

**SPEECH PFVI GRAND REUNION**  
*Beauty Quest Presentation Night 2009*

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IT IS A GREAT HONOUR TO BE HERE WITH YOU TONIGHT ON THIS IMPORTANT OCCASION - THE GRAND REUNION OF THE PHILIPPINE FIESTA OF VICTORIA INCORPORATED (PFVI) FOUNDERS, PIONEERS AND ORIGINS, AND PRESENTATION NIGHT OF THE 2009 BEAUTY QUEST CANDIDATES. I WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE OF PFVI LED BY ROSE MANUEL AND IN PARTICULAR PHILIP SALANGUIT AND GERRY OCAMPO FOR INVITING ME TO BE ONE OF THE GUEST SPEAKERS FOR TONIGHT'S EVENT.

I HAVE BEEN ASKED TO SPEAK ABOUT THE ACQUISITION OF THE PHILIPPINE COMMUNITY CENTRE IN LAVERTON BY PFVI. I AM PLEASED TO HAVE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO FONDLY REVISIT THIS MILESTONE WHICH MANY OF YOU HERE TONIGHT WERE INSTRUMENTAL IN ACHIEVING.

ALLOW ME TO WIND THE YEARS BACK SOME 14 YEARS AND 9 MONTHS AGO WHEN THE PROJECT OF ACQUIRING A CENTRE FOR THE VICTORIAN FILIPINO COMMUNITY STARTED TO TAKE SHAPE. A SUCCESSFUL TENDER FOR THE PURCHASE OF THE LAVERTON PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL FROM THE DIRECTORATE OF SCHOOL EDUCATION VICTORIA WAS FACILITATED BY THEN CHAIRMAN BERT DELA PENA, FRED DE GUZMAN, NONONG TORRES, MONA TORRES, MAINA WALKLEY AND MYSELF. THIS CULMINATED IN A CONTRACT OF SALE BEING SIGNED BY THE OFFICERS OF PFVI ON 8<sup>TH</sup> OF APRIL 1994.

THE PROPERTY LOCATED AT THE CORNER OF ARMSTRONG AND THOMAS STREETS LAVERTON WAS A SPRAWLING 4.74 ACRE WITH TWO LARGE BUILDING FACILITIES. THE SALE PRICE OF THE PROPERTY WAS \$320,000, A VERY SUBSTANTIAL SUM IN THE PROPERTY MARKET BACK THEN. A DEPOSIT OF TEN PERCENT (\$32,000) WAS REQUIRED WITH THE BALANCE OF \$288,000 TO BE FINANCED BY THE BANK. THIS WAS A STAGGERING COMMITMENT FOR PFVI. THE MONSTROUS TASK OF FULFILLING THIS COMMITMENT HAD JUST BEGUN!!

THE PROPERTY WAS NAMED "THE PHILIPPINE COMMUNITY CENTRE", AND QUICKLY BECAME KNOWN AS PHILCOMCENTRE. THE OPENING AND BLESSING OF THE PHILCOMCENTRE WAS HELD ON 2<sup>ND</sup> AND 3<sup>RD</sup> JULY 1994. MEETINGS WITH VARIOUS FILIPINO COMMUNITY LEADERS AND ORGANISATIONS WERE HELD TO SHOWCASE THE CENTRE WITH A VIEW TO GATHERING SUPPORT TO RAISE FUNDS FOR THE GREATER BENEFIT AND WELL BEING OF THE WHOLE VICTORIAN FILIPINO COMMUNITY.

HOWEVER, IT IS FAIR TO SAY THAT THE RESPONSE FROM THE COMMUNITY AT THE TIME WAS DISAPPOINTINGLY LUKEWARM, DOUBTFUL AND CRITICAL. FUNDRAISING EFFORTS HAD INITIALLY POOR RESULTS AND THE THREAT OF FORFEITING THE CONTRACT OF SALE FOR THE PROPERTY PERENNIALY HUNG LIKE A SWORD OF DAMOCLES OVER THE HEADS OF THE PFVI OFFICERS. UNDAUNTED BY THE TASK THAT LAY AHEAD, PFVI WORKED TIRELESSLY TOWARDS RAISING THE FUNDS NEEDED BY THE DUE DATE.

IN DECEMBER 1994 A NEW MANAGEMENT GROUP WAS FORMED AND A FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN DUBBED "OPERATION TULONG TULONG" (IN ENGLISH, "HELPING EACH OTHER") CONTINUED ON A MASSIVE SCALE. IN THE TRUE TRADITION OF FILIPINO FRIENDSHIP COUNTLESS INDIVIDUALS RALLIED BEHIND THE COMMUNITY CENTRE CAUSE. CORPORATE SPONSORS WERE OBTAINED AND OUR "AUSSIE MATES" GAVE US A HELPING HAND. IN RECOGNITION OF THESE SUPPORTERS, THE NAMES OF DONORS WERE ENGRAVED AND ARE CURRENTLY EXHIBITED AT THE PHILCOMCENTRE HALL OF FAME.

