receive a free Masonic wrist watch.

MW Aniaga, on his part, commended the conferral team for a job well done and stressed the paramount importance of solemnly, proficiently and impressively conferring the degrees of Masonry on the candidates.

WM Tan presented a token of appreciation to the Grand Master, who in turn distributed his personal gifts to the District and Lodge officers present. "These stationery items were personally crafted



by my beloved wife, your Sister Alice," he said.

From the Masonic Temple, we proceeded to the Sardonyx Restaurant where the Grand Master and party enjoyed a fellowship dinner with more than 100 members of the Masonic Family in the district.

Day 2: Saturday, 16 August 2008

At 7:30 a.m., we assembled at the Phoenix Gas Station of VW Hemington H. Yap, DDGM for MD R XII-A. Half an hour later, we left Cotabato City and, accompanied by Bro./Gov. Ibay and 14 other Cotabato brethren, we resumed the caravan on our



way to Ozamis City via Pagadian City. We were escorted by PNP and Army security teams up to the boundary of Lanao Del Sur and Lanao Del Norte provinces.²

We were met by Bro. Nasser "Jing" Naga of Lake Lanao Lodge No. 227, his brother Ismael Jr. and Ismael III at the Malabang Junction to Pagadian and Karumatan.

² The following brethren were with Bro./Gov. Ibay: VW Johnson Wee, VW Hemington Yap, WM Raymond Tan, JW Hector Emberga, WB Reynald Chua, VW Alexander Anpatuan, WB Graham Nasser Dumama, Bros. Leopoldo Lugtu, Michael Jimmy Yap, Sacrudin Masukat, Harold John Lu, Albert Tan, Anthony Ross and Noel Nuñez. On the request of Bro./Gov. Ibay, Lt. Col. Bro. Bismark Soliba, a member of Mount Huraw Lodge No. 98 in Catbalogan City and the Commanding Officer of the 2nd Mechanized Infantry Battalion Light Armored Division, PA, provided us with escort along the Narciso Ramos Highway. An additional police vehicle also escorted us. WB Johnny W. Tan, PGLI, was among those who sent us off. He wanted to go with us, but due to his health condition, he was not able to do so.

We tarried for a while in the municipality of Sultan Gumander, where we were shown the tunnel used as a hospital by Japanese forces during World War II.

Onwards to Sultan Naga Dimaporo, we were joined by a host of brethren, DeMolays and Rainbow Girls, led by VW Nelson E. Wooton, DDGM for MD R IX-A, VW Leonardo L. Babasa, DGL and VW Adriano "Django" B. Durano III, PDDGM.³ They led us to the Jose G. Holifeña Masonic Memorial Temple in Pagadian City where we were enthusiastically greeted by more members of the Masonic Family in MD R IX-A.⁴

Grand Master Pacifico Aniaq and party were formally received by the officers of Illana Bay Lodge No. 274. We proceeded to Django's Grill, which is owned and operated by VW Django Durano III, for a fellowship lunch which was attended by more than 130 members of the Masonic Family in the district.⁵

After the fellowship lunch, Bro./Gov. Ibay and party had to make their way back to Cotabato City. Bro. Nasser Naga and his companion likewise journeyed back to Marawi City.

MW Aniaq with some brethren then went to visit WB Paquito Sun Yu, PM, at his residence.

Just before 3 p.m., we left Pagadian City for Molave, Zamboanga Del Sur, where the temple of Salug Valley Lodge No. 215 is located. There, we were warmly welcomed by the brethren led by WM Marcos M. Bahinting, who later on requested the Grand Master to plant a tree which would serve as token of remembrance of his visit.

MW Aniaq distributed souvenir items to the brethren, particularly the officers of the Lodge. Then VW Wooton formally turned over the caravan to the care of VW Vincent O. Soledad, DDGM for MD R X-C, who was accompanied by his DGLs, VWBs Sandy D. Ablaña and Gerard Teodorico R. Oligario III.



The caravan traveled from Molave to Tangub City, where we were warmly welcomed by the brethren of Don Lorenzo Tan Memorial Lodge No. 265, led by WM

3. The movement of vehicles from both directions was halted for a while because we had picture taking along the highway.
4. The brethren of Dr. Jose G. Holifeña Memorial Lodge No. 153 in Pagadian City were headed by their Worshipful Master, VW Floresto E. Florendo, Jr., PDDGM; those of Illana Bay Lodge No. 274 also in Pagadian City, by WM Johnny V. Sy; those of Baganian Peninsula Lodge No. 275 in San Miguel, Zamboanga Del Sur, by WM Santiago D. Tolentino II; those of Sibugay Valley Lodge No. 246 in Bugang Sibugay Province, by WM Ronnie P. Luz; and those of Dr. Aurelio Mendoza Memorial Lodge No. 283 in Ipil, Zamboanga Sibugay Province, by WM Josef M. Galicia.
5. We refreshed with much gusto the seafoods, as well as the roasted pig and goat, prepared by the brethren of the district.



to Ozamis City, where the Temple of Don Timoteo S. Uy Lodge No. 349 is located. Again, we were warmly received by the brethren of the Lodge, led by WM Edgar C. Villanueva, as well as members of Mt. Malindang Lodge No. 130, led by WM Ricardo H. Pintacasi.

The day's activities were capped by a fellowship dinner at the Bethany Gardens Resort and Hotel.⁶

We checked in at Plaza Hotel Beatriz, which is owned by VW Rico Medina, Sr., PPDGM, for a good night's rest after a hard day's work.



Clint S. Cha and VW Rico M. Medina, Sr., PDDGM of Mt. Malindang Lodge No. 130.

After partaking of a merienda served us, we proceeded to Ozamis City, where the Grand Master paid Bro. Bu Hong Chiong 98 years old, a visit.

From Ozamis City we went to Jimenez, Misamis Oriental, where the temple of Palilan Lodge No. 239 is located. WM Joel J. Agraviador and other members of the Lodge were deeply honored and grateful because the Lodge, which was constituted 26 years ago, was, at long last, visited by an incumbent Grand Master.

WM Agraviador and other Palilan Lodge brethren joined our caravan back



Day 3: Sunday, 17 August 2008

We had an early breakfast at the hotel to gain ample time for the next leg of our trip, from Ozamis City to Baroy, Lanao Del Norte, where the Temple of Glicerio A. Lim Memorial Lodge No. 222 is located.

At 7 a.m., we took a ferryboat crossing Iligan Bay escorted by VWBs Soledad,



6. More than 100 brethren, sisters and other members of the Masonic Family in the district were with us during the fellowship dinner at the Bethany Gardens Resort and Hotel.

The program, which was emceed by VW Abaña, started with an invocation, led by Bro. Joseph Kent C. Bacolod, followed by VW Soledad's welcome address. Introduced by VW Oligario, MW Anig focused his message on the theme "Harmony, the Strength and Beauty of Masonry." VW Soledad presented to the Grand Master a replica of the Cotta Shrine, a landmark of the City of Ozamis.



Ablaña and Olegario. When we reached Mucas Port in Kolambungan, Lanao Del Norte, the Reception Committee assigned by VW Philip Steven D. So, DDGM for MD R X-D, to meet us, was not there. So, on our own initiative, we proceeded to Baroy. Only WM Victory L. Demiar, JW Resnol C. Torres and the Lodge caretaker were there to meet us. Shortly afterwards, however, VW So and other district officers and brethren arrived. But they did not tell us right away of the situationer briefing given by the Commanding General of the Philippine Army's Task Force Tabak, Bro. Brigadier General Hilario A. Atendido of Pagkakaisa Lodge No. 282. The details of the situationer briefing were as follows:

Armed men were sighted in the hinterlands of Tubod, Lanao Del Norte and the Iligan City Highway. Earlier in the morning, a patrolling squad of the Philippine Army was ambushed in the town of Mulondo, Lanao Del Sur. Four soldiers and three militiamen were killed and 11 others were wounded. The MILF rebels blocked the highway connecting the cities of Pagadian and Iligan; they opened fire at incoming buses.

On hindsight, we were lucky to have taken the ferryboat from Ozamis City to Mucas Port of Kolambungan. Had we taken the land trip to Baroy, we would have passed the highway controlled by the MILF rebels.

This information was held back by our host brethren, most probably because they wanted to spare us from excessive worries.

Since we were not duly informed about the situation then prevailing in the area, we pursued our course. We left Baroy for Tubod because the Grand Master and other Masonic leaders wanted to inspect the Mindanao Civic Center located there, which would serve as the venue for the Western Mindanao Masonic Convention to be held on November 14-15, 2008.

Our host brethren led us to Ysmael Restaurant, Tubod Highway, where we had another breakfast consisting of bulalo soup and nilagang baka.

At that time, little did we know that our host brethren were using the restaurant as a "holding area" for the Grand Master and the rest of the caravan "to stay put while the unexpected extraordinary situation" was assessed by our military brethren in the area and the concerned brethren of Glicerio A. Lim Memorial Lodge No. 222 and Lake Lanao Lodge No. 227.

Finally, at 9:45 a. m., our host brethren deemed it safe for us to proceed to Marawi City.⁷

To reach Marawi City, we had to pass the towns of Kolambungan, Maigo, Bacolod, Kauswagan, and Linamon.⁸

In Maigo, Lanao Del Norte, we were met by VW Lini L. Hernandez, PDGL, whose Mother Lodge is Bud Daho No. 102 of Jolo, Sulu and who is a Past Master of



7. The go signal for us to proceed to Marawi City was given by the Worshipful Master of Lake Lanao Lodge No. 227, WB Cosain I. Abbas thru VW Philip Steven D. So, who was in constant communication with military brethren in the area.

8. These towns were besieged by the MILF rebels under Abdullah Macapaar (alias Commander Bravo), who reportedly burned buildings and rampantly killed civilians.



Batong Buhay Lodge No. 27 in Makati City. With him were WB Peter L. Gochuico, of Manuel Valencia Ko Memorial Lodge No. 210 and Bro. Robert L. Tiu of Macajalar Lodge No. 184.

In Kauswagan, MW Aniag visited an elderly Mason, WB Hosain D. Maranda, Sr. of Maranao Lodge No. 111 and Lake Lanao No. 227.

A group of Iligan brethren led by Past Grand Pursuivant Frederick R. Castro, were waiting for us at the Junction Road

in Overton, Iligan City.⁹ Also waiting there for us were Bro. Omarbasha S. Lucman of Lake Lanao Lodge No. 227 and two security escorts, who were to guide us to Marawi City.

At the Pantar Bridge of Agus River, which marks the Lanao Sur-Lanao Norte boundary, WM Cosain "Cocoy" I. Abbas and two petitioners (Mimbalanag A. Mitmug and Marawi City Chief of Police Madid M. Paitao) awaited our arrival.

We were warmly welcomed by some 45 brethren at the Ranao Masonic Center within the Mindanao State University (MSU) Campus.¹⁰

The sun was already at meridian height, but the scheduled program must go on. It consisted of presentation by WM Abbas of the Gura and Gonong to MW Aniag, as well as the explanation of the history and significance of the two tokens



9. The brethren who were with VW Frederick Castro, PGP were WB Edward L. Banawa, GLJ of Judge Valerio V. Roxira Memorial Lodge No. 259; WM Ronald U. Uy and SW Eduardo D. Ulirang of Iligan Lodge No. 207; JW Ian C. Uy of Maranao Lodge No. 111; and Bro. Jaime M. Ang of Manticao Lodge No. 243.

10. The welcome party was composed of VW Sergio O. Lastimosa, DGL; VW Edgar A. Masorong, PDGL; VW Musa C. Saruang, PDGL; VW Datumanong D. Sarangani, PDGL; WB Bernard R. Castillo, PGLI; WB Macoro L. Macumbal, PM; WB Mustapha M. Naga, PM; Bro. Sanny P. Alonto, Sr.; Bro. Alexander B. Mitmug, and P; Senior Superintendent and Bro. Paniares U. Adap, PNP Provincial Director.

11. WB Col. Rey C. Ardo, a Past Master of Punta Sulawan Lodge No. 242, is the Commanding Officer of the camp. He is ably assisted by two brethren, namely, WB/LL Col. Casimero Royne D. Tamparong, GLJ of Gliceno A. Lim Sr. Memorial Lodge No. 222 and Executive Officer of the camp, and Bro. Major Jamaluddin Polog, Operations Officer of the camp and a member of Dr. Jose G. Hofferia Memorial Lodge No. 153. The brigade is under the Task Force Tabak Division of Bro. Brigadier General Hilario A. Atendido, Assistant Second Division PA Commanding General for Operations.

The Pagana Meranao lunch preparation at The Polygon, Signal Hill Kampo Ranao was supervised by Sister Emily, the wife of VW Edgar A. Masorong, PDGL, while the hall setting was under the immediate direction of Sister Zenaida, the wife of Bro. Nasser A. Naga, who was assisted by Sister Zorahaydah, the wife of Petitioner Hyder Panawidan and a member of the Order of the Eastern Star.

by VW Musa C. Saruang PDGL and Bro. Sanny P. Alonto, Sr.

MW Aniag thanked WM Abbas and the other brethren of Lake Lanao Lodge No. 227 for presenting to him the valuable tokens; then he explained the significance of the Mindanao Caravan.

After the program, we proceeded to Signal Hill, Kampo Ranao, headquarters of the Philippine Army's 103rd Infantry Brigade, where we partook of what our hosts referred to as Pagana Meranao lunch.¹¹

After lunch, we left the camp for Iligan City with the Iligan brethren, with petitioner Madid Paitao serving as our escort up to Pantar Bridge.¹²

We toured the Maria Cristina Falls and the Eco Park in Overton, Iligan City, with VWBs Castro and Theonilo A. Pala PGH serving as our tour guides.

When we reached the city proper, MW Aniag went right away to the Mindanao Sanitarium and Hospital to visit Bro. Benjamin M. Masangcay, Jr. of Manticao Lodge No. 243, who was suffering from a rare cancer disease.

Later on, with VWBs Castro and Pala still serving as guides, we toured the Iligan City Hall Compound and the Buhanginan Park.¹³

At about 4:30 p.m. we checked in at Celadon Pension House, which is owned by VW Dominic W. Siao, PJGS, of Iligan Bay Lodge No. 207.¹⁴

Fifteen minutes later, the Grand Master attended an informal meeting at the Ubaldo

D. Laya Masonic Center,¹⁵ where dinner would be served. It was attended by more than 100 brethren and other members of the Masonic Family in the district.

The program that formed part of the dinner was emceed by VW Castro, who acknowledged the attendance of VW Buenaventura C. Alipio, PSGS; VW James T. Yu, PDDGM; VW Henry C. Dy, Vice Mayor; VWBs Moises G. Dalisay, Jr. and Voltaire I. Rovira, City Councilors.

In his remarks, Grand Master Aniag stressed the importance of family involvement in Masonic affairs.

Our host brethren presented another Gonong and a Kobing, a tool for harmony, to MW Aniag.

Returning to the pension house, MW Aniag joined other brethren from the caravan in a fellowship at the hotel coffee shop.



12. On the way down, we saw a wounded soldier lying on the ground, tightening the bandage on his right leg; an American soldier standing nearby; 2 soldiers helping a comrade go up the hill; 4 dead soldiers in a 6 x 6 army truck approximately 100 soldiers resting at open spaces in the camp; 5 helicopter gun ships at the helipad, which either were on standby or had just arrived from a combat mission.
13. According to our tour guides, the Vice Mayor of Iligan City is VW Henry C. Dy; PDDGM VW Moises G. Dalisay, Jr. PDGL, and VW Voltaire I Rovira, PDDGM, are city Councilors; and the City Mayor is a petitioner of Maranao Lodge No. 111.
14. An hour after we had checked in at the pension house, two bombs exploded nearby; reportedly, however, nobody was killed in the explosion. Shortly afterwards, the following brethren arrived from Cotabato City to rejoin the Grand Master's caravan: Ibra Cletus Carim, Arnold Jim Chua, Timothy Lyle Ang, and Henry Lu.
15. The informal meeting with the Grand Master was convened by VW Frederick Castro on request of the District Council, VW Sergio G. Lastimosa, DGL, pointed out that since 1999, the Institute of Masonic Education and Studies of Masonic District RX-D/ARMM-D had been conducting seminars for Lodge officers before their installation. This should be the practice throughout our grand jurisdiction, he said. He further suggested that seminars conducted by the REGIONAL INSTITUTES OF MASONIC EDUCATION AND STUDIES should be accredited by the GLP IMES. Another DGL, VW Feliciano B. Alagao, suggested that degree work training be intensified, and that lectures be done in all districts. Several brethren then commented that Grand Lodge membership files be straightened up to correct mistakes in the past, and that Grand Lodge should respond promptly for simple requests for diplomas, certificates, and the likes.

