

MAGAZINE FOR THE WELLINGTON FILIPINO COMMUNITY

KABAYAN

Winter 2016 • Issue No. 14

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Staying true to their passion

Introducing:
Ambassador Gary

'Kraving' for a
taste of home?

Rachel's year in
the Philippines

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Kabayan's

Cover story



Photos by Lynil Yap

Photoshoot location: Tarrant Dance Studio, 125 Cuba St. Te Aro

editorial

I'm a bit conflicted.

Let's talk about passion. Not the romantic kind. But passion that drives you to do certain things or activities because you love them. Many people will tell you to follow your passion. Yet there are some who say that you need to find passion in what you do.

So which one is it? Is it something you search for or something that you cultivate?

Instead of making a decision if it is one or the other, I think passion is something already inside you that you need to discover. Then you need to cultivate and develop to the point where you put up with discomfort, pain and even danger to be better at what you do. A bit obsessive you might think. To some degree perhaps. I think that obsession is part of realising your passion.

In this issue, we feature three young women (on our cover) who share their 'passion' stories with us. For Grace it is her love of ballet; for Alex it is her talent in creative writing and art; and for Bea it is her drive to sing and go rock climbing. You will also meet husband and wife Billy and Michelle Valenzuela, owners of Kravings NZ who are making cakes that will remind you of the Philippines. We also feature Evita McGuire who put her career on the backburner to raise her family. Geo shares his love of languages while Rachel Espejo and our new ambassador show their passion for their work.

If you have yet to discover your passion, remember the words of Mike Rowe (host of Dirty Jobs) "Don't follow your passion, but always bring it with you."

Read on kabayan!
Meia

Proud Pinoy moment:

Congratulations to Wellington Filipino Julianne Alvarez and the University of Washington's women's golf team for winning the NCAA's women's golf Division One title. This is the first time the UW has won this award. Congrats *kabayan*!

Additional images and graphics from:

<https://pixabay.com/>; <https://www.pexels.com/>; <http://creativity103.com/>; NZTrade & Enterprise; KiwiPinoy Connection

Talk to us:

How do you think we are going? How can we make it better? Any story idea you'd like to see featured in the magazine? Tell us your thoughts about the articles in this issue. Email us on kabayanmag@gmail.com. We'd love to hear from you.



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Dream big, Start small.

Let's build our Filipino Community Hall in Wellington! Support the FilCom Centre Project.

To help, go to the Bulwagan Foundation Trust website www.bulwagan.org.nz and check out the different fundraising programs

(Adopt a Brick, Alkansya and pledges).

Acquaintance party with Amba Gary

by Billie Carani Searle

Have you heard about AmbaGary Domingo? He is the new Philippine Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to New Zealand.

On 16 May 2016, the Filipino community welcomed the new ambassador during the 'FilCom - AmbaGary Acquaintance Party' at the Wellington Filipino Community Centre in Petone, Lower Hutt. He opened the event by inviting everyone to introduce themselves, where in the Philippines they were from and what organization they belonged to in New Zealand. It showed his genuine interest in knowing more about the Filipino community in New Zealand. Those who attended the event would say that AmbaGary (as he is widely known now within the Philippine community) is a down-to-earth diplomat and a very relaxed guy who loves to take selfies with the community he serves.

Like any Filipino party, there were food, drinks, lots of 'chikahan' and a bit of singing and dancing. Many were surprised to see AmbaGary on the dance floor dancing with confidence and gusto when the 80's music such as Village People's 'YMCA' and Abba's 'Dancing Queen' were played.

He is one tech savvy diplomat so the next time you get an invite from AmbaGary whether via FB or other channels, make sure to put it in your diary. If you haven't done so already, like his FB page Ambassador Jesus "Gary" Domingo and join in one of his group selfies!

Get to know the man behind the title. Check out Noel Bautista's article on page 12.