ON 8<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 1995, THE TRANSFER OF LAND WAS SIGNED SEALED AND DELIVERED BY VIC ICASIANO, ELMER RAGEL AND YOURS TRULY. THIS MEMORABLE EVENT WAS WITNESSED BY THE 1995 PFVI MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE. PFVI PUT UP A TOTAL DEPOSIT OF \$70,000 AND AN ADDITIONAL \$24,770 WAS PAID ON INTEREST. THE BALANCE OF \$250,000 WAS LOANED FROM ANZ BANK. PFVI WAS GRANTED AN EXEMPTION TO PAY \$16,364 ON GOVERNMENT STAMP DUTY THANKS TO THE HARD WORK AND SMARTS OF PFVI TREASURER NESTOR PINEDA.

I SERVED AS CHAIRMAN OF PFVI FROM DECEMBER 1994 UNTIL MY RETIREMENT IN MARCH 1998.

TODAY, THE PHILIPPINE COMMUNITY CENTRE IN LAVERTON IS THE OPERATING THEATRE AND WORKPLACE OF VARIOUS FILIPINO COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS. IT IS THE CENTRE AND VENUE FOR THE ANNUAL 2 DAY PHILIPPINE FIESTA CELEBRATIONS HELD EVERY NOVEMBER. IT IS THE PLACE WHERE WE FILIPINOS COME TOGETHER, MEET OLD FRIENDS AND ENTERTAIN OUR MANY AUSTRALIAN FRIENDS. IT IS A HOME TO THE OVER 27,000 STRONG FILIPINO AUSTRALIAN COMMUNITY IN VICTORIA.

THE CHALLENGES THAT FACE THE CURRENT MANAGEMENT OF PFVI ARE MANY AND THEY ARE NOT EASY TO OVERCOME. THE CONTINUING DEMANDS AND REQUIREMENTS OF THE COMMUNITY FOR BETTER FACILITIES AND SERVICES ARE OF PARAMOUNT IMPORTANCE. WE MUST MOVE FORWARD STEADFAST IN OUR GOAL TO ENSURE THAT THIS

IMPORTANT LEGACY BEQUEATHED TO FUTURE GENERATIONS OF PINOY MIGRANTS CONTINUES TO PROGRESS FROM STRENGTH TO STRENGTH.

LIKE SO MANY OTHERS OF MY GENERATION OF FIL-AUSSIE COMMUNITY LEADERS AND ORGANISERS, I AM AWARE THAT TIME AND TIDE WAIT FOR NO MAN. WE ORIGINS GET FEWER AND FEWER WITH EACH PASSING YEAR. THE BATON IS NOW BEING PASSED TO A NEW GROUP, A SECOND GENERATION AND A BIGGER MIGRANT PINOY COMMUNITY IS TAKING SHAPE BEFORE OUR EYES. THERE WAS A TIME WHEN I THOUGHT I KNEW ALMOST EVERY PINOY IN OUR OWN NEIGHBORHOOD IN KNOX CITY. NOW, EVERY TIME I DO THE GROCERIES I AM TAKEN ABACK BY SO MANY NEW FACES ... SO MANY BAGONG DATING. WE WELCOME THESE NEW PINOY MIGRANTS INTO OUR FOLD. AND WE OLDTIMERS JOIN HANDS WITH THEM TO ENSURE THAT THE INSTITUTIONS OF FIL-AUSSIE CULTURE AND VALUES THAT WE HAVE PAINSTAKINGLY BUILT FROM THE GROUND UP .... SUCH AS THIS PHILCOMCENTRE .... REMAIN STRONG, DYNAMIC AND WORTHY OF BEING PASSED ON TO SUCCEEDING WAVES OF FIL-AUSSIE MIGRANTS.

I WOULD LIKE TO PAY TRIBUTE TO THE PAST AND PRESENT LEADERS OF PFVI AND TO THE PAST AND PRESENT CANDIDATES OF THE MISS AND MRS PHILIPPINE FIESTA AND THE MISS AND MRS PHILIPPINE FIESTA CHARITY QUESTS. THROUGH THEIR CHARITABLE EFFORTS THEY HAVE BUILT THE PILLARS OF OUR COMMUNITY AND EXEMPLIFY WHAT IT TRULY MEANS TO BE AN AUSSIE PINOY. GOD BLESS YOU ALL.

THANK YOU AND I WISH YOU ALL A VERY PLEASANT EVENING.

Eddie Joven Atacador  
Chairman  
December 1994 – March 1998  
Philippine Fiesta of Victoria Inc.

31 January 2009

Eddie Joven Atacador was Chairman of the Philippine Fiesta of Victoria Incorporated from December 1994 to March 1998.

He was the founding member and first President of the Filipino Community Welfare Services, founding member and first President of the Filipino Tradesmen Association of Victoria, founding member of the Federation of Filipino Associations of Victoria, Member of the Management Committee of the Migrant Resource Centre Melbourne, 1981 and Commissioner for taking Declarations and Affidavits appointed by the Law Department Victoria from 1981 to 1990.