The Grand Master, on his part, informed the brethren in attendance that some Masonic protocol and procedures would be revised in order to strengthen the rituals and ceremonies of the Craft, and that the Masonic records of the brethren were being looked into. He gave the attendees the assurance that the Grand Lodge would attend expeditiously to pending requests of Lodges and individual brethren. "The Assistant Grand Secretary," he said, "will more closely supervise the work of the GLP staff."

While taking an early breakfast at the hotel, we were informed that:

- More than 300 MILF rebels under Abdullah Macapaar (alias Commander Bravo) had taken control of the Lanao Del Norte-Iligan City highway, which spans through the towns of Kolambugan, Maigo, Bacolod, Kauswagan and Linamon, and which, as a caravan, we traversed a day before lunch.
- The rebels were burning edifices and rampantly killing civilians.
- Fierce fighting between the rebels and the government armed forces was going on.
- Lt. Col. Angelo Benitez, a member of PMA Class '90 and the Executive Officer of the Army's 102nd Infantry Brigade, accompanied by six soldiers, left headquarters in Pagadian City at about 3:00 this morning to claim his promotion as Chief of Operations of Task Force Tabak in Iligan City. Their vehicle, however, was ambushed 1.5 kilometers away from the town proper of Kolambugan. Two of the soldiers were instantly killed, but the officer and the remaining soldiers were able to seek cover in the town market. They called for reinforcements; but, overpowered by the enemy, they died with their boots on.
- Sixteen hours after the Grand Master and the rest of the caravan had taken breakfast at Ysmael Restaurant along the said highway, MILF rebels overran Kolambugan, engaged government armed forces in fierce fighting, burned buildings of the town's National High School, and blocked the highway between the cities of Pagadian and Ozamis on the west side and the towns of Kauswagan and Linamon on the east. Had we left the restaurant later than we did, we would have been trapped therein.
- The bridge connecting Linamon, Lanao Del Norte and Iligan City was blown up, and invaded by the MILF rebels. The town of Kauswagan, where the Grand Master had visited WB Maranda the day before, was heavily damaged.





and the officers of the host Lodge, we departed for Malberry Suites Business Hotel in Cagayan de Oro. Eagerly awaiting us there were Sister Alice U. Aniag, our Grand Master's beloved wife; RW Juanito P. Abergas, Junior Grand Warden; VW Fernando V. Pascua, Jr., Senior Grand Lecturer; VW Marcelino S. Garcia, Jr., Asst. Grand Secretary; VW Reynaldo M. Dionisio, Grand Standard Bearer; VW Faustino C. Garcia, Cabletow Publisher; VW Michael DJ. David, Grand Master's Deputy for MD

The above-mentioned disturbing reports notwithstanding, at about 7:00 a.m., we left Iligan City for Initao, Misamis Oriental, where the temple of Kitanglay Lodge No. 256 is located.

When we reached the "Welcome" Landmark at the Iligan City-Misamis Oriental boundary, a project accomplished through the initiative of VW Buenaventura C. Alipio, PSGS, we stopped a while for picture taking.

On our arrival at the temple of Kitanglay Lodge No. 256, we were warmly welcomed by RW Peter U. Lim Lo Suy, DGM; VW Peter M. Unabia, DDGM for MD R 10-A; and the brethren of the host Lodge led by WM Ruben M. Guilot, SW Remigio E. Lumbay, Jr., and Lodge Secretary Diosen B. Ratonil, Past Master. As in the other places we had visited, we partook of the merienda served, signed in the Tyler's Book, and had our pictures with the brethren taken.

Then, escorted by RW Lim Lo Suy, VW Unabia, and WB Guilot, we left Initao for Alubijid, Misamis Oriental, where the temple of Punta Sulawan Lodge No. 242 is located.

We had fellowship and merienda with around 50 members of the host Lodge, led by WM Nelson P. Mabaylan, SW June G. Rosquieta, JW Jenito M. Adequia, and Lodge Secretary Joseph R. Mongcal, at the Sia Beng Tek Masonic Hall.

After the exchange of tokens of remembrance between the Grand Master





RIII-C; VW Benito T. Ty, PDDGM, of Manila-Mt. Lebanon Lodge No. 1; VW Ramil V. Huele, DGL of MD RIV-A; VW Francisco M. Lovero, Administrative Assistant to the Grand Master; and WB Bonifacio S. Garcia, PM of Cupang Lodge No. 295. A CDO resident, our Deputy Grand Master tried his utmost to entertain us.

After a brief respite, we left the hotel for Malaybalay City in Bukidnon, escorted by WB Bartolome M. Tiongson, PM of Mount Musuan Lodge No. 155, and some brethren of Masonic District RX-E.

On arrival at Malaybalay, we were warmly greeted by other brethren of MD RX-E, led by VW Alberto R. Lagamon, their DDGM, as well as by brethren of MD RX-F, headed by their DDGM, VW Gideon B. Cabahug. Also there to bid us welcome were DGLs Jerome N. Ramirez, Alexis N. Castillo, and Jimmy L. Apostol; Grand Lodge Inspectors Gil G. Tabor, Ricarte V. Adalim, Isidro B. Ramos, and Godwin R. Valdez, Worshipful Masters Rey S. Fernandez and Fred F. Barberan of Mount Musuan Lodge No. 155 and Don Camilo Osias Memorial Lodge No. 253, respectively; VW Billy L. Emphasis, PDDGM; and VW Antonieto M. Unabia, PDDGM. Conspicuously present,

too, was Sister Rowena, wife of VW Joseph B. Baula, PDDGM, a friend of Sister Alice and family.

We had a fellowship lunch at the Anton's Fast Food and Grill Restaurant, which is owned by VW Antonieto Unabia, together with more than 100 brethren and sisters representing Mount Musuan Lodge No. 155 in Malaybalay; Bukidnon Masonic Lodge No. 245 in Valencia; Don Camilo Osias Memorial Lodge No. 253 in Malaybalay; Tangkalan Lodge No. 287 in Manolo Fortich; Zosimo Montemayor Lodge No. 212 in Don Carlos; Lake Pinamaloy Lodge No. 230 in Don Carlos; and Laureano S. Ledres Sr. Memorial Lodge No. 271 in Quezon.

The caravan was joined at Malaybalay by VW Floren V. Lumo, DGL of MD RXI-A. WB Narciso L. Ner, Jr., PM, who was with the brethren who formed the original caravan from Cotabato City, went back to Davao City via the Bukidnon-davao Road.

We then proceeded to the proposed site of a new Malaybalay Masonic Temple at the back of the existing temple shared by Mount Musuan Lodge No. 156 and Don Camilo Osias Memorial Lodge No. 253.¹⁶

MW Pacifico B. Aniag, Grand Master, was assisted by the following brethren in conducting the ceremony of laying the foundation stone of the future Malaybalay Masonic Temple:

RW Peter U. Lim Lo Suy, Deputy Grand Master; RW Juanito P. Abergas, Junior Grand Warden; VW Fernando V. Pascua, Jr., Grand Marshal; VW Rodel Riezl S.J. Reyes, Senior Grand Warden; VW Marcelino S. Garcia, Jr., Grand Secretary; VW Benito T. Ty, Grand Treasurer; VW Carlo A. Hilario, Grand Chaplain; and VW Eduardo Y. Salvador, Principal Architect.

Toward the end of the ceremony, MW Aniag addressed the brethren, stressing the thematic focus of his year in the Grand East, "Harmony: The Strength and Beauty

16. The land and building shall be owned by the Malaybalay Masonic Temple Association (MMTA). The lot has a total area of 1,200 square meters, while the new temple building will occupy an area of 252 square meters.

17. Cagayan de Oro is the gateway to Northern Mindanao, with its airport and seaport facilities. The capital of Misamis Oriental Province and the administrative center of Region X, it is a bustling metropolis which serves as the commercial, educational and transportation hub of the region, as well as the point of entry to Iligan City, Camiguin, Bukidnon, and Lanao provinces.

of Masonry." Then he distributed tokens of remembrance to the District and Lodge officers present.

We returned to Cagayan de Oro City in order to have a much-needed rest at the Malberry Suites Business Hotel.¹⁷

After resting for less than two hours, we left the hotel for the ceremony of unveiling the marker of the new Maguindanao Masonic Temple Association, Inc (MMTAI) at the ground floor of the Temple. MW Aniang presided over the ceremony assisted by WB Gilbert B. Gille, PGLI, and VW George G. Lim, PDGL, President and Trustee of the MMTAI Board respectively. Also present during the ceremony were RWBs Lim Lo Suy and Abergas, as well as VWBs Peter Unabia and Bermadas.

Right after the unveiling ceremony, MW Aniang led the Rite of Institution of Kagan-an Lodge U.D. He was supported by



the Grand Lodge Officers. Approximately 110 brethren were in attendance. The Grand Master's talk on the importance of the Rite of Institution capped the event, followed by dinner at the San Riva Cafe and Restaurant.

Day 5: Tuesday, 19 August 2008

At 8:00 a.m., the 13 Cotabato brethren who were with us at yesterday's special events and who spent the night in the hotel bade us farewell.¹⁸

Our Cotabato brethren having departed for home, the Grand Master, accompanied by some brethren, visited two sick or elderly Masonic leaders, namely, VW Mardenio M. Lao, PDDGM, who was confined at the Capitol University Medical Center in Cagayan De Oro, and MW Manuel D. Mandac, our Grand Master in 1980.

At about 10:00 a.m. the caravan left the city for Gingoog City. We were escorted by RW Lim Lo Suy, VW Bermadas and other Misamis Oriental brethren, WM Jordan G. Tiu of Camiguin Lodge No. 296, together with WB Teodoro A. Gales, PM, and Bro. Felix P. Albinda, went ahead of the caravan in order to check the lunch preparation at



Talisayan, Misamis Oriental.

We tarried for a while at the Mantia-Anak Tree Park in Sugbongcogon, Misamis Oriental. The park is owned by Bro./Mayor

18. VW Alex U. Ampatuan DGL, Chief of the Buluan District Hospital in Cotabato City, had to personally supervise the treatment of bombing victims for shrapnel wounds and had to go back home. Traveling with him back to Cotabato City were WB Reynald Chua, Bros. Michael Jimmy Yap, Sacruddin Masukat, Arnold Jim Chua, Timothy Lyle Ang, Harold John Lu, Ibra Cletus Carim and Henry Lu, all of Kutang Bato Lodge No. 110; WB Graham Nasser Dumama, Bros. Albert Tan, Anthony Ross and Noel Nuñez, all of Sharif Kabunsuan Lodge No. 266. Left behind to complete the trip to General Santos City were Caravan Organizer VW Johnson Wee, VW Hemington Yap, WB Raymond Tan, JW Hector Emberga, and Bro. Leopoldo Lugtu.



Jerome P. Lagbas of Misamis Oriental Lodge No. 335.¹⁹

We passed by the port town of Balingoan, the gateway to Camiguin Island.²⁰

The caravan reached Nita's Place SUTOKIL (Sugba, Tola, Kinilao) Eatery By the Sea in the town of Talisayan at about 12:55 p.m. We were given a rousing welcome by the brethren of MD R XIII-A, who arrived earlier from Butuan City. They were led by VW Franklin G. Calo, Junior Grand Lecturer for Northern and Western Mindanao, as well as by VW Florencio D. Agot, DDGM for MD RXIII-A, and WB Antonio D. Dacumos, Master of Agusan Valley Lodge No.160.

The Hon. Rommel C. Maslog, a member of Loyalty Chapter, Order of DeMolay like MW Aniag, and the Mayor of Talisayan, later joined the caravan. He and brethren of Camiguin Island Lodge, led by WM Tiu, SW Emmanuel W. Paderanga, WB Gales, and Bro. Albinda, hosted the lunch.²¹

After lunch, we left Talisayan for Gingoog City, where the temple of Apo Kahoy Lodge No. 166 is located.

On arrival at the temple, we were treated to coffee, soft drinks and snacks; followed by the usual picture taking and signing of the Tyler's Book. Bro. Moises Rommel J. Rodriguez, Lodge Secretary, informed AGS VW Garcia that the Lodge had not yet received copies of the circulars and edicts issued by the Grand Master, as

well as other communications from the office of the Grand Secretary. This reporter was instructed by the AGS to look into the matter.

At about 3:00 p.m. VW Bernadas turned over the Caravan to the care of VW Agot and his party. At this juncture, RW Lim Lo Suy and the brethren from Camiguin Lodge No. 296 bade us adieu as we proceeded our journey to Butuan City.

When we arrived at the Agusan Valley Masonic Temple in Butuan City at about 4:15 p.m., we were enthusiastically met by some 50 brethren. The usual exchange of pleasantries, signing of the Tyler's Book,



19. The Grand Master was amused to see some personnel serving as receptionists in the park who could qualify to become members of a new group called the SBFF (Samahang Below Five Feet), to be organized in the Grand Lodge. It is mentioned that VW Adam Y. Sim of Dalisay Lodge No. 14 and VW Berneruto C. Alegre of High Twelve Lodge No. 82 maybe tapped to head the new group at GLP, while VW Antonio M. San Luis, Jr. of Batong Buhay Lodge No. 27 shall be the Over-all Coordinator.

20. Camiguin is a province island with a land area of 29,187 hectares and site of the active volcano, Mount Hibok-Hibok, which erupts every 50 years. It celebrates the lanzones festival every October. A cross marker is planted at the sea, one who rides a banca may be able to see an underground cemetery. The incumbent Congressman of Camiguin is a member of Camiguin Lodge No. 296, while his son, a Senior DeMolay and the current Provincial Governor, has filed his petition for Masonic degrees with the same Lodge.

21. On instruction of WB Juanito G. Espino, Jr. Worshipful Master of AG MW Pedro Jimenez Memorial Lodge No. 370, WB Gales and Bro. Albinda, cluster directors of the Commission on Audit in the Regional Office in CDO and together with the brethren of Camiguin Lodge No. 296 led by its Master WB Jordan Tiu, hosted the lunch in coordination with Mayor Maslog, who brought a lechon baboy.



picture taking, and merienda ensued. MW Anigi then led the brethren in planting trees at the temple premises. The theme of the project was "Magtanim para sa Kinabukasan."²²

By 5:00 p.m., we checked in at Almond City Inn which is managed by Sister Suzette, the wife of JGL Calo, and a Past Matron of Balanghai Chapter of Butuan City, Order of the Eastern Star.

When we arrived at the Function Hall of the Imadejas Subdivision, venue of the fellowship dinner, more than 90 brethren and sisters, plus a DeMolay, were already enjoying old-time favorite songs performed by a live band.²³

The program for the fellowship dinner started with the singing of the Pambansang Awit, accompanied by the sound of gongs, and flutes. The invocation was done the way the Manobo tribe of Agusan offer up their devotion to their deity. VW Agot welcomed one and all.

The program was ably emceed by VW Ronald T. Ang, PDDGM and WB Eufroceles D. Udarbe, PM.

Shortly before the start of the dinner, Bro. Rudolfredo M. Mordeno of Agusan Valley Lodge No. 160 arrived. He is 69 years old, suffered a stroke some 5 years ago and half of his body is paralyzed. Yet, he took pains to attend the fellowship dinner because he wanted to meet personally the

Grand Master, who in turn honored him with an invitation to sit at the presidential table. Bro. Mordeno was palpably elated the whole night to be with the Grand Master.

While taking our dinner, students of Northern Mindanao State Institute of Technology performed cultural ethnic Manobo and Miga-onon dances to entertain us.

During his address, MW Anigi remarked in part, "I came to Masonic District RXIII-A and I saw for myself the truth of your reputation as holding your fellowship socials together with members of your own families."

He then specified the purposes of the Caravan through Mindanao.

"Thank you very much for your well-planned, well-prepared and well-executed reception of my humble self and my party."



22 MW Anigi planted the Grand Master's Tree; VWBs Calo and Roxel Reyes, the JGL's Tree; VW Agot, the DDGM's Tree; WB Dacumos, the Worshipful Master's Tree; VW Benito T. Ty and VW Calo, the Scottish Rite Supreme Council Tree.

23 The brethren revised the songs of Bro. Louis Armstrong, Nat King Cole, Frank Sinatra, The Platters, Righteous Brothers, and other melodies carefully selected by VWBs Calo and Agot.

Among the guests was WB James E. Moore, a Past Master of Gippsland Lakes Lodge No. 715 in Lake Entrance, Grand Lodge of Victoria, Australia who desired to affiliate with Agusan Valley Lodge No. 160. Desirous of affiliating with Agusan Valley Lodge No. 160. He furnished VW Joby Maghanua, COS, copies of his Masonic credentials.

he concluded

WB Arthur Ong Oh, GLI, then asked the brethren of the district by Lodges, to approach the Grand Master and present the tokens they had prepared for him. The DGLs presented their token first, but requested the Grand Master not to open the box until he would be back at the Grand Lodge. Next, in behalf of Agusan Valley Lodge No. 160, VW Calo presented to the Grand Master a replica of the "Golden Tara."²⁴ In behalf of the brethren of Butuan Lodge No. 200, WB Augustus L. Calo presented a lei designed with a Square and Compass logo.