Flores De Mayo Festival

by Jon Bayot

On 8 May 2016, the Wellington Filipino Community gathered at St. Anne's Catholic Parish to celebrate the *Flores de Mayo* (Flowers of May) Festival and *Santacruzán* (sacred cross). Many of our *kababayan* observed the festival which was spearheaded by the Wellington South Filipino Community Pastoral Areas leader Ms Shirin Zonoobi, ONZM. Also present were many of our Kiwi and Pacific Island friends who marvelled at the colourful pageantry.

In the Philippines, *Flores de Mayo* is the month-long celebration led by devotees of the Virgin Mary during the Marian month of May. It culminates with the *Santacruzán*, a procession of young women (*reyna*) often wearing sashes based on the litany of Mary. The *Santacruzán* procession honours the discovery of the true cross of Jesus Christ by St Helena of Constantinople and her son Constantine the Great.

At the Wellington version, *Santacruzán reynas* offered flowers to the Virgin Mary during the holy mass officiated by Father Dennis Nacorda, Associate Priest at Newtown Parish. After the

mass, there was a short programme at the church hall where the different *reynas* were introduced and there were songs and dances from the community. The attendees joined the shared meal prepared by the hosts.

New Philippine Ambassador Gary Domingo attended the event and acknowledged the effort of the organisers* for bringing our culture and tradition to New Zealand.

*Organizing committee members are Shirin Zonoobi, ONZM Filipino Community Leader, Father Dennis Nacorda, Rose Anne Sales Corpuz, Nelson Agajona Corpuz Jr., Rachel and Abbot Calvelo, Ronald Salazar, Spring of Life Fellowship, Rhose and Jon Bayot of Pinoy Stop, Paul and Minerva Connolly, Elenita Aligado Stutz, Rose and Nap Rodulfo, Esmeralda Delmiguez Young, Anita Mansell, Melissa Ann Walker, Filifest Dance Group, She Kavinta, Violeta Kavinta, Rowena Echano, Rey Cabauatan, Khemmy Magallanes Batac-Empredo, and Johnny Teariki.

Absentee voting in New Zealand and the Pacific Islands

Text based on information from the Philippine Embassy Wellington website

The 2016 Overseas Voting process in New Zealand closed on 11 May 2016 after the Embassy's Special Board of Canvassers (SBOC) canvassed the election returns from five (5) precincts representing New Zealand, Fiji, Samoa, Cook Islands and Tonga. Out of 9,470 registered voters only 3,283 actually voted - a voter turnout of 34.67%. The SBOC immediately sent the Certificates of Canvass electronically to the National Board of Canvassers in Manila for consolidation.

The period of casting Overseas Voting ballots started on 9 April 2016 and ended on 9 May 2016 at 9:00 p.m. New Zealand time to coincide with the closing of the COMELEC voting precincts in the Philippines. The Embassy's designated Special Board of Election Inspectors (SBEI) started the



manual counting of ballots on 9 May 2016 at 9:00 p.m. New Zealand time. Designated poll watchers, Philippine media representatives and Filipino community members witnessed the counting.

Watchers and community members expressed satisfaction at the Embassy's information campaign to reach out to registered voters and reissue or resend ballots to those who were unable to receive their electoral ballots initially.

2016 Election results in New Zealand

by Mely Feria and Matilde Tayawa-Figuracion

The Duterte-Cayetano tandem emerged as the winners in the 2016 Presidential and Vice Presidential race for absentee voters in New Zealand and the Pacific Islands. Of the 3,283 absentee voters 69 per cent or 2,269 voted for Rodrigo Duterte and 43 per cent or 1,401 voted for Alan Peter Cayetano. In second and third place

for President were Roxas (264 votes) and Santiago (243 votes). For Vice President, Bongbong Marcos was second garnering 768 votes followed by Robredo with 581 votes.

The top three Senators were Dick Gordon, Serge Osmena III and Kiko Pangilinan, which were different from

the top three proclaimed Senators. Of the top 12 proclaimed Senators, nine of them were in the top 12 chosen by absentee voters in New Zealand and the Pacific Islands while three did not get to the proclaimed Magic 12 - Serge Osmena III, Teofisto Guingona III and Susan Ople.