The brethren of Kamayo Lodge No. 255 in Bislig City composed a modified Masonic version of "What a Wonderful World," a song made famous by Bro. Louis Armstrong, distributed hard copies thereof, and requested the audience to sing their adapted version of the song along with them.

Not to be outdone, the ladies of the brethren led by Sister Diana Agot, wife of the DDGM, also honored Sister Alice U.



Aniag by presenting her another lei.

At 10:00 p.m. we returned to the hotel for a much-needed rest in preparation for the next day's activities.

Day 6: Wednesday, 20 August 2008

At 7:20 a.m., we departed from Butuan City for Tagum City in Davao Del Norte. Riding in the lead car were VWBs Calo and Agot. On board the vehicle at the tail end of the caravan were VW Tan and Bro. Benigno J. Dagani.

We stopped for a while at the newly built Diosdado Macapagal Bridge at the diversion road of the provincial highway within the City.

It was almost 9:00 a.m. when we arrived at the MacMac Eatery in San Francisco, Agusan Del Sur, which is famous for its bulalo, tinola bisayang manok and balbacua. We had a taste of these delicacies.

We passed by the temple of Timberland Lodge No. 219 where we were welcomed by VW Enrico S. Rojas, Jr., PDGL; WB Paulian R. Redondo, PM; and 3 DeMolays.

After signing the Tyler's Book and had



24. VW Calo said that the original image of the replica of the "Golden Tara" was cast in a 21-carat gold measuring 8 inches and weighing 4 pounds. The original item, he further mentioned, is on display at the Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago, Illinois.

our pictures taken with the brethren, we departed for Tagum City. There to send us off were brethren of MD R XIII-A. Leading us to Tagum City was VW Rodel Riez Reyes in his Isuzu Alterra.

Arriving at Monkayo, Compostela Valley Province, we were warmly welcomed by brethren of MD R XI-B, led by VW Arnold O. Ancog, DDGM; WB Arnold O. Lao, WM



of Tagum Lodge No. 204; VW Francisco G. Rivero, PDDGM, also of Tagum Lodge No. 204; VW Senen P. Abing, Jr., PDGL, of Shangri-La Lodge No. 196; and VW Precioso M. Abrasado, PDGL, of Panabo-Dalisay Lodge No. 237.

WB Narciso Ner, Jr. of Shangri-La Lodge No. 196 rejoined us in Monkayo.

We arrived at Barangay Madgun, Tagum City, at high twelve. There to meet us were brethren of MD R XI-B composed of VW Julius S. Valdez, DGL; WM Feliciano A. Yamas, Jr. of Shangri-La Lodge No. 196, together with VW Melchor S. Perdide, PDDGM, and VW Salvador S. Doce, Sr., PDGL, whose Mother Lodge is Island-Luz-Minerva No. 5 in Manila; WB Ramon A. Sarenas of Panabo-Dalisay Lodge No. 237; WM Paterno S. Limbing of Don Salvador P. Lopez Memorial Lodge No. 276.

Also there to meet us were VW Benjamin C. Rodriguez, Sr., PDGL, of Mati Aurora Lodge No. 130 and WB Marcos J. Villanueva, Jr. of the same Lodge. The latter heads the Traffic Division of the Tagum City Police; he provided the 7 motorcycle cops who accompanied our motorcade to the City Hall and the Provincial Capitol.

We were met at the Bulwagan ng Lalawigan by Governor Rodolfo P. Del Rosario, who traced his family roots to the province of the Grand Master, Bulacan.

Hon. Del Rosario told the Grand Master, "I was in the same Congress your elder brother, Francisco Jr., was in."

The Governor and the Grand Master were subsequently joined by the Vice-Governor, WB. Victorio R. Suaybaguio, Jr.,

PGLI, of Shangri-La Lodge No. 196, and by VW Antonio M. Lagunzad, PDDGM, of Tagum Lodge No. 204, a member of the Sangguniang Panlalawigan.

A short program ensued, emceed by Bro. Cromwell S. Bonghayon of Shangri-La Lodge No. 196, the Tagum City Information Officer. VW Ancog gave the welcome remarks, and Gov. Del Rosario delivered an inspiring message, in which, among other things, he praised Freemasonry and its members for its charity works. MW Aniag, on his part, expressed his appreciation of the warm reception extended to him and his party. Said he: "It is only in the Province of Davao Del Norte that a non-Mason Governor gave me and my party a warm and pleasant welcome reception. I must commend VW Francisco C. Rivero, PDDGM, for coordinating this reception, which is to me, a show of a united Freemasonry and a demonstration of the harmony which prevails among our brethren in Mindanao."

The Grand Master was, indeed, elated because the welcome affair at the Bulwagan ng Lalawigan was well attended.



Present were more than 200 brethren, DeMolays (of Dalisay Chapter), sisters and members of the Order of the Amaranth (Tagum Emerald Court No. 37).

The Grand Royal Matron, HL Rosalinda V. Altares, was in Tagum City to visit the local Davao chapters; she was invited by the Grand Master to attend the occasion (i.e., the welcome affair).

After the program, the Governor treated the Grand Master and the rest of the assembly to a sumptuous lunch at the Governor's Mansion.

At about 1:30 p.m. WB Yamas led MW Aniag and some other Masonic leaders to the residence of WB Emeterio B. Madurado, a Past Master of Shangri-La Lodge No. 196.

After the Grand Master had visited WB Madurado, we proceeded to the new Tagum Masonic Temple. WM Lao showed the Grand Master around the Temple, describing how it was reconstructed from its ruin after it was burned to ashes in 1990.

After the usual signing of the Tyler's Book and picture taking, MW Aniag distributed tokens of remembrance to the District and Lodge Officers present.

At about 2:30 p.m. we left Tagum City for nearby Panabo City. We were still escorted by motorcycle cops up to the city boundary.

We stayed at the temple of Panabo-Dalisay Lodge No. 237 for less than an hour as the Grand Master had to catch up his bigger appointments at Davao City. The care of the Caravan was transferred by VW Ancog to VW Carlo A. Hilario, DDGM of MD RXI-A who was with us since Day 1 in Cotabato City. Before we left Panabo, MW Aniag assured the brethren of his commitment to provide assistance in the repair of their unfinished temple.

At Davao City, we checked in at Roadway Inn, courtesy of Sister Dina Reyes, mother of VW Rodel Riezl SJ. Reyes, JGL whose family owns and operates the hotel.

We arrived Davao City during the week of "Kadayawan sa Dabao," an annual festival



celebrating the city's bountiful harvest of farm and sea produce. But due to our hectic schedule, we missed watching the grand colorful parade of orchid-bedecked floats and tribal street dancing around the city.

In any case, the Grand Master and his party attended a joint meeting of MD RXI-A, which was hosted by Sarangani Lodge No. 50. The meeting was attended by the officers and members of the Lodges in the district and representatives of appendant bodies, allied orders, and side organizations, such as the Davao Bodies, A. & A.S.R. of Freemasonry; Davao York Rite Freemasonry; Teodora Alonso Chapter No. 4, Order of the Eastern Star; Shangrila Court No. 9, Order of the Amaranth; Bethel No. 6, Order of Job's Daughters; Feliciano Inigo Chapter, Order of DeMolay; and Mindanao Shrine Club.

After MW Aniag's talk on the harmonious relationship between the Craft and the other segments of the Masonic Family, the different Lodges and appendant organizations presented to



MW Pacifico Anigi and Sister Alice their respective tokens of remembrance. In turn, MW Anigi distributed his personal tokens to the brethren.

The Lodge having been closed in short form, the various groups took turns in having their pictures with the Grand Master and party taken for posterity.

The ensuing fellowship dinner at the Davao Masonic Center Social Hall, which consisted mainly of roasted calf and pigs, and which was spiced by some dance numbers performed by the Eastern Stars, Job's Daughters, and DeMolays.

The Masonic assemblage that night was an exemplification of Psalm 133!

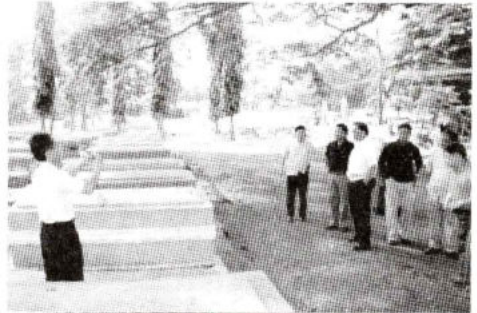
Day 7: Thursday, 21 August 2008

After the buffet breakfast at the Roadway Inn, we visited the Davao Masonic Memorial Park, where buried the remains of brother Masons in the area, notably those of the late MW Desiderio F. Dalisay, Sr., PGM, who died on September 18, 1989, and VW Raymundo L. Yu, Sr., father of several brother Masons, particularly MW Romeo A. Yu, PGM.

From the park, we proceeded to the residence of an elderly Mason, WB Bayani B. Estanislao, PM. He was patently elated by the Grand Master's visit and award of a token of remembrance.

After the visit, we returned to the Roadway Inn and prepared for departure to Digos City.

While in Matina, the Caravan stopped at the residence of VW Magno C. Cruz, PGO, who was also gratified by the Grand Master's visit and award of a token of remembrance.





A welcome party of 18 brethren, led by WM Edward V. Megriño, SW Narciso D. Batiancila, Jr., JW Crescimo V. Tan, and VW William Lowell C. Gragat, PDDGM, met us near Our Lady of Benedictine Peace Monastery at the boundary of Davao City and Davao Del Sur. From there, escorted by the Digos City Police mobile cars courtesy of Bro. Police Chief Inspector Antonio O. Padua, a member of Davao Masonic Lodge No. 149, our caravan consisting of 19 vehicles, held a motorcade going to the Provincial Capitol in Digos City. There we paid the Provincial Governor, Bro. Douglas R. Cagas of Digos Lodge No. 198, a courtesy call.²⁵

The PNP Provincial Director, P/Senior Superintendent Cesario A. Daramtanao, Jr., a member of Biliran Lodge No. 338

in Biliran Island Province, Leyte, was also on hand to welcome the Grand Master and his party.

After having our pictures taken at the provincial capitol, we proceeded for lunch at the Digos Masonic Center, where the Grand Master presented tokens of remembrance to the officers of Digos Masonic Lodge No. 198.

After lunch, a short impromptu program took place. Bro./Gov. Douglas A. Cagas "serenaded" the Grand Master with 3 songs, which were, according to him, his secret weapon during the last election campaign. Not to be outdone, MW Aniaga responded with 2 Tagalog songs.

The impromptu program over, we went to visit WB Ruben R. Mejorada, Sr., 83, a Past Master of Digos Masonic Lodge No. 298. The Grand Master gave him a token of remembrance.

At 3:35 p.m. we arrived at the Shell Gas Station in Barangay Lagas, General Santos City.²⁶ Waiting for us there were some 30 brethren, led by VW Adonis G. Agreda, DDGM of MD R XII-B.²⁷

After the usual amenities with the welcome party, we proceeded to the East Asia Royale Hotel, at the lobby of which other brethren were waiting, led by the owner of the hotel, VW Romeo A. Bartolome, PDDGM, of Dadiangas Lodge No. 225. Later, the Grand Master and Sister Alice met and exchanged pleasantries with the Sisters of the Order of the Amaranth at the hotel lobby, headed by Past Royal Matron Charmy Cortez of Rajah Buaya

25. Bro. Douglas R. Cagas, the Provincial Governor of Davao Del Sur, is a lifetime member of Digos Masonic Lodge No. 198. Although he had not become a Past Master, his elder brothers are all Past Masters; they are WBs Gary R. Cagas and Risrito R. Cagas of Digos Lodge No. 198, and VW Reuben R. Cagas, PDGL of Gregorio O. Calit Memorial Lodge No. 154 in Oroquieta City.

26. General Santos City is known as the "tuna capital of the Philippines." It is a seafood haven, with its booming fishing industry which supplies both the local and export markets. With a world-class international airport, it is the point of entry to exotic Sarangani, Sultan Kudarat, and South Cotabato provinces, where upland Lumad communities exist to this day.

27. The brethren of MD R XII-B who were with VW Adonis Agreda were VWBs Agustin D. Dema-ala and Modesto C. Sanchez, Jr., DGLs; WBs Abiner N. Baac and Nereo G. Regallo, Jr.; WM Richard L. Chua, SW Rolando S. Salud, JW Mario Ricardo C. Homez, VW Joven K. Chua (PGT), VW Celso F. Navalos III (PDGL), Bros. Herminio G. Javier, Alain L. Balisbis, and Antonio Ephrem S. Marin, all of Dadiangas Lodge No. 225.

WM Benito U. Tan, Jr. (who dropped his working tools on the day following due to a vehicular accident), SW Reynold L. Edillon, JW Edward B. Flores, WB Roel S. Palaca (PGLI), and Bro. John Anthony Tan, all of Kaduh Lodge No. 278; SW Lawrence D. Sabado, WB Fernando M. Figueroa (PGLI), and Bro. Rodrigo G. Javier, all of Mount Matutum Lodge No. 156; WM Orlando N. Dela Cruz, WB Geroncio D. Loyola (PGLI), and WB Jose Dindo O. Abantao (PM), all of Koronadal Lodge No. 209; WM Argel R. Rodriguez, SW Jose G. Agreda, and VW Esteban T. Co, Jr. (PDDGM), all of Sultan Kudarat Lodge No. 348; WM Jonathan Edward L. Chua of Beacon Lodge No. 213; and SW Sherjie Michael C. Cortez of Maribulan Lodge No. 304. It was at this time that VW Hilario turned over the care of the caravan to VW Agreda.



Court No. 28.

Then, accompanied by VW Agreda and other leaders of MD R XII-B, MW Aniag went to visit Bro. Ernesto S. Dignadice, Sr., 81 years old, a lifetime member of Mount Matutum Lodge No. 156.²⁸

At about 6:00 p.m., we attended the stated meeting of Mount Matutum Lodge No. 156. MW Aniag, VW Agreda and other Grand Lodge officers were duly received into the lodge hall by WM Virgilio M. Serrano and his set of officers, which was filled with brethren from different Masonic districts. In observance of the Wikang Filipino month (August), WB Serrano conducted the meeting mainly in Filipino.

In his address, MW Aniag expressed elation over the fact that more than 130 brethren representing 20 Lodges were in attendance. He described the gathering at hand as "a mini-multidistrict convention." He requested the members of his Mindanao Caravan Team to stand up and be duly acknowledged for their strong support to the historic activity. He first called the Cotabato brethren, from whom the idea of the Mindanao Caravan originated and who escorted the caravan since Day 1. This group was represented by VW Johnson T. Wee, PDDGM; VW Hemington M. Yap, PDDGM; WB Raymond K. Tan; and Bros.

Hector A. Emberga and Leopoldo P. Lugtu.

Then he called the Davao brethren, represented by VW Rodel Riezl S.J. Reyes, JGL; VW Carlo A. Hilario, DDGM; and WB Narciso L. Ner, Jr., PM. MW Aniag also called his party from the Grand Lodge to stand up and be recognized.

Summing up the significance and achievement of the First Masonic Mindanao Caravan, MW Aniag mentioned that the sojourn covered an actual distance of 1,597 kilometers and took 7 days to travel.

Added he: "The Caravan moved agreeably to schedule, with not fewer than 25 accompanying brethren at any given time in not fewer than 10 vehicles. It covered 14 Masonic Districts and 72 Lodges. Fourteen elderly or ailing brother Masons were visited; the eldest of these brethren is MW Manuel D. Mandac, PGM, 99 years old. . . There were suggestions from some concerned brethren that the Caravan be postponed due to the volatile situation in Mindanao. But I decided to pursue the two-year-old plan as already scheduled. . ."

Then he said, "I wonder why the 'ruffians' and the unwelcome events along the way of the trip appeared only after we, as a caravan, had passed. The Great Architect of the Universe must be with us



28. The brethren other than VW Agreda who accompanied the Grand Master to the residence of Bro. Ernesto S. Dignadice, Sr. were VWBs Romeo Bartolome, Agustin Dema-ala, Modesto Sanchez, and Esteban Co. Jr; WBs Fernando Figueroa, Geroncio Loyola, and Angel Rodriguez; Bro. Rodrigo Javier.

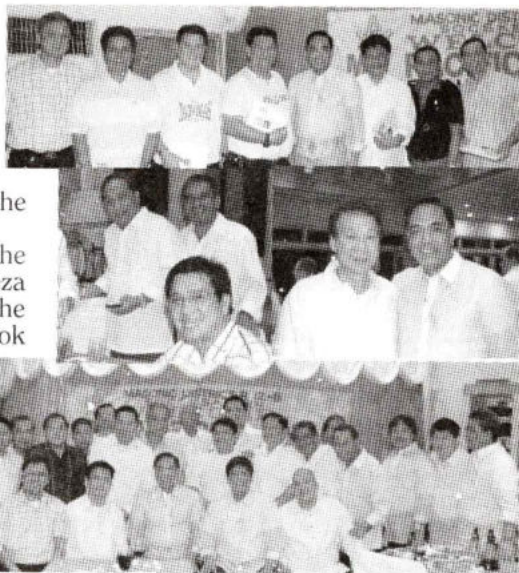
all the way."

Finally, MW Aniang called up the Lodge and requested the members of his Caravan Team to stand before the altar. Then he requested the Lodge Chaplain, WB Angel D. Dapreza, PM, to offer a thanksgiving prayer to God for all the favors and blessings accorded to the Group in its entire trip.

When the Grand Master was on the level with the brethren, WB Dapreza led the assembly in giving thanks to the GAOTU. After the prayer, MW Aniang shook hands with, as well as hugged, each member of his Caravan. A long round of applause filled the lodge hall.

Fellowship dinner followed at the Rosewood Place, where a big tuna fish, donated by Bro.

Rogelio R. Lim, Jr. of Dadiangas Lodge No. 225, was sliced into a buffet "sashimi" before the eat-all-you-can dinner was relished by one and all. We enjoyed particularly the lechon and lamb prepared by VW Joven K. Chua. Drinks flowed freely during the



fellowship social, which metamorphosed into a karaoke singing affair emceed by Bro. Herminio G. Javier, the District Secretary.

After the Grand Master had distributed tokens of remembrance to the District and Lodge officers present, we retired to the East Asia Royale Hotel. . . .

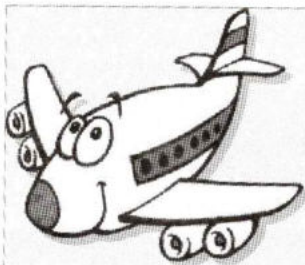
Day 8: Friday, 22 August 2008

After breakfast, free time was given to the members of the Caravan. The Grand Master, together with some brethren, went to play 18 holes at Dole's Kalsangi Golf Club in Polomolok, South Cotabato. Some brethren went to the fish port to buy fresh tuna fish, while others roamed around the city.

At 9:00 a.m., the Cotabato boys who had parted temporarily with us in Cagayan de Oro in order to attend some urgent work at home, arrived at General Santos City to rejoin the Caravan and to send off the Grand Master and his party to Manila. They were led by VW Alexander U. Ampatuan, DGL.

While we were taking lunch at the hotel, courtesy of VW Romeo A. Bartolome, VW Froilan G. Tecson, PJGL, an 81-year-old Past Master of Mount Matutum Lodge No. 136, arrived. He is fondly referred to

by DeMolays and younger Masons as "Very Worshipful Daddy." He and MW Aniang fondly hugged each other.



At about 3:00 p.m. we left for Manila, via Cebu Pacific Flight No. 5J 996. The send-off party was composed of VW Adonis Agreda, VW Agustin Dema-ala, VW Froilan Tecson, VW Romeo Bartolome, VW Joven Chua, WB Richard Chua, and Bro. Jun Wesley Chua.

We arrived at the Manila NAIA Terminal III at about 4:40 p.m. The plane was piloted by Bro. Lawrence B. Ben of Pampanga Lodge No. 48. He came out of the cockpit to greet the Grand Master and his party. This reporter was his MU Class "mistah" at the Grand and Glorious Order of the Knights of the Creeping Serpent (Snake).

This concludes the report on, or the story of, our 8-day Caravan through Mindanao.

MW ANIAG VISITS ELDERLY, AILING BRETHREN IN THE COURSE OF THE CARAVAN THROUGH MINDANAO

In the afternoon of Friday, August 15, 2008, after paying Acting Provincial Governor Ibrahim P. Ibay, DMD, a fellow Senior DeMolay and a fellow Master Mason, he being a member of Kutang Bato Lodge No. 110, a courtesy call at his satellite office near the Kutang Bato Masonic Temple, MW Pacifico B. Aniag, together with some brethren, first visited WB MOYA YU EKEY, who celebrated his 77th birthday four days ago. Bro. Ekey was raised at Bantugan Lodge No. 223 in December 1978 and became its Worshipful Master in 1988. Since 2004 he has been a lifetime member of the Lodge. He is, moreover, a dual member of Shariff Kabunsuan Lodge No. 266. Still active in his hardware business, he now gets assistance in this endeavor from his blood son, Bro. NARCISO YU EKEY, also a member of Bantugan Lodge No. 223. Certainly, WB Moya Yu Ekey was much gladdened to have been visited by his Grand

Master.

WB HOSAIN B. AMPATUAN, who was to celebrate his 69th birthday the following day, shed tears for having been visited by his Grand Master. He was raised to the sublime degree of Master Mason at Lodge Bantugan, too, in August 1982. He later on served as his Mother Lodge's Worshipful Master. He suffered a stroke, and he had a slip disc and benign prostatic hypertrophy.



Present in his house during MW Aniag's visit were Sister Linda, an incumbent member of the Sangguniang Panglungsod (City Council); daughters Marjorie and Farida; grandchildren TJ, EJ, and Baby MJ; and his son, VW Alexander





U. Ampatuan, a medical surgeon by profession and one of the District Grand Lecturers of MD RXI-A.

Like WB Hosain B. Ampatuan, Bro. GREGORIO S. CORDERO, 68 years old, is ambulatory but is experiencing corporeal weakness and therefore, finds it difficult to move without support. In any case, he has maintained his jolly disposition. He was raised to the sublime degree of Master Mason at Bud Daho Lodge No. 102 in Jolo, Sulu in April 1980. Then in May 1999, he became a dual member of Shariff Kabunsuan Lodge No. 266. He served the Philippine Army as a Battalion Commander for 27 years. A stroke victim, he now experiences joint pains; he is suffering from rheumatoid arthritis. He and Sister Marietta were patently pleased to see the Grand Master in person.

The three elderly and ailing brethren received from the Grand Master simple tokens of

remembrance.

In the afternoon of Saturday, August 16, 2008, together with some brethren, MW Aniag visited WB PAQUITO SUM UY, 78

"The best way to have happiness is to halve it," a punster once pointed out. Thus our Grand Master made a significant number of elderly and ailing brethren, together with their families, happy by paying them a visit in their respective residences in the course of his caravan with our brethren in the South (i.e., Mindanao).

years old, at his residence in Pagadian City. In 1991, he served as the Worshipful Master of Baganian Peninsula Lodge No. 275 in San Miguel, Zamboanga Del

Sur (formerly Margosatubig Lodge No. 275 in Margosatubig, Zamboanga Del Sur). He is a member of Dr. Jose Gf Hofileña Memorial Lodge No. 153 (formerly Pagadian Lodge No. 153). He is also a 32nd degree Scottist Rite Mason. Due to a stroke, he is now forced to use the wheelchair. He was profusely grateful to the Grand Master for visiting him and giving him a simple token of remembrance. His physical condition notwithstanding, he insisted that he would escort the Grand Master

and brethren down to the entrance of his hardware and auto supply store. He also instructed his wife and granddaughter to get some grocery items for the



Grand Master to eat while on travel.

Later in the same afternoon, MW Pacifico B. Aniag, accompanied by some brethren, visited Bro. BU HONG CHIONG, 98 years old, at his residence in Ozamis City. He is, clearly, the eldest Mason in the city and in the district. This lifetime member of Mount Malindang Lodge No. 130 was evidently elated to be visited by no less than the current Grand Master, MW Aniag, and to be given a token of remembrance by him.

At about 10:30 a.m., Sunday, August 17, 2008, the Grand Master and some brethren visited WB HOSAIN D. MARANDA, SR. at his residence in Kauswagan, Lanao Del



Norte. Now 80 years old, WB Maranda was raised to the sublime degree of Master Mason in 1979 at Maranao Lodge No. 111. In 1983, he served as the Worshipful Master of Lake Lanao Lodge No. 227, which is the Mother Lodge of his son, Bro. HOSAIN R. MARANDA, JR.

Maranda is now afflicted with asthma and body weakness.

At the time of the Grand Master's visit, besides bro. Hosain R. Maranda, Jr., WB Federico "Khalil" R. Maranda, PM who served as the Worshipful Master of Manticao Lodge no. 243 in 2003, and his daughters, Karis and Syma, were present.

The elder Hosain



When the caravan arrived at Iligan City at about 3:30 p.m. of the same day, the Grand Master, accompanied by some brethren, visited Bro. BENJAMINN.MASANGCAY, JR., a 51-year-old member of Manticao Lodge No. 243, at the Mindanao Sanitarium and Hospital. He was diagnosed to be suffering from urethral adenocarcinoma, a rare cancer disease. At his bedside were his wife, sister Emma, who had arrived from the United States of



America (USA) to be with her husband, and their daughter Filili, a registered nurse new personally attending to her sick father. Seeing the Grand Master, Bro. Ben Masangcay, Jr. became lively and amiably conversed with the former.

The visitors prayed for the healing of Bro. Masangcay and sang him a birthday song, his natal day being August 26. The visitee was very glad to be visited by his Grand Master, who gave him a simple token of remembrance.

In the morning of Tuesday, August 19 (MLQ Day), the Grand Master and brethren visited VW MARDONIO M. LAO, 58 years old, at the Capitol University Medical Center in Cagayan de Oro (CDO) City. He was raised in 1986 at Zosimo Montemayor Lodge No. 212 in Bukidnon; he became a Worshipful Master thereof in 2002. Later on he served as District Deputy Grand Master. He was suffering from liver disease with complications. He was very happy to see

the Grand Master, who gave him a simple token of remembrance.

(Later in the afternoon, when the caravan was in Butuan City, VW Lao dropped his working tools. Requiescat in pace!)

From the Capitol Medical Center MW Aniag and a group of brethren visited MW MANUEL D. MANDAC, PGM, at his residence in CDO City. He is now 99 years old. This retired Brigadier General of the Philippine Army, a native of Laoag City, was a late starter in Freemasonry. He was raised at High Twelve Lodge No. 82 in Manila on Valentine's Day, 1959 at the age of 50. He became our Grand Master in 1980, at age 71.

Although he found it difficult to move due to his age, he expressed his resolve to attending the



Annual Communication in CDO City. He received from the Grand Master a simple token of remembrance.

In the afternoon of Wednesday, August 20, 2008, the Grand Master and some brethren led by WM Feliciano A. Yamas, Jr. of Shangri-La Lodge No. 196 visited WB EMETERIO B. MADURADA, 88 years old, a Past Master of the said Lodge. Three years ago he suffered a stroke which affected his mind and body coordination. He was in complete Masonic attire and waited for the Grand Master and brethren near the main door of his residence in Tagum City. He could hardly talk; he could not stand and walk without assistance. He unashamedly cried and cried upon seeing the Grand Master. Sister Eutropia was at his side, together with their children, Emerphy, Emerson, Emelyn and Emerjoy and the latter's children. Emerjoy would petition for



Masonic degrees in Tagum Lodge No. 204. The Grand Master gave Bro. Madurada a token of remembrance.

After a photo session with the Madurada family, the Grand Master and brethren proceeded to the Tagum Masonic Temple.

In the morning of Thursday, August 21, 2008, MW Pacifico B. Aniag and some brethren dropped in at the residence of VW MAGNO C. CRUZ, Past Grand Orator, in Matina, Davao City. He was the Worshipful Master of

Sarangani Lodge No. 50 in 1983, the year MW Rodendo C. Herrera was Grand Master. He was a member of the Grand Lodge Committee on Revision of Constitution and By-Laws in 2001. He received from MW Aniag a simple token of remembrance.

In the afternoon of the same day, the Grand Master left the Digos Masonic Center after the fellowship lunch in order to visit WB RUBEN R. MEJORADA, SR., 83 years old. He served as Worshipful Master of Digos Masonic Lodge No. 198 in 1978 and became a lifetime member thereof in 2001. He retired as Cashier of the Philippine National Bank (PNB). He, too, received a simple token of remembrance from the Grand Master.



Later that afternoon, accompanied by VW Adonis G. Agreda, DDGM, and other leaders of MD RXII-B, MW Aniag left



first time he was visited by a Grand Master. MW Aniaga gave him a token of remembrance. Then the group bade Bro. Dignadice and Sister Remedios farewell in order to attend the stated meeting of Mount Matutum Lodge no. 156.

By visiting elderly and sick brethren in the course of the caravan through Mindanao, MW Pacifico B. Aniaga has set an example for us emulate.

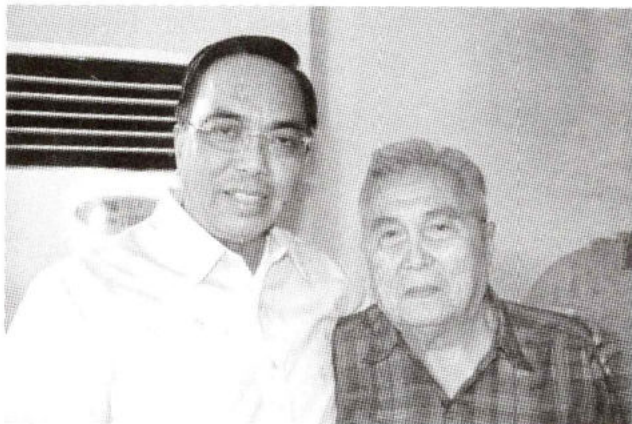
the East Asia Royale Hotel in Gen. Santos City in order to visit Bro. ERNESTO S. DIGNADICE, SR., 81 years old. He was raised to the sublime degree of Master Mason at Mount Matutum Lodge No. 156 in December 1975. Now a lifetime member of the said Lodge, Bro. Dignadice was a charter member of Dadiangas Lodge No. 225. He is suffering from benign prostatic hypertrophy and low potassium in his body. When the Grand Master and party arrived at his residence, he was in casual attire; so, he insistently told his daughter to change

his shirt. He and Sister Remedios were smiling with joy throughout the



Grand Master's visit. But he intermittently shed tears of joy because it was the

Led by the officers of our respective Lodges, we should periodically visit the senior members of our Lodges, who cannot attend stated and special meetings, as well as join us in fellowship socials, due to advanced age and/or illness, ever remembering that in their younger days they diligently worked "in the quarries and on the mountains" for the good of our respective Lodges.



WHAT WE FOUND IN OUR SEARCH

We who composed the caravan were all excited in the early morning of August 16, 2008. We were provided with security escorts; hence, we were assured of a safe journey to Pagadian City. The Cotabato brethren who joined the caravan included VW Hemington H. Yap, WM Reymond K. Tan, VW Johnson T. Wee, WB Reynald Y. Chua, JW Hector A. Emberga, Bro. Ibrahim Ibay, Bro. Sadruddin A. Masukat, Bro. Michael Jimmy O. Yap, Bro. Leopoldo P. Lugtu, Bro. Harold John D. Lu, all of Kutang Bato Lodge No. 110; VW Graham Nazer G. Dumama, WB Albert Tan, Bro. Noel Nuñez, Bro. Anthony P. Ross, all of Shariff Kabunsuan Lodge No. 266; and VW Alexander U. Ampatuan of Bantugan Lodge No. 223.

The caravan took off for Pagadian City with much animation. The Grand Master and his party expressed their admiration of the spectacular coastal panorama as well as the rustic scenery along the way.

As we traveled along the Narciso Ramos Highway, we passed the towns of Parang, Matanog, Kapatagan, Malabang, and Karamatan. We stopped at the tunnel in Sultan Gumander, which was used as a hospital by the Japanese during World War II.

Brother Masons, DeMolays and Rainbow Girls met us at the boundary of Sultan Naga Dimaporo, Lanao Del Norte. We reached Pagadian City at about 11:30 a.m.

Bros. Arnold Chua, Ibra Cletus Carim, and Henry Lu of Kutang Bato Lodge No. 110 joined us in Iligan City.

The brethren who traveled with the caravan all the way were VW Hemington Yap, VW Johnson Wee, WM Reymond Tan, Bro. Leopoldo Lugtu, and Bro. Hector Emberga, Junior Warden of Kutang Bato Lodge No. 110.

We were too familiar with the Biblical passage which reads: "Seek and you shall find; ask and it shall be given you; knock and it shall be opened unto you." We joined the Grand Master and his caravan through Mindanao because we were in search of something. We searched at every leg of this Masonic Mindanao Caravan; we sought out the essence of every Masonic event. We may have viewed our experiences during the trip in different light, but the ultimate affirmation was that all of us belong to one great Masonic family. We may have diverse cultures, tribal affiliations, and religious beliefs, but we are bonded together by an indissoluble chain of sincere affection. Our common aspiration is to help Masonry attain its long-term goal, which is to establish on earth a Brotherhood of all men under the Fatherhood of God.