Ranking	Top 12 in New Zealand	Top 12 Proclaimed Senators
1st	Richard Gordon	Franklin Drilon
2nd	Sergio Osmena III	Joel Villanueva
3rd	Francis Pangilinan	Vicente Sotto III
4th	Ralph Recto	Panfilo Lacson
5th	Panfilo Lacson	Richard Gordon
6th	Juan Miguel Zubiri	Juan Miguel Zubiri
7th	Franklin Drilon	Manny Pacquaio
8th	Teofisto Guingona III	Risa Hontiveros
9th	Risa Hontiveros	Francis Pangilinan
10th	Leila De Lima	Ralph Recto
11th	Manny Pacquaio	Sherwin Gatchalian
12th	Susan Ople	Leila De Lima

Grace(fully) Dancing to her Dreams

by: Noel Bautista



According to the *kabayan's* realist school of philosophy, there are two ways to respond to your dream. The first is to tuck it in your book of fairy tales and review every now and then for a good laugh or some inspiring insight. It is not something you'd take seriously lest you lose sight of reality. The second way to treat your dream is to earn your bread, live your life and face the harshness of daily living, without forgetting the pureness of your vision.

There is a third way of course, which only the bravest (or craziest) would venture on. That way (as if you didn't know) is to breathe your dream vapours as deeply as you can, embrace your dream, and live it every day of your life.

Our *kabayan*, Divina Grace Cabauatan, is one of the rare few who has done the third way, without fear or reservation. At an early age, Grace, as she's better known, discovered that dance was her passion. The question was - would it also become her life?

To this end, and in order to get a foothold of her dream, Grace decided that there might be more talented dreamers, but definitely no harder workers. Grace was admitted into the globally recognised Alvin Ailey Dance School for their Junior Summer Intensive Program in New York. There, she developed

her talents as well as her outlook alongside budding dancers from all over the world. As if this wasn't enough to solidify her resolve to chase her dream, soon after graduating from Sacred Heart College in Lower Hutt, Grace continued to work hard with her dance technique and was offered a full scholarship at the regionally renowned Academy of Performing Arts in Hong Kong.

On her way to earning her Bachelor of Fine Arts majoring in Dance, Grace overcame challenges such as the language barrier and being the only Filipina in her classes. Grace turned these challenges into spurs in her quest to learn the art and science of ballet.

Her efforts paid off in the form of an apprenticeship offered by Charlottesville Ballet in Virginia, a progressive ballet-oriented dance company on the US East Coast. Highlights of her apprenticeship season included performances in the timeless classic, "The Nutcracker Suite," and a contemporary ballet piece "Anonym," choreographed by Chicago-based Tom Mattingly, in which only seven of the company's best performed.

Before our *kabayan* Grace embarks on a full season of professional dance, she has decided to rest with her number one support group in Wellington -- her parents Roy and Marilou Cabauatan --- who have never given her anything less than their full support and encouragement. After all, it has been a whirlwind of adventures, starting from summer internship in New York, to her bachelor of fine arts work in HK, to the apprenticeship in Virginia. All of these happened all for Grace's love of ballet, and the joy of chasing her dreams.

Grace sashays and pirouettes not only on the dance stage but also on the stage called life. Dance becomes her life and life becomes her dance.

Mabuhay ka, at mabuhay ang iyong mga pangarap, Grace!



Creativity in Art

By Grace Marasigan

Art and creativity go hand in hand but are these part of someone's innate talent or something learned and acquired? Let us get to know a girl who might shed a light on this. She's Alex Bayot, a creative and talented 13-year old girl. She is a Year 9 student at Wellington Girls College.