We brethren from Cotabato are grateful to our fellow Masons for the warm welcome they accorded us at every Masonic Lodge along the way. We will forever treasure the invaluable fellowship and camaraderie we shared with all the brethren and their families.

*Maraming salamat
sa inyong lahat,
mga kapatid!*

CARAVAN OF MASONIC MEMORIES

“Ideas are the rest of creation.”

It all started with an idea one night in December 2006, while some brethren of our Lodge were working on THE CRAFT newsletter. We were discussing the coming installation of a new set of Lodge officers when someone proposed a caravan that would take us all over Mindanao. The idea excited the brethren in attendance, especially those with the itch to travel. It was then just a grand proposal on the what, when, where and how of the journey. The trip was grandeur in scale because the target route was the whole of Mindanao. Never in the history of Philippine Masonry was it done, and would we dare do it? Are we up to the challenge? These questions were raised by the brethren of the Cotabato Lodges when the plan was presented to them. Passed with such a challenge, we dared; so the idea for a historic Mindanao Caravan was passed into action.

The main purpose of the Mindanao Caravan was to bring the Grand Master closer to the Mindanao brethren. The Grand Master, together with other Grand Lodge Officers, would be physically present in the different Lodges to better inspire and reach out a greater number of Masons. Inactive members would then have the opportunity to meet the Grand Master and Grand Lodge Officers and, hopefully, renew and revive their spirit of Masonry.

Then RW Pacifico B. Anig, Junior Grand Warden, came to Cotabato as Guest of Honor and Speaker two years ago. He was enthusiastic upon hearing about the proposed caravan, so that a committee chaired by VW Johnson Wee, PDDGM, was tasked to formulate logistics and coordinate with other Mindanao Lodges. Final arrangements were approved during the Annual Communication in Bacolod.

D-Day arrived: Grand Master Pacifico B. Anig, Grand Sword Bearer Moises Roque, Grand Tyler Felix Flor Cruz, Chief of Staff Joby Magbanua, VW Charles Aguba, VW Rodel Reizl Reyes, VW Carlo Hilario, WB James Olayvar, and Bro. Benny Dionson took the first leg of their journey to Cotabato City on August 15, 2008. They were welcomed by the brethren of the Lodges of Region XII-A at the airport tarmac. A motorcade brought the party to the Kutang Bato Masonic temple for the arrival honors. The Grand Master paid the OIC Governor, Hon. Ibrahim Ibay of Shariff Kabunsuan Province, a courtesy call at his office near the Kutang Bato Masonic Temple. He is a Senior DeMolay like MW Anig and a member of our Lodge.

We appreciate the courage displayed by the Grand Master and his party; for, in spite of the armed hostilities escalating in Cotabato, they did not consider suspending the trip. Probably their enthusiasm was greater than their fears. In conformity to



the theme of his year in the Grand East, "Harmony, the Strength and Beauty of Masonry," he visited retired brethren, such as WB Hosain Ampatuan, WB Moya Yu Ekey and Bro. Gregorio Cordero, Sr. This is a deed well worthy of emulation by us—a task the Grand Master took upon himself to assure these elderly brethren that they had not been forgotten. This particular mission done during the whole caravan was an outreach to the elderly members of our Craft. It was another admirable and remarkable endeavor coming from no less than the Grand Master. The conferral of the 3rd degree of Masonry on Bro. Henry C. Lu

was another affair to remember. After the conferral, the Grand Master and his party had dinner at the Sardenyx Restaurant, together with more than 130 brethren and sisters of Lodges in the district and nearby districts. Bro./Gov. Ibrahim Ibay graced the occasion with his presence. Despite his difficulty in walking, WB Hosain B. Ampatuan, accompanied by Sister Linda, also joined the celebration.

Early in the morning of Saturday, August 16, the Grand Master and his caravan departed from Cotabato City to Pagadian City in Zamboanga Del Sur.

*by VW Alberto R. Lagamon, DDGM
Masonic District RX-E*

MWGM PACIFICO B. ANIAG'S VISIT TO MASONIC DISTRICT RX-E AND RX-F

Preparations.

MW Pacifico B. Aniang, Grand Master of Masons in the jurisdiction of the Philippines, visited Bukidnon Masonic District on August 18, 2008 at Malaybalay City, Bukidnon. This was part of the MW Aniang's caravan to bring the Grand Lodge's office closer to the Blue Lodges and meet the brethren in their very own respective areas.

The schedule of the MWGM's caravan was relayed to all seven Lodges in the province of Bukidnon. Four Lodges are under Masonic District RX-E and three are under Masonic District RX-F.

Since the MWGM's visit would be held in Malaybalay City, the brethren from Masonic District RX-F, headed by District Deputy Grand Master Gideon B. Cabahug,



and brethren from Masonic District RX-F whose lodges are not located in Malaybalay City (like Bukidnon Lodge No. 245 in Valencia City and Tangkulan Lodge No. 287 in Manolo Fortich) decided to come to Malaybalay City to meet MWGM Aniag.

The brethren of Don Camilo Osias Memorial Lodge No. 253 and Mt. Musuan Lodge No. 155, being both located in Malaybalay City, will act as host for this affair. The plan was for all lodges in both Masonic District RX-F and RX-E to share in the expenses.

During the stated meeting of Mt. Musuan Lodge No. 155 on August 9, 2008, the brethren decided to hold the cornerstone laying of the proposed Masonic Temple of Malaybalay City in the afternoon of August 18, 2008 considering that this affair is a Grand Lodge activity and to take advantage of the MWGM Aniag's arrival, together with the rest of the Grand Lodge Officers, in Malaybalay City on this date. Since most of the brethren of Don Camilo Osias Memorial Lodge No. 253 were also present during this meeting, they being on lodge visitation pursuant to the Grand Lodge's proposed activity for the month of August, the brethren together with their WM Barberan of DCOML No. 253 concurred with the plan. Said plan to lay the cornerstone was then relayed to the Grand Lodge. Fortunately for the brethren of both Mt. Musuan Lodge and Don Camilo Osias Memorial Lodge No. 253, their request was granted.

Several meetings were held in preparation for the arrival of the MWGM Aniag and the rest of Grand Lodge officers and visiting brethren. Working Committees were created to take care of security, food and accommodation, reception proper, cornerstone laying ceremony preparation, and ways and means. Constant communications were also made to the Grand Lodge through Bro. Joby Magbanua, who knows Visayan language, to apprise the brethren of the MWGM's whereabouts.

With Bro. Magbanua's help, we came up with the projected number of the brethren accompanying the Grandmaster; the Grand Lodge would have about 18, another 18 from Cotabato, 4 from Davao, and 10 from Cagayan de Oro City, for a total of 50 Masons and guests. We also expected that 10 brethren from RX-F, and 10 brethren each from the four lodges in

RX-E would be present to make the whole attendance in the affair number to a grand total of 100 persons.

Visitation Proper:

Several brethren from District RX-E accompanied MW Pacifico B. Aniag and his party from Cagayan de Oro City to Malaybalay City, particularly brethren from Tangkulan Lodge No. 287 who were residing in the said city. WB Bart Tiongson, his close friend and kababayan from Bulacan, was there as well.

To the amazement of the brethren of both RX-E and RX-F, MWGM Aniag, together with his wife, Sister Alice, other Grand Lodge Officers and the rest of the party arrived in Malaybalay City at 12:00 noon as scheduled. The amazement was only natural because the brethren did not expect the GM to arrive on time, given the very hectic schedule of District and lodges visitation. The fear was even heightened by reports of a shooting incident last August 17, 2008 and on the peace and order problem in Lanao del Norte on the 18th of August, the following day. In fact the road to Iligan City was blocked a short while after the MWGM and his party passed on the way to Cagayan de Oro City. It is as if events conspired to accommodate the safe travel of the GM and our brother Masons.

The arrival of our MWGM Pacifico B. Aniag and party at 12:00 high noon is not only accurate but also symbolic, considering that the sun at meridian height is the beauty and glory of the day.

District Deputy Grand Masters, VW Alberto R. Lagamon and VW Gideon B. Cabahug of RX-E and RX-F, respectively; together with District Grand Lecturer of RX-E, VW Jimmy N. Apostol; Grand Lodge Inspectors of RX-E, VW Gil G. Tabor, WB Ricarte V. Adalin, WB Isidro B. Ramos, WB Godwin R. Valdez; Worshipful Master of Mt. Musuan Lodge No. 155, WB Rey S. Fernandez; Worshipful Master of Don Camilo Osias Memorial Lodge No. 253, WB Fred F. Barberan; past DDGM VW Billy E. Emphasis; past DDGM Antonieto M. Unabia; and brethren from both Districts met the Grand Lodge caravan at Anton's Restaurant owned by VW Unabia. Worthwhile to mention that also present in the reception was the wife of VW Joseph B. Baula, Sister Rowena, who is a friend of the



wife of our MWGM, Sister Alice.

Being high twelve, the Grand Lodge Officers with our fellow Masons and guests proceeded to take their lunch right after the reception.

At about 1:30 pm, the group proceeded from Anton's Restaurant to the proposed Malaybalay Masonic Temple, which was located about 4 minutes by car from the lunch venue, for the cornerstone laying. The site lies within the property of Mt. Musuan Lodge No. 155 where the old temple shared by Mt. Musuan Lodge No. 155 and Don Camilo Osias Memorial Lodge No. 253 used to stand.

The cornerstone laying was conducted by the Grand Lodge, with MW Pacifico B. Aniang presiding, together with the rest of the Grand Lodge Officers. Past District Grand Lecturer VW Eduardo Y. Salvador, however, acted as the Principal Architect.

The cornerstone laying of Malaybalay Masonic Temple was also graced by the presence of VW Fernando V. Pascua, Jr., Senior Grand Lecturer who acted as Grand Marshall and directed the activity in accordance with the ceremony of Laying the Cornerstone and its Consecration.

To the members of Mt. Musuan Lodge No. 155 and Don Camilo Osias Memorial Lodge No. 253, this ceremony of cornerstone laying goes beyond the building of their physical Masonic temple.

As stated above, this Malaybalay Masonic Temple will be erected on the property owned by Mt. Musuan Lodge No. 155. The said land was donated to the first Masonic Lodge in the province of Bukidnon which is Mt. Musuan Lodge. Sometime in 1983, Don Camilo Osias Memorial Lodge No. 253 was created by some members of Mt. Musuan Lodge who got into a discord

with the rest of the members. But with the passage of time and the influence of the tenets taught us in Masonry, the members of both Lodges agreed to form a Masonic Temple Association to manage its affairs and maintenance, and registered the same with the SEC. It was their intention then to transfer the properties owned by Mt. Musuan Lodge No. 155 to the Association so as to jointly own the land and the building constructed thereon used as temple by both lodges. The SEC however revoked the juridical personality of the Association for failure to function as one before the properties were transferred to the Association, hence, ownership of the properties remained with Mt. Musuan Lodge No. 155.

This scenario brought problems to both Lodges, considering that it would be unfair for Mt. Musuan Lodge No. 155 to solely own the temple and for Don Camilo Osias Lodge No. 253 to shoulder the maintenance. A lease contract would not resolve the issue, for it would reduce Don Camilo Osias Memorial Lodge No. 253 to an inferior entity. Moreover, harmony could be disrupted due to common problems arising from landlord and tenant relationship. Buying a new land and constructing a new temple for Don Camilo Osias Memorial Lodge No. 253 is not only impractical but may perhaps impute a negative connotation in the eyes of non-Masons. The two temples might even be construed as a symbol of disunity among Masons of Malaybalay City.

To date, both Mt. Musuan Lodge and Don Camilo Osias Memorial Lodge are in the process of creating Malaybalay Masonic Temple Association and of transferring the subject properties to the Association. In this way, all possible new Masonic lodges

that would sprout within Malaybalay City can and may use this new temple.

The cornerstone laying ceremony for this new temple is also a reminder to all of us Masons to make sure that the tenets of Freemasonry are the ones that we deposited within a cavity in the stone placed at the northeast corner of our spiritual building; so that, if the fury of the elements, the violence of man, or the slow but certain ravages of time should lay bare its foundations, an enduring record may be found by succeeding generations, to bear testimony to the untiring, unending industry of Free and Accepted Masons. With these, our mission in life will not be shattered by the vicissitudes of hate, envy, and greed.

The ceremony ended in accordance

with our old and ancient practice. Right after the affair, MWGM Aniag once again emphasized the theme of his leadership which is "Harmony, the strength and beauty of Masonry". To us, that theme was deeply carved in our hearts by bringing the Grand Lodge to the doorstep of Bukidnon, Mindanao and through the ceremony of cornerstone laying for our new temple.

MW Pacifico B. Aniag and the rest of Grand Lodge Officers, accompanying brethren, and guests, left Malaybalay City at 2:30 p.m. on August 18, 2008 for Cagayan De Oro City to continue the Mindanao Caravan, but not without first presenting a token, hand-made by Sister Alice, to the District officers and to the Worshipful Masters of Mt. Musuan Lodge No. 155 and Don Camilo Osias Memorial Lodge No. 253.

by VW Arnold O. Ancog, DDCM

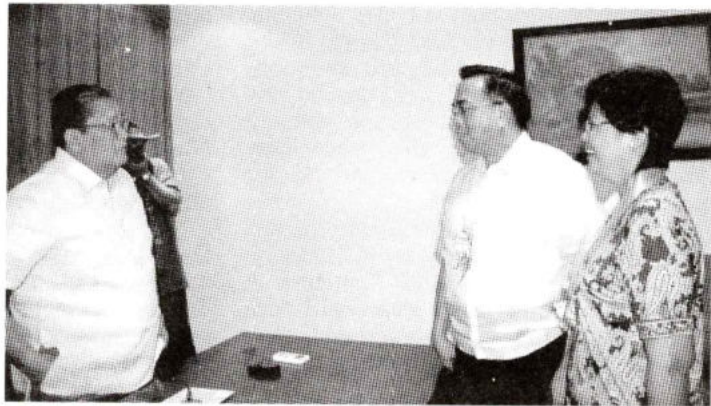
MINDANAO CARAVAN OF MW PACIFICO B. ANIAG VISITED MD RXI-B

The brethren of Masonic District RXI-B had occasion to meet the Most Worshipful Pacifico B. Aniag, Grand Master of Masons under the jurisdiction of the Philippines, during his official visitation in a Mindanao Caravan, at noon of August 20, 2008. In a brief ceremony, this writer welcomed the Grand Master, who was accompanied by his lovely wife, Sister Alice, and 22 other brethren from the Grand Lodge, neighboring Masonic districts and lodges in Mindanao.

The caravan started in August 15 at Cotabato City, moved toward northeast and northern Mindanao, and finally to Southern Mindanao.

When the Mindanao caravan arrived in the area of Masonic District RXI-B, they were met by a group of brethren led by the DDCM, with VW Francisco G. Rivero PDDGM, VW

Senen P. Abing, Jr. PDGL, VW Precioso M. Abrasaldo PDGL, and WB Arnold O. Lao, Worshipful Master of Tagum 204, at Monkayo, Compostela Valley Province, some 70 kilometers away, and were led toward Tagum City. At Barangay Madgum, 8 kilometers to Tagum City, more brethren of the district greeted the caravan led by VW Julius S. Valdez, District Grand Lecturer, with Worshipful Masters Feliciano A. Yamas, Jr. of Shangri-la Lodge No. 196,



Ramon A. Sarenas of Panabo-Dalisay Lodge No. 237, Paterno S. Limbing of Don Salvador P. Lopez Memorial Lodge No. 276, and some elderly brethren, to name a few: VW Melchor S. Perdido PDDGM, VW Salvador G. Doce PDGL and VW Benjamin C. Rodriguez, Sr. PDGL, who traveled early from Mati City which is 120 kilometers from Tagum City. They were all there to meet the Grand Master, then all joined the caravan and the motorcade toward the City Hall of Tagum.

The Worshipful Master of Mati Aurora Lodge No. 190, WB Marcos J Villanueva, Head of the Traffic Division of Tagum City, made possible the motorcade, and with his motorcycle-riding siren-sounding men, traffic was made easy for the Grand Master going to the City Hall where he made a courtesy call on the City Mayor, the Honorable Rey Chiong Uy. The City Mayor eagerly awaited the arrival of the Grand Master as early as 11:00 am, with WB Don F. Donalvo PM, WB Gilbert S. Mabulao PM, and a number of brethren,



all heartily welcomed the visiting Grand Master in Tagum City. During their friendly conversation and pleasantries, it came up that key positions in the City of Tagum are occupied by members of the Fraternity. After exchange gifts and simple tokens of remembrance, the Grand Master and the group in a motorcade proceeded to the Provincial Capitol to meet the Honorable Governor of the Province of Davao del Norte, and for the fellowship lunch.

Members of the Order of the Amaranth led by the Grand Royal Matron, who incidentally was on her official visitation to the local Chapter, the officers and members of the International Order of the DeMolay, Dalisay Chapter, and other brethren of the District, happily welcomed the Grand Master at the Capitol, and all proceeded to the Bulwagan Ng Lalawigan

where the Honorable Governor Rodulfo P. Del Rosario of the Province of Davao Del Norte, together with Vice Governor WB Victorio R. Suaybaguio PM, and VW Antonio M. Lagunsad PDDGM, a member of the Sangguniang Panlalawigan, were already awaiting the arrival of the visiting Grand Master.

In his welcome remarks, the Honorable Governor was very pleased and happy of the visit of the Grand Master to the Davao Region, and being a kababayan having his roots in the province of Bulacan, their meeting was so casual and friendly that it even touched on their experiences in the political arena. Governor Del Rosario expressed his admiration for the Grand Master's commitment and courage in visiting the various Masonic District and Lodges in the Island of Mindanao, despite the very critical period, and further declared his respect and admiration for the Masonic Fraternity which accordingly can harmoniously gather together people irrespective of political colors and religious

beliefs. Bro Cromwell S. Bonghanoy of Tagum Lodge 204 served as Master of Ceremonies. Lunch fellowship was tendered and shared at the Governor's Palace immediately after the program.

In his message, the Grand Master has high hopes that Philippine Masonry can eventually recapture its old glory, and accordingly this could be done by reaffirming our Masonic fidelity and renewing our commitments to Masonic activities with dignity and honor. He put emphasis on the theme for this Masonic year - Harmony, the strength and beauty of Freemasonry. The Grand Master was very satisfied and thankful of the presence of brethren in all the places and lodges he visited and had stopped over, narrating some of the good, challenging and critical experiences the group had while on travel.

It could be noted that the routes and places they passed by and had visited were almost the same places disturbed or attacked by rebels in the days following.

The Grand Master gave special thanks to the Honorable Governor and brethren of the District for patiently waiting and affording a warm welcome to him and his party, for their prayers of protection for safe travel, and for their preparation for the occasion, thereby making the visit a memorable one. Most Worshipful Aniaga confessed that the Province of Davao del Norte and the City of Tagum are among the beautiful places he had seen and visited in the course of the Mindanao Caravan. He was glad to have visited the place. The welcome program ended with the giving of souvenir items by the DDGM and the Worshipful Master of Tagum Lodge No. 204 to the Grand Master, a CD depicting the beautiful and tourist spots of Tagum City, including the calendar of activities of the City during the year.

Making the very brief stay of the Grand Master in Masonic District RXI-B more meaningful and memorable was his visit to elderly and ailing brother, WB Emeterio B. Madulara, a Past Master of Shangri-la Lodge No. 196. Brother Madulara was in complete masonic attire, in barong tagalog and black pants, as if he was going to attend a lodge stated meeting, when the Grand Master arrived at his

residence. Seated and stationed near the main door, he received and welcomed the Grand Master and his party with tears in his eyes. Though he could hardly utter words to express his feelings and can not stand and walk without assistance after he suffered stroke three years ago, gleaned from Brother Madulara's facial reaction were the joy and contentment of seeing in person the Grand Master, his wife, and some members of the fraternal family.

After taking pictures with the whole family of WB Madulara, gifts and simple souvenir tokens were heartily handed. After the visit, the Grand Master and party left for the Tagum Masonic Center. He huddled with the brethren for a few minutes at the temple, had some pictures taken, handed souvenir items to the District and Lodge officers, then left for Panabo City.

The Grand Master and his party stopped at Panabo-Dalisay Lodge No. 237 in Panabo City to meet the brethren and members of the Lodge. Assessing that the building that houses the Lodge is in need of immediate repair, he promised to augment the financial assistance on the planned repair and renovation of the building.

MW Pacifico B. Aniaga left Panabo City at 3:30 pm, with memorable experiences and encouragements to the brethren of Masonic District RXI-B, and parted harmoniously with the Mindanao Caravan to Davao City.

by VW Vincent C. Soledad, DDGM

THE GRAND MASTER'S VISIT TO MD RX-C

As THE GRAND MASTER'S DEPUTY for Masonic District RX-C, I announced to the brethren of the Lodges in my district the preparations for, as well as the activities during, the visit of MW Pacifico B. Aniaga and his party to our District.

On August 16, 2008, VW Gerald Teodorico B. Olegario, II and VW Sandy D. Ablaña, both District Grand Lecturers, accompanied me to Salug Valley Lodge in Molave, Zamboanga Del Sur, where we briefed MW Aniaga on the activities lined up for his visit to our district, as well as the

problems we were then encountering.

From Molave the Grand Master and his caravan journeyed to Tangub City, where Don Lorenzo Tan Memorial Lodge No. 265 is located. Some 25 brethren, led by VW Clint Cha, welcomed us with much enthusiasm. Inside the Lodge we had picture taking with our Grand Master.

Then the Grand Master's convoy proceeded to Ozamis City and visited the eldest Mason in the district, Bro. Bu Hong Chiong, 97 years old, in his residence. The visited was, certainly, overjoyed to meet his



incumbent Grand Master in person and to receive from him a token.

We next accompanied the Grand Master to Jimenez in Misamis Occidental in order for him to visit Palilan Lodge No. 239. Some 18 brethren, led by WM Joel J. Agraviador, greeted us with much jubilation. MW Aniaga being the first Grand Master to set foot in the new temple of their Lodge since its constitution 26 years ago. WM Agraviador informed us that their Lodge was first housed in an old school building, and he assured the Grand Master that his historic visit to their Lodge had solidified their support to the Grand Lodge of the Philippines.

From Jimenez, the Grand Master and his convoy headed back to Ozamis City. Our arrival there was greeted with much delight by some 43 members of both Malindang Lodge No. 130 and Timoteo S. Uy Memorial Lodge No. 349, led by WMs Ricardo Pintacasi and Edgar Villanueva. The Grand Master presented these two Worshipful Masters with tokens of remembrance, thereby making his visit memorable and meaningful.

MW Aniaga's visit to our District was highlighted by a Fellowship dinner at the Bethany Resort and Hotel. This was attended by about 102 brethren from the different Lodges and 12 sisters from the Order of the Eastern Star.

In his message, MW Aniaga stressed the importance of harmony in the Fraternity. Aware of the existence of disharmony among some brethren in the District, he specified ways of attaining harmony therein.

In appreciation of his memorable visit to our District, I presented MW Aniaga with a replica of the Cotta Shrine, a landmark in the City of Ozamis.

Early in the morning of August 17, VWs Olegario and Abilaña, DGLs, and I escorted MW Aniaga and his party to Glicerio Lim Memorial Lodge No. 222 in Baroy, Lanao Del Norte. The Grand Master later on presented me and the DGLs with tokens of remembrance.

We will forever cherish the memory of MW Aniaga and party's historic visitation of our District, RX-C.



by VW Franklin A. Calo, PDDGM
JGL for Northern & Western Mindanao

AN ACCOUNT OF THE MD RXIII-A LEG OF THE GRAND MASTER'S MINDANAO CARAVAN

Preparations

Upon our return from the Ancom in Bacolod City last April, VW Florencio D. Agot, the Grand Master's Deputy for Masonic District RXIII-A, informed us of MW Pacifico B. Ania's Mindanao Caravan. He reechoed this information to the different Lodges during the installation of Grand Lodge Inspectors (GLIs) in the months of May and June.

In early July, MW Ania through his Chief of Staff, VW Joby Magbanua, instructed VW Agot and me via text message that we give him our assessment of the peace and order situation in our District. We assured him, in turn, that his route to Davao City would be safe since the no-letup operations of both the AFP and the PNP had neutralized the NPA elements in the area. Then in mid-July, we were informed that the Grand Master's Mindanao Caravan would jump off from Manila to Cotabato City on August 15, 2008, and that the Caravan would arrive at Butuan City on August 19, 2008, in the evening of which the Grand Master and party would have a fellowship with the brethren of our District and the sojourners therein.

VW Agot jumped to prompt action. He designated Agusan Valley No. 160, headed by WM Antonio D. Dacumos, as lead Lodge, to be assisted by Butuan Lodge No. 299. He also assigned Bro. Alfredo G. Davalos as District Secretary and Coordinator, as well as appointed the following as committee chairpersons:

VW Linbert U. Tan, Finance; Bro. Benigno J. Dagani, Jr., Ways & Means; WB Antonio D. Dacumos, Food; Bro. Benigno J. Dagani, Jr. & Sister Suzette Y. Calo, Accommodation; VW Ronald T. Ang & WB Eufroceles D. Udarbe, Program;

Bro. Alfredo G. Davalos, Hall Preparation; Bro. Edgardo T. Padilla & Bro. Angelus A. Angulo, Elderly; Bro. Raul A. Rosales & Bro. Barlou M. Aparte, Tree Planting; Bro. Dax Vintula & Senior DeMolay Benjie T. Lasam, Secretariat.

On August 14, we received from VW Joby Magbanua an updated schedule of the Grand Master's Mindanao Caravan. Two days later, VW Agot called the brethren to a caucus at Bro. Jeremiah B. Calo's Weegols Garden after the stated meeting of Agusan-Surigao Bodies, A&ASR.

In the evening of August 18, we had another caucus.

D' Day (August 19, 2008)

VW Agot, WM Dacumos and I left for the rendezvous point, Nita's Place in Talisayan, Misamis Oriental, at about 10:00 a.m. and arrived there at 12:30 p.m. well ahead of the Grand Master and party, who were still in the vicinity of Sugbongcogon, some 20 minutes away.

At about 1:00 p.m., MW Ania and his wife, Sister Alice, together with RW Peter Lim Lo Suy (DGM), VW Jaime Barnadas (DDGM for MD RX-B), and other leaders of Misamis Oriental, arrived at the rendezvous point.

The Mayor of the Municipality of Talisayan, Hon. Rommel Maslog, an alumnus of Loyalty Chapter, Order of DeMolay, like MW Ania, hosted a sumptuous lunch



consisting of seafoods and lechon baboy and baka.

At about 2:15 p.m., our car led the convoy from Talisayan to Gingoog City. When we reached the temple of Apo Kahoy Lodge No. 166, the Grand Master and his caravan were treated to coffee and snacks. Picture taking and signing of the Tyler's Book ensued.

As a conclusion of the Grand Master's visitation of MDs RX-A, RX-B, RX-E and RX-F, VW Jaime Bernadas turned over the Caravan to the care of VW Florencio Agot, the Grand Master's Deputy for our District, RXIII-A.

At 2:45 p.m. we left Gingoog City for the City of Butuan, with VW Agot's car at the head of the 7-car convoy.

On our way to Butuan City, I informed Sis Suzette, my beloved wife, to relay the message to the Sisters that Sister Alice Aniang was with the Caravan.

When the Caravan reached the Agusan Valley Masonic Center in Butuan City at about 4:15 p.m., the Sisters were already there, together with some 50 brethren. They gave the Grand Master and party a rousing welcome.

After the usual exchange of pleasantries, MW Aniang and party were treated to merienda consisting of coffee, bread, and pansit palabok. Again, picture taking and signing of the Tyler's Book ensued. Then the Grand Master and party were ushered into the Lodge hall.

We were gladdened by the fact that the Grand Standard Bearer, VW Reynaldo M. Dionisio, pointed out that the Tessellated Border surrounding the Mosaic Pavement was done right "while many Lodges in our grand jurisdiction had not done it right."

WM Dacumos informed VW Dionisio that the Entered Apprentices assigned to make a research on the laying of the tiles and the Tessellated Border had done their assigned task quite well.

In commemoration of the Grand Master's visit, the brethren of the lead Lodge organized a ceremonial tree planting activity on the premises of their temple. MW Pacifico Aniang planted the Grand Master's Tree; VW Florencio Agot, the DDGM's Tree;

VW Linbert Tan, VW Alipio Olita and VW Walderico Bonifacio, the DGL's Tree; VW Rodel Riezl Reyes and this writer, the JGL's Tree; WB Antonio Dacumos, the Worshipful Master's Tree; and VW & III. Benny Ty, 33°, together with this writer, the Scottish Rite Supreme Council's Tree.

Bro. Barlou M. Aparte informed the Grand Master and other visiting brethren that (1) the Lodge's ongoing tree-planting project started on September 15, 2007, when the brethren and sisters participated in the launching by the DENR CENRO of Cabadbaran of the PGMA's Green Philippines Program-Trees for Life: 20 Million Seedlings for Planting; (2) the brethren participated in the Mangrove Enhancement activity in Barangay La Union, Cabadbaran, Agusan Del Norte; (3) WI Arden Rasonabe, then Worshipful Master of Agusan Valley Lodge No. 160, signed a Pledge of Commitment; (4) this writer signed a similar pledge for

and in behalf of the Scottish Rite; and (5) this year, the brethren would be planting trees in the mined-over areas of SRMI in Tubay, Agusan del Norte.

Next the Grand Master and party were guided through the streets of Butuan City leading to the Almont City Hotel, which is managed by Sister Suzette, this writer's beloved wife and a Past Worthy Matron of the Balanghai Chapter No. 28, Order of the Eastern Star, located in Butuan City.

The Grand Master's Night was held at the Barangay Hall of Barangay Imadejas, Butuan City.

Upon his arrival at the hall, MW Aniang was introduced to the brethren. Among these was WB James E. Moore, a Past Master of Gippsland Lares Lodge No. 715 under the jurisdiction of the MW Grand Lodge of Victoria, Australia, who would like to affiliate with Agusan Valley Lodge No. 160.

Emceed by VW Ronald T. Ang, PDDGM, and WB Eufroceles D. Udarbe, PM, the program for the night started with an invocation, followed by the singing of the Pambansang Awit. This was ethnically done by the Cultural Dance Group of the Northern Mindanao State Institute of Technology. The invocation was done the way the Manobos



invoke the blessings of their Deity, complete with the ritual of collecting tithes; the singing of the Pambansang Awit was done with the accompaniment of gongs, nose and mouth flutes.

VW Florencio Agot delivered his welcome remarks, after which dinner was served.

At this point, Bro Rudolfo M. Mordeno of Agusan Valley Lodge No. 160 arrived. He suffered a stroke some five years ago; as a consequence thereof, the left side of his body was paralyzed. To be able to attend the Grand Master's Night, he had to be assisted by Bros. Angelus A. Angulo and Edgardo T. Padilla. Upon seeing him, MW Aniang invited him to sit at the presidential table.

The cultural dance group of the NORMISIST presented another ethnic dance, which formed part of a ritual of the Higa-onon Tribe.

Introduced by WB Antonio D. Dacumos, MW Aniang opened his inspirational talk by announcing that he really loved having fellowship with the brethren of District RXIII-A and their families.

"In the fellowship I experienced during my last two visits to Butuan," he revealed, "I noticed that fellowships in this district are marked by the heavy involvement of members of the brethren's families. The involvement of the family in Lodge activities makes the Lodge active and dynamic..."

Continued the Grand Master: *"Before embarking on my Mindanao Caravan, I received not a few warnings, relayed to me personally or through text messages, not to proceed with the Caravan due to the volatile situation in the ARMM area, particularly in North Cotabato, and the restiveness of the NPA in Northern Mindanao. But we Masons have been taught, at least in part, to put our trust and hope in God, and not to fear what man can do unto us..."*

MW Aniang then told the assembly that the main purposes of the Mindano Caravan were to visit the brethren and their Masonic temples, as well as to bring sunshine to elderly and ailing members of the Craft.

WI Arthur Ong Oh thanked the Grand Master for having found time to visit

the different temples of the brethren in Mindanao, to fellowship with the brethren and their families, and to bring sunshine to the senior members of the Craft who could no longer attend Masonic functions due to advanced age. Then he requested the brethren to present whatever tokens they would like to give to the Grand Master.

DGLs Alipio Olita, Walderico Bonifacio and Linbert Tan presented the DGLs' token, with the request that the Grand Master should not open the box until his arrival at his office in the Grand Lodge.

This writer presented The Golden Tara for and in behalf of the officers and members of lead Lodge Agusan Valley No. 160. Here is my explanation of the significance of the Golden Tara.

"Before the Spaniards colonized us, there was no Philippines, but there was Butuan. Butuan at that time was an important trading port during the Sri Vijayan Empire (700-1377 A.D.) in Palembang, Sumatra, the Kingdom of Champa (700-900 A.D) in the central coast of Vietnam, and the Sung Dynasty (960-1279 A.D) in Imperial China.