Her creative flair started at an early age. While other toddlers her age played with different toys, her favourite 'toy' was cello tape. Much to her Lola and Mum's dismay, rolls of cello tape would be gone in an instant. Alex would use these and find stuff around the house to stick together and she would find satisfaction in the new things she created. Alex has moved on from her cello tape creations. A year ago, she modelled for and created, along with her group in intermediate school, their version of WOW - World of Wearable Art.



Alex has also displayed brilliance in creative writing even as a young child. She's gained a High Distinction in ICAS for Writing during her years at Sacred Heart. Her writings could give life and animation to minor characters of traditional fairy. As a pre-teen, she has worked on her novel for Wattpad. I have read excerpts of her work. Clearly, she's well beyond her years. I look forward to the day when her work gets published and sold at the bookshops with her own illustrations. Her sketches, to my untrained eyes, are close to being perfect.

Whether hers is an inborn talent or learned, there is no doubt that with her grit and passion, this girl would get far in life. Alex is many things in one package. Let's get to know her more in this Q&A.



How old were you when you started doing artwork?

I've always been drawn to art, even in my younger years, especially since my mum loves to draw. I guess I just started to take more of an interest to it when I was around 10 or 11.

What type of art do you do? What are your art techniques?

I've tried many different art styles, ranging from painting to drawing anime *manga*, but I guess I like sketching the most and I'm still exploring different art styles and techniques.

Who are your influences?

My biggest influence is my mum because she would always teach me how to draw. I remember when I was a kid, I'd watch her draw, get amazed and think 'Hey! I want to draw that too!' So I would draw and draw for ages, and even though I never got the result I wanted, I still found it extremely fun and so I would try again.

Why do you like art? How did it become a passion?

I like art because, to me, it's extremely satisfying to see the end result, especially, when I've worked really hard on the piece of artwork. I also like art because it's relaxing for me to draw.

What is your most memorable art piece? Why?

I guess it was my first attempt at drawing my brother, Nathan. It was then when I realised that I wanted to continue drawing and explore it more.



What are your plans in terms of your love of the arts?

I would like to pursue a career that will involve art and design. Ten years from now, I see myself as a person working in my dream job and probably doing a start-up business.

What advice can you give to other young artists?

Practice makes perfect. Try your best and never give up on a piece of work.

HOW MY PASSION IN ROCK CLIMBING HAS HELPED WITH MY SINGING

By: Bea Cariño

Rock climbing has taught me a lot about letting go of my fears, trusting other people, voicing out my feelings, and believing in myself and what I am capable of, which is transferable to my singing. I owe my daddy huge thanks for getting me into this sport. If it wasn't for him I wouldn't be as fearless and competitive as I am now. I still remember the first time he took me rock climbing. It was at Power Up in Katipunan, Quezon City in the Philippines. I struggled because of my fear of falling.

In hindsight, I realise that heights are not too much of a problem unless I have to get down or I know I'm going to fall. Rock climbing is pretty much a constant mental battle, as you always remind yourself that you're overthinking the situation and that you literally just need to do it, because the gear is safe and your belayer (a climber holding the rope for another climber) is awesome at what he's doing.

Like rock climbing, singing is pretty much considered as a sport, as it is so much more than just opening your mouth and singing a set of notes. You need to be physically and emotionally fit as it requires a lot of endurance from your tongue, back neck, shoulder, ribs, and pelvic floor muscles. Training demands you to remember how the perfect sound made you feel, and to constantly remind yourself of the little details in the art of singing.

You need to make sure everything is engaged and that means your ribs are flaring out while you're singing to keep the vocal track open. You also need to convince the brain



that you're not choking, because singing is quite an unnatural thing for us humans. A teacher once told me, "don't trust your ears, as they are deceiving you" and make sure to find the sound that is "ugly" to me.