"The extensive trading network in insular Southeast Asia ultimately had to satisfy the vast requirements of the great empire of China, whose markets and trading web extended all the way to Central Asia and Europe through the famous Silk Road. The Southeast Asia emporia, like the Malacca, served as funnels for goods coming from Arabia, Persia and India towards the biggest market of all, which was China.

"Aside from the economic impact brought about by the China Trade, Butuan was also influenced at a much deeper cultural level by the Indian civilization. Indian influence was not direct, but was mediated by the Hinduized civilization of the Sri Vijayan Empire and the Madjapahit Empire in Java (1292-1487 A.D.). It is believed that both the Sri Vijayan and Madjapahit Empires were the major carriers of Indic influence in the Philippine archipelago.



"Two objects have become popular icons of Butuan's pre-history, namely, the Balanghais boat and the Golden Tara, a most fascinating object which serves as a material evidence of Hindic influence. Otherwise known as the Golden Tara of Agusan, it is now displayed in the Field Museum of Cultural History in Chicago. It was found in 1917 by a Manobo woman along the bank of Wawa River, not far from its confluence with the mighty Agusan River in Esperanza, Agusan del Sur. This golden image was cast in 21-karat gold and weighs nearly four pounds and measures about eight inches."

For and in behalf of the brethren of Timberland Lodge No. 219, WM Lyndon Romero gave MW Aniag a Square and Compasses emblem carved in narra wood. Likewise, for and in behalf of the brethren of Butuan Lodge No. 299, WM Augustus L. Calo gave the Grand Master a lei with the Square & Compasses logo.

Instead of giving the Grand Master a token, the brethren of Kamayo Lodge No. 255 rendered a modified version of "What a Wonderful World." Done by VW Froilan C. Montero, the modified version reads as follows:

WHAT A WONDERFUL MASONIC WORLD

I SEE TREES OF GREEN, RED ROSES TOO;
I WATCH THEM BLOOM, FOR ME AND YOU;
AND I SAID TO MYSELF,
WHAT A WONDERFUL WORLD.

I SEE SKIES OF BLUE, CLOUDS OF WHITE;
BRIGHT BLESSED DAYS, DARK SACRED NIGHTS;
AND I THINK TO MYSELF,
WHAT A WONDERFUL WORLD.

-CHORUS-

THE COLORS OF THE RAINBOW,
SO PRETTY IN THE SKY;
ARE ALSO ON THE FACES OF MASONS COMING BY;
I SEE BRETHREN SHAKING HANDS;
SAYING HOW DO YOU DO;
THEY'RE REALLY SAYING "WHENCE CAME YOU"

I HEAR BRETHREN SING, I JOIN THEM TOO;
WE SHARE MUCH MORE THAN I'LL EVER KNOW
AND I THINK TO MYSELF,
WHAT A WONDERFUL WORLD.

-REPEAT CHORUS-

I HEAR BRETHREN SING, I JOIN THEM TOO;
WE SHARE MUCH MORE THAN I'LL EVER KNOW

AND I THINK TO MYSELF,
WHAT A WONDERFUL WORLD;
YES WONDERFUL, MASONIC WORLD.

The brethren of Kamayo Lodge No. 255 distributed copies of the song and requested the whole assembly to sing the song with them.

Not to be outdone, led by Sister Diane Agot, the charming wife of our DDGM, the Sisters presented a lei to Sister Alice Aniag.

This writer, at this juncture, led the brethren in giving a toast to the Grand Master. I said, "Most Worshipful Sir, in your Mindanao Caravan, you have personally experienced the turmoil going on in Mindanao, which is, to my mind, caused by Disharmony. Let then your theme, 'Harmony, the Strength and Beauty of Masonry,' be inculcated in the hearts and minds of Masons not only in Mindanao but also everywhere else in the world as tool for promoting peace. MABUHAY!"

The toast was followed by more singing on the part of the brethren and sisters, and the Grand Master himself delighted the assembly of around 90 members of the Masonic family by rendering several songs.

On to Timberland Lodge No. 219 in San Francisco, Agusan del Sur

At about 7:30 a.m., August 20, VW Florencio Agot, VW Linbert Tan, Bro. Benigno Dagani and this writer accompanied the Grand Master and party to San Francisco, Agusan del Sur.

The convoy of seven vehicles tarried for a while at the new Diosdado Macapagal Bridge for some picture taking.

At about 9:30 a.m. we reached San Francisco. We stopped over a roadside eatery named MacMac to have a taste of two delicacies of the place: bulalo and tinolang manok: From there we proceeded to the temple of Timberland Lodge No. 219. The welcomers included VW Enrico S. Rojas (PDGL), WB Paulian Redondo (PM), and three DeMolays.

After some picture taking, we bade the Grand Master and party Godspeed.

The Grand Master's Caravan composed of five cars traveled at a southerly direction towards Tagum, Province of Compostela Valley, with VW Rodel Riezl Reyes, JGL, in the lead vehicle. And we traveled at a northerly direction towards Butuan City.

MW ANIAG AND PARTY'S SUCCESSFUL VISITATION OF OUR LODGE AMIDST VOLATILE PEACE AND ORDER CONDITIONS

"Fear not what man can do unto you."

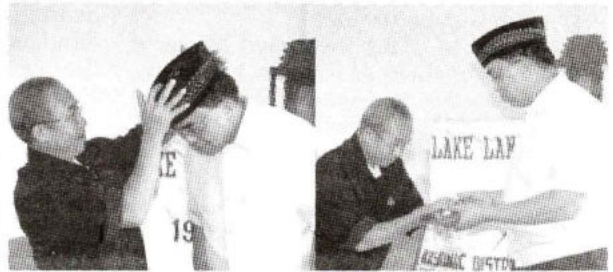
These familiar words must have been remembered by MW Pacifico B. Aniag, Grand Master of Masons in the jurisdiction of the Philippines, when, through VW Philip Steven So, DDGM for MD RX-D & ARMM (Lanao), I advised him to stay put at Glicerio S. Lim Memorial Lodge No. 222 in Baroy, Lanao del Norte, until security clearance shall have been obtained from the military.

On the eve of MW Aniag and party's arrival at Marawi City, rumors were circulating around that the mujahideen (freedom fighters) were seen surreptitiously marching toward the coastal towns of Lanao del Norte. On the day following, elements of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) had a firefight against armed men along the national highway in Barangay Dalama, Municipality of Mulondo, Lanao del Sur, some 15-20 minutes ride from Marawi City. Immediately after hearing this news, I made consultations with the PNP Provincial Director of Lanao del Sur, Bro. Paniar U. Adap, who expressed fear that the skirmishes in Mulondo might trigger disturbances at nearby areas in Lanao del Norte. Then WB/Lt. Col. Royme Tamparong of the 103rd Brigade, Phil. Army, called me up, informing me that the national highway from Baroy, Lanao del Norte, to Marawi City was "clear".

I met the caravan at the Pantar Bridge (Lanao Sur-Lanao Norte boundary) and, with PNP escorts, led the convoy to the MSU Campus in Marawi City. The brethren of my Lodge, Lake Lanao No. 227, were waiting at the Lastimosa Hall, Ranao Masonic Center, where a short program was subsequently held. In my welcome remarks, I jokingly said, "Before your arrival, Most Worshipful Grand Master, more than 21 gun salute had already been fired. The helicopters hovering above are part of the

security arrangements for you and your party, and there is no reason for you to fear because the PNP Provincial Director, Bro. Paniar Adap, is a member of our Lodge; the Commanding Officer of the 103rd Brigade, Col. Rey Ardo, is a Worshipful Brother; and the Commander of the Task Force Tabak, General Atendido, is also a worthy Brother."

Assisted by VW Musa C. Saruang, PDGL,



and Bro. Sanny P. Alonto, I, as Worshipful Master, presented a token consisting of two items to MW Aniag. VW Saruang explained the significance and symbolism of the two articles in the following manner:

"First, the GURA, a very special headgear worn by Muslim leaders of ancient times. It is of Malay origin brought down by generations and believed to have originated from Johor, the southernmost State of Peninsula Malaysia. It reached the southern shores of the great country through Sharief Kabungsuwan and his hosts. Sharief Kabungsuwan was the progenitor of the Bangsamoro and the early teacher or propagator of Islam in the Philippines. Since his time, the Muslim great leaders of yesteryears, i.e., the Sultans of Sulu, Maguindanao and Lanao, until the present time, used the Gura as an emblem of Wisdom, Respect, Leadership and Authority.

"By the same token, we, the brethren of this valley, deemed it appropriate to present this Gura to you, Most Worshipful Brother, as a manifestation of our great respect for your wisdom, leadership and authority as the Grand

Master of all Masons in the jurisdiction of the Philippines.

"Second, the GONONG, sometimes called Kris, Gorok or Danganan, and a smaller representation of the famous Kampilan. Like the Gura, it is of Malay origin. To us Muslims, the Gonong is a symbol of Power, Temperance, Justice and Harmony. Historically, the Gonong was wielded by the Muslim leaders of yore (Sultans) in the exercise of their powers and prerogatives to correct their rude and unyielding subjects with the highest degree of temperance to attain peace, sustain justice and maintain harmony among the inhabitants of the Sultanate.

"With all its significance and symbolism, we present to you, Most Worshipful Brother, this important instrument as our humble fraternal way of recognizing, without any reservation, the vast powers of your Most Worshipful Office, and as a re-affirmation of our obedience to the tenets, teachings, virtues and the general rules of our Ancient and Honorable Fraternity."

After a brief moment of silence, MW Pacifico B. Aniag explained that he became speechless because he was so overwhelmed not only by the ceremonial presentation of the token but also by the symbolism conveyed by the Gura and the Gonong.

"I am greatly honored to be the recipient of these presents from the brethren of Lake Lanao

Lodge No. 227. I assure you, dear brethren, that I will always remember the symbolic meaning of these items."

After presenting a gift to me, as Master of the host Lodge, MW Pacifico B. Aniag briefly explained the objectives of the Caravan and then outlined the program thrusts of his administration.

We brethren of Lake Lanao Lodge No. 227, together with WB/Col. Rey Ardo, Commanding Officer of the 103rd Brigade, Phil. Army, tendered a Pagana Meranao (Royal Banquet) in honor of the Grand Master and his party at the Signal Hill in Kampo Ranao.

After thanking us, MW Aniag and his party left for Iligan City at around 2:00 p.m.

While the Grand Master was having evening fellowship with the brethren at the Ubaldo D. Laya Masonic Center in Iligan City, there was power outage that lasted about half an hour, and two bombs exploded one after the other at a commercial building not too far from where the Grand Master and his party stayed.

I therefore conclude that wherever the Grand Master went in Lanao, he was received with gun (and bomb) salutes.

Most Worshipful Brother Pacifico Aniag, your exit through the east gate on the morning of August 18, 2008 was timely because two of the towns in Lanao del Norte where you passed by en route to Marawi on August 17, 2008 were under siege by ruffians!

**by VW CARLO A. HILARIO
DDGM, MD XI-A**

HOW WE HOSTED MW ANIAG AND HIS CARAVAN

AFTER coming from MD XI-B, MW Pacifico B. Aniag and his party proceeded to Roadway Inn located at J.P Laurel Ave., Bajada, Davao City, to grab some much-needed rest. There to welcome them was Mrs. Lina Reyes, the mother of VW Rodel Riezl S. Reyes, Junior Grand Lecturer for Southern Mindanao.

The Grand Master and party were later on offered free massage at Touch and Heal Spa, courtesy of Bro. Hector Emberga, the Junior Warden of Kutang Bato Lodge No. 110 and the Dakilang Driver of the Grand Master (ddgm), and Sis. Dagney. Almost everyone availed of the offer.

Meanwhile, at about 5:30 p.m., Sarangami

Lodge No. 50, the eldest in MD XI-A, opened in due and ancient form in behalf of the whole Masonic District for the purpose of jointly welcoming and receiving the Grand Master and party. Then recess was called.

When the Grand Master and party finally arrived, together with our District Grand Lecturers and Grand Lodge Inspectors, I was received into the Lodge in due and public form. WM Glenn Polinar having turned over the gavel to me, I proceeded to receive MW Aniag and his entourage. MW Aniag having returned the symbol of authority to me, I introduced the brethren of the different Lodges in the District, headed by the following:

WM Glenn Polinar, host Lodge Sarangani No. 50; WM Felicisimo Ramos, Sr., Davao Lodge No. 149; WM Jonlanie Malones, Datu Bago Lodge No. 197; WM Anselmo Dy, Toril Lodge No. 208, WM Jonathan Chua, Beacon Lodge No. 213; and JW Jose Mercado, Jr., Podomo Lodge No. 294. (Both the Master and the Senior Warden of this Lodge were out of town due to work commitments.)

Since the theme for the evening was "Masonry and the Appendant Bodies," I next presented the following:

III. Paul Arcangel, Sovereign Grand Inspector General (SGIG) of Davao Bodies, Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite (A&ASR) of Freemasonry;

Sir Knight Manuel Garcia, Regional Deputy of the Grand Commander, York Rite Freemasonry;

Sister Agnes Jariño, Worthy Matron of Teodora Alonzo Chapter No. 4, Order of the Eastern Star;

Sister Eva Panopio, Royal Matron of Shangrila Court No. 9, Order of the Amaranth;

Noble Reynaldo Reyes, President of the Mindanao Shrine Club;

Jobette Adlaon, Honored Queen of Bethel No. 6, Order of Jon's Daughters International; and

Ace Guerra, Master Councilor of the Feliciano Iñigo Chapter, International Order of Demolay.

MW Aniag, in turn, introduced his wife, Sister Alice, and the members of his party. He then recounted their experiences with the brethren of the different Lodges and Districts they had visited.

The Grand Master having delivered his wonderful, touching message, the Worshipful Masters of the different Lodges in the District, as well as the presiding officers of the different appendant bodies, allied orders and side organizations, presented him with tokens.

VW Joby Magbanua, Chief of Staff of the Grand Master, at this juncture, told me that he would have a hard time packing all those tokens for the trip back to Manila.

We all then proceeded to the Davao Masonic Center Social Hall to partake of the meal prepared by the District. We had lechon baka, lechon baboy, and other viands, plus enough beer and brandy. Since VW Vic Lumo, DGL, and I had been with the Caravan, we left the preparations in the hands of a veteran of organizing conventions and other special events, namely, VW Jun Alvarez, DGL. The preparations

were perfect, thanks to all the Lodges, which contributed their respective shares for the success of the fellowship.

As we shared fellowship with one another, we kidded around, pointing out that this was the 11th meal in which we had lechon baboy.

The DeMolays then serenaded their fellow DeMolay, MW Pacifico Aniag, and his wife, Sister Alice. The Eastern Stars presented an entertaining dance number; the DeMolays and Jobies next regaled everybody with another dance number.

Sister Alice, at this point, was having her first taste of durian.

"What do you think of the durian?" I asked her.

She smilingly told me, "I will tell you about it later."

But she never did. So, the next time I see her, I will ask her to tell me what she thinks of the durian.

The following day, August 21, the Grand Master and party visited the Davao Masonic Cemetery, where he paid tribute to the Founding Fathers of our Masonic District. He also visited two elderly Masons, WB Bayani Estanislao and VW Magno Cruz, in their respective residences.

By 10:00 a.m., we traveled 65 kilometers to Digos City, Davao del Sur, where Digos Masonic Lodge No. 198 is located. We were met at the entrance to the City by the brethren, headed by Bro. Eduardo Megriño, the Worshipful Master of Digos Masonic Lodge No. 198. We then proceeded straight to the Provincial Capitol to pay Bro. Douglas Cagas, the Governor of the



Province of Davao del Sur, a courtesy call.

From the Provincial Capitol we motored to the Digos Masonic Temple, where we were greeted by more brethren. There

we had another sumptuous meal consisting of kambing (kilawin, papaitan, kaldereta and sinampalukan), kinilaw na bangus, and lechon baboy (again!).

MW Aniag joked about our cholesterol levels. VW Benny Ty replied, however, that it was necessary for us to eat because we had to compare the taste of lechon baboy from city to city. Then Gov. Cagas grabbed the microphone and started singing. Other brethren followed suit. I was excused from singing because when my turn to sing came, MW Aniag went up to sing. Masonic protocol dictates that after the Grand Master has sung, no other Mason may sing. Whew, what a big relief for me! [you can run but you can't hide - WEC]

We were still having fun, but our tight schedule had to be followed. So, we visited WB Ruben Mejorada, the eldest and only living charter member of Digos Masonic Lodge No.



198, at his residence. Thence we journeyed toward General Santos City for the MD XII-B leg of the Mindanao Caravan.

I want to end this report with two notes. First, my warm-hearted thanks to all the brethren, sisters, Demolays and Jobies who helped and contributed in welcoming MW Aniag and Sister Alice, as well as making their stay a memorable one; specially to VW Riezl Reyes, JGL, for bringing and driving his Isuzu Alterra in the more than 1,500 kilometers journey—and, of course, for letting me ride in it—as well as to VW Vic Lumo, DGL, for joining us starting from Bukidnon. My thanks, too, to WB Boy Ner for accompanying us in the scary part of the trip, as well as to WB Totoy Mabagos for bringing RW Abergas to Bukidnon to join the Caravan.

Secondly, if you, RW Peter U. Lim Lo Suy, have plans of having a Luzon Caravan during your year in the Grand Orient, please inform us. SAMA KAMI!!!

*By Bro. Normie G. Javier
District Secretary*

MD RXII-B (SOCKSSARGEN): LAST LEG OF MINDANAO CARAVAN

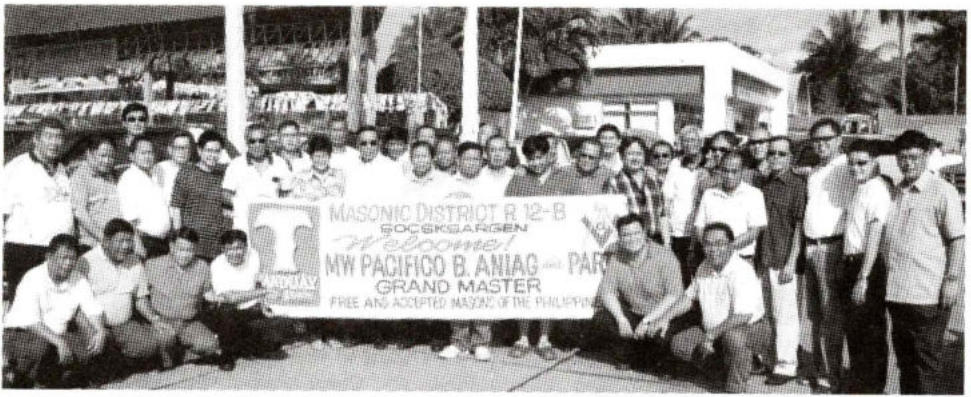
MOST WORSHIPFUL PACIFICO ANIAG and his Caravan left the City of Digos, Davao del Sur, at about 2:00 p.m. on Thursday, August 21, 2008. Led by our DDGM, VW Adonis G. Agreda, we brethren of host District RXII-B waited for them at the national highway in Barangay Lagao, General Santos City. Upon arriving at this meeting place, the Grand Master alighted from the vehicle, shook hands with us, and joined us in a brief picture-taking session.

When we reached the East Asia Royale Hotel, MW Aniag, Sister Alice, and some Masonic leaders with them exchanged pleasantries with the other brethren, as well as with the members of the Raja Buayan Court No. 28, Order of the Amaranth, led

by PRM Charmy Cortez, who had been eagerly awaiting the Grand Master and party's arrival.

After a brief respite, accompanied by VW Agreda and other leaders in the District, our energetic Grand Master visited Bro. Ernesto S. Dignadice at his residence on Casqueje St., General Santos City. The visitee, who will turn 80 by the end of the month, was all smiles upon seeing MW Pacifico Aniag, whose hands he fraternally clasped and whom he profusely thanked "for taking time to visit an elderly brother in his humble abode." He then showed the Grand Master and other visitors his Masonic Diploma.

"Mahal ko ang Masonerya; ayaw ko lang ang third (degree)," he told the Grand Master



in his Ilonggo accent.

"Bakit, Kuyang?" the Grand Master asked.

"Masakit kasi," Bro. Ernesto Dignadice quipped.

This drew a hefty laugh from MW Aniang, who jokingly said, "Ituro mo sa akin, Kuyang at sususpendihin natin."

Tears of joy formed in the corner of the eyes of Brother Dignadice as the Grand Master and other visitors bade him and his wife goodbye.

Shortly before 6:00 p.m. MW Aniang and other brethren arrived at the Gen. Santos City Masonic Center to attend the stated meeting of Mt. Matutum Logde No. 156. Since the lodge hall could accommodate only 100, some brethren were content to stay in the ante-room.

WM Virgilio M. Serrano and his team exerted extra effort to duly receive MW Aniang and his party. Since the visitation occurred during the Buwan ng Wikang Filipino was used in the proceedings, but with little success. At any rate, the Grand Master acknowledged the sincerity of their intentions.

The Tyler's Book registered a total attendance of 123 brethren.

Noting the exemplary attendance during the stated meeting, MW Aniang commented, "This, to me, seems to be a mini multi-district convention." Next he recapitulated the significant aspects of his 8-day caravan through Mindanao, which started on August 15. Revealed he: "Due to the dangers of trekking the troubled ways, not a few of the brethren advised me to postpone the caravan. But I chose to pursue the plan.... Along the way, I personally experienced and witnessed the agony and miseries of our fellows in this beautiful island of Mindanao...."

After the stated meeting, we proceeded to Rosewood Place, venue of an enjoyable fellowship dinner, which was highlighted by an exchange of tokens between MW Aniang and VW Agreda, his Deputy for RXII-B. The fellowship social was marked, among other things, by singing and exchange of banter among the brethren. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity...."





A GENERAL AMONG THE GENERALS

For several centuries, Mindanao was an enclave of Muslims and Lumads until King Carlos I of Spain sent successive expeditions to Asia [beginning in 1521]. One such expedition, led by Ruy Lopez de Villalobos, arrived on February 2, 1543 in the southern part of the islands. Through systematic subjugation the Spaniards eventually gained a foothold in the archipelago.

After the defeat of the Spaniards in 1898 by the Americans, The Moro province came into existence on July 15, 1903 with Bro./Gen. Leonard Wood as its first Governor. It was the third Governor, Bro./Gen. John Pershing, who encouraged Christians from Luzon and Visayas to migrate to the virgin lands of Mindanao.

In 1913, Bro. F.B. Harrison, then Governor General, implemented the Agricultural Colonization Project, which proclaimed that the "occupation of open lands of Mindanao be implemented with utmost haste." Since then, batches of pioneers from Cebu and Ilocos came amidst hardship and lack of government funds. In response, Assemblymen Elpidio Quirino and Claro M. Recto caused the enactment in 1935 of Act No. 4197, known as the Quirino-Recto Colonization Act.

Mindanao was in such a state when MW Manuel Luis Quezon took his oath as President of the Commonwealth on November 15, 1935. He selected Bro. Paulino T. Santos Sr., former Director of the Bureau of Prisons, as his aide-de-camp. In 1936, he designated him Chief of the Philippine Army with the rank of Major General.



On Oct. 22, 1938, Bro. Manuel A. Roxas, Chair of the National Economic Council, recommended the creation of a National Land Resettlement Corp. (NLRC) which would implement what Quezon called a new brand of Social Justice Program. Bro. Santos was asked to do an ocular inspection and submit a report. On the day following his retirement from military

service in 1939, Pres. Quezon appointed him General Manager of the NLRC.

Thus on the night of Feb. 22, 1939 sailing from Muelle de la Industria in Intramuros on board the S/S Basilan, General Santos led 62 settlers and 17 original recruited employees; and on arriving, disembarked at the shoreline of then Buayan, later called Dadiangas. In the same year, Alagao (Lagao), the first settlement, was established, and became the Administration and Distribution Center



of the whole Northern and Southern Koronadal Valley. Also in the same year, Commonwealth Act No. 441 created the National Land Settlement Administration (NLSA) with funding of P20M.

During one of MW Quezon's visits, critics like Bro./Sec. Benigno S. Aquino, Sr. were very much impressed with General Santos for a splendid job of converting the so called "Land of Promise" to a "Land of Fulfillment." One after the other, settlements opened up, like Polomolok and Banga in 1941. Soon after, glowing accounts of the settlement were published, which attracted the biggest group ever, led by Bro./Gov. Sotero Baluyot, accompanied by the League of Governors.

When Japanese adventurism led to the bombing of Davao City on Dec. 8, 1941, the Japanese Air Squadron almost wiped out the permanent structures built in the settlement, which compromised NLSA's operations momentarily. General Santos, aware of MW Quezon's last minute instruction before departing for the US, tacitly cooperated with the Japanese and averted bloodshed.

On May 6, 1943, Premiere Hideki Tojo pledged independence. And in response, the Philippine Executive Commission re-organized some bureaus which named General Santos as Commissioner of Mindanao and Sulu based in Davao. On Oct. 14 that year, Bro Jose P. Laurel,

then acting Chief Justice was sworn in as President of the Republic. General Santos was summoned to Malacanang on Aug 5, 1944 and was designated Commanding General of the wartime Bureau of the Constabulary whose function was to regulate peace and order among the civilian populace.

On October 20, 1944 the Japanese, caught off guard by forces led by Bro./Gen. Douglas "I shall return" MacArthur, engaged the Americans at Leyte Gulf. The ravages of war made General Santos sickly and weak. He dropped his working tools at 2 p.m. in the afternoon of Aug. 29, 1945, and was buried in the vastness of Bo. Calapang, Kiangang, Bontoc, Mt. Province. After the war, his remains were reburied in Anoling, Camiling, Tarlac where he was born on June 22, 1890.

By virtue of EO No. 82 dated Aug. 18, 1947 signed by Bro./Pres. Manuel A. Roxas, Buayan became a Municipality. On June 1954, Congressman Luminog Mangelen of Cotabato authored RA No. 1107 changing Buayan into General Santos. Congressman James L. Chiongbian made General Santos into a City on July 8, 1968 through RA No. 5412. Later it earned for it the title, "Tuna Capital of the Philippines."

Like the legendary Hiram Abiff, General Santos was buried 3 times. The third time, with his wife, Sis Elisa Angeles, was on September 5, 1991 at the foot of his monument in Carlos P. Garcia Park fronting Pioneer Avenue in General Santos City where the residents fondly refer to themselves as "the Generals."





By: Bro. Carlito Y. Uy, Marshal,
Member-D'TROWEL Publication Committee
Lodge Librarian

THE **COOPERATIVE** **COOPERATOR COOPERATING** FOR **COOPERATIVISM**

In the proposed monthly calendar of activities contained in the Manual for Grand Lodge Officers 2008-2009, the month of September is declared Cooperative month by MW Pacifico B. Aniag. He encourages the formation of cooperatives. Our forefathers, nay, our national heroes, in their own right already implemented this. One was the late Bro./Sen. Teodoro Sta Ana Sandiko who eventually earned the title 'Father of Cooperation' in this country.

Bro Sandiko was born in Pandacan, Manila on March 31, 1860 to parents Miguel Sandiko and Maria Paz Santa Ana. Later, they moved to Pampanga where he spent two years at the school of Vicente Quirino. He continued his 3rd year studies at the school of Quintin Salvidea and the 4th year under the Jesuits in Manila. He obtained his Bachelor of Arts in 1886 from the Universidad de Santo Tomas after which he taught Latin at a school in Malolos, Bulacan.

During the visit to Malolos of Governor General Valeriano Weyler in June 1888, 20 young ladies who were scions of rich Chinese mestizos presented a proposal to establish a night school, at their expense, for

learning Spanish, purportedly at the behest of Bro Sandiko. The school opened in early 1889. The ladies received a commendation letter dated Feb 22, 1889 from Bro. Jose Rizal, referring to them thus, "Sa mga Kababayang Dalaga sa Malolos".

Having obtained 2 years in Law, he continued the study of it at the University of Madrid. There he joined

the other propagandists, especially helping to manage La Solidaridad, by translating articles in Spanish. When Logia Revolucion was established by 7 Filipinos on April 2, 1889 led by Bro Lopez-Jaena as Charter Master it affiliated with the Gran Oriente Espanol. Among those obligated was Bro Sandiko who adopted the Masonic



GOV SANDIKO



WOMEN OF MALOLOS WITH GOV GEN WEYLER AT CASA REAL



name Libertad. On December 9, Bro del Pilar re-organized Solidaridad Lodge that elected Bro Sandiko as Secretary. From Spain, Bro Sandiko traveled to France, Germany, Brussels and England, teaching Spanish in

various schools in Paris to support himself. He settled for a while in Leige, Belgium to open up a bicycle shop.

He came back to the country on May 19, 1898 with Bro Aguinaldo, who was fetched by the Americans to resume the war with the Spaniards.

During the February 1906 gubernational election in Bulacan, he defeated the incumbent, erudite Federalista Don Pablo Tecson. This victory was the only one in Luzon achieved by a Nacionalista. As a Governor, he promised to be faithful and exemplary in the discharge of his civil duties by never proposing or countenancing any act which may have a tendency to subvert the peace and good order of society.

Ever remembering his travels to West Germany during the Propaganda days, his impression of the Raiffeisen Cooperative Movement lingered. He prepared a Credit Union Bill patterned after it while still Governor and had it sponsored in the Philippine Assembly. The principal aim of this bill was to protect and develop the agricultural interest of the country. When the bill was presented it readily obtained unanimous approval on January 20, 1908. The Philippine Commission, composed of appointed Americans, however, turned it down. Still persisting, he had it sponsored again in the 2nd Legislature by Assemblyman Rafael Corpuz who ably presented the Bill in both Houses. It was finally passed into law on February 11, 1914 thus becoming Act 2508 or the

Rural Credit Law.

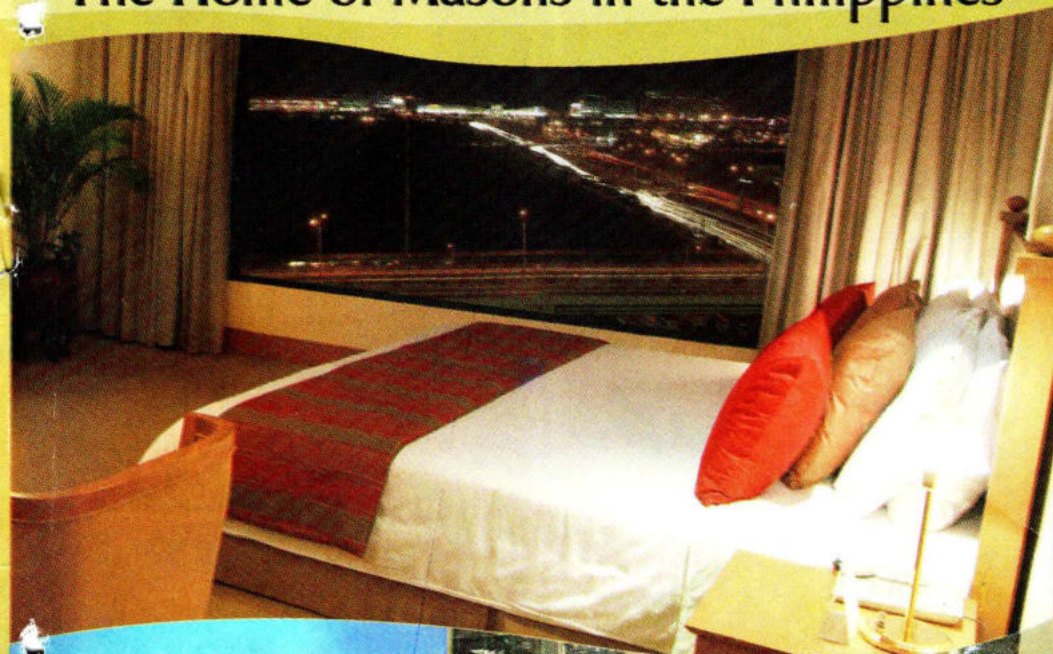
The administration of the Rural Credit Law was entrusted to the Bureau of Agriculture. The First Rural Credit Association that was organized under this Law was the Agricultural Credit Cooperative Association of Cabanatuan, Nueva Ecija. It was formed on October 18, 1916. At the end of 1926 there were 544 rural credit cooperatives organized in the 42 provinces and by 1930 there were 571 associations formed all over the country. In 1935, however, about 90% of these cooperatives were inactive with no funds

left in their treasury. The experiment on rural financing through Cooperatives was a failure. Subsequent Laws were, however, enacted to strengthen Cooperatives until the enactment of RA 6938 or the Cooperative Code of the Philippines by Sen Agapito Aquino in 1990. Article 2 of the code is "the declared policy of the state to foster the creation and growth of cooperatives as a practical vehicle for promoting self-reliance and harnessing people power towards the attainment of economic development and social justice".

Bro Rizal during his 1892 exile in Dapitan, Zamboanga del Norte, fulfilled his Cooperative plan meant for Sandakan, Borneo in 1892, by putting up La Sociedad de los Abacaleros. This functioned for only a year. He returned the member's share capital without any loss. He likened it to the 1st coop in the world, namely the "Rochdale Pioneers" founded in Northern England in 1844 on the self-help ideas of Welsh utopian Socialist Robert Owen.



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