Rock climbing and singing are two very different interests that I am passionate about. They are very different from each other but they make me happy. To me, passion is similar to happiness; it is something you have to define for yourself. You cannot measure it in the same way you can with success, but passion often leads to success as long as you stick with it. That being said, following your passions would lead you to happiness. Why waste your life on a job or degree that you don't like for the sake of making money? Sure, money does open up a lot of doors, but it also closes some. Coming from an Asian society, people subtly expect you to be a lawyer, a doctor or an engineer, and just be good at the things that sound boring as h*ll. My decision to do a music degree at university is risky as the future is uncertain for musicians, especially singers. But, I'm enjoying myself and I'm not stressing over useless exams that I'll probably cram for.

I sing because I just love it! Singing is very personal and it is tailored differently to each person, so is rock climbing. Many rock climb for the adrenalin or the adventures that you get from it. I rock climb because I feel that I am conquering my fear. That to me is so much better than the adrenalin. The adventure is pretty much just a bonus.



The Palace

By: Meia Lopez



Malacañang Palace has a new resident.

For the next six years, Malacañang will be the new Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte's official residence and workplace. President Duterte will be the 15th Philippine President to live in the palace and its surrounding compound.

Built in 1750, Malacañang started its life as the Rocha family's summerhouse in San Miguel, Manila. Luis Rocha, original owner of the house, would have enjoyed relaxing in the veranda facing Pasig River while a soft breeze blew, helping push fishing boats along the water. This was a time when life was slower paced and much simpler; Malacañang was just one of the many houses that dotted the riverbank; and the Pasig River was clean and teeming with life.

In the early 1800s, the Spanish government purchased the property, which later became the temporary residence of the Spanish Governor General when his official residence in Intramuros was damaged in an earthquake in 1863. But temporary became permanent; it has since then been the home of the leader of the land.

Malacañang had gone through many transformations over two hundred seventy years. It survived the Philippine Revolution, the Second World War, the EDSA Revolution and a number of military uprisings since then. It had been rebuilt and expanded many times in the last 100 years; extensive renovations were done in the late 1970s to make it structurally sound and secure. (<http://malacanang.gov.ph/about/malacanang/>)

Today, Malacanang is a compound made up of several buildings where the president holds his office, performs state ceremonies and receives local and foreign dignitaries and

guests. Most parts are closed to the public but there is a museum which exhibits some historical memorabilia from presidents past.

But more than its physical transformation over the centuries, it is its residents who have transformed the country from our colonial past

to our democratic and free present-day society that matter. From Spanish governor-generals to American administrators, to Japanese generals and Filipino presidents, Malacañang has always been the symbol of the executive branch of government.

Malacañang museum historian Manuel Quezon III states, "It is a prize, it is the physical symbol of the presidency, of power, of ruling the country. It's a pulpit. It is where the country looks for leadership and direction in times of crisis or in times of adversity or in general to find out what is happening to their country. And it's a stage. It's where the great events of state - state visits, funerals, weddings, conferences - takes place. At the same time it's an object of pride, it's an object of identity, it's a reflection of our being an independent nation, of our being a democratic nation with presidents who are expected to be accessible to the people and who are expected to represent the people in everything that they do." (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yNpSI765idE>)

In May this year, Filipinos have chosen the new President of the country on whose shoulders rest the aspirations, trust and hope of the people. He may live in a palace but he is primarily a servant of the people.

In his own words, he is "tasked to lead, and sworn to serve".

Good luck Mr President.

Malacañang is a curious word. There are many versions relating to its origins and all seem plausible. There's '*mamalakaya*', which means fishermen. Quite a logical choice as the Malacañang Palace lies at the bank of the Pasig River. Another source says it comes from the original name of the street where the palace stands. There is also the quite popular '*May lakan dyan*' which means there is a noble man there. It might have referred to Luis Rocha, its next owner Colonel Jose Miguel Fomento or even spirits if you consider our pre-hispanic culture but now it is a most fitting name as the ruler of the land lives in this house.

With a new president in the palace, we asked our kabayan

“What issue does the new Philippine president need to focus on? Why?”



“(Fight) **Criminality**. I would want our fellow Filipinos to live without fear when walking on the streets, riding public transportation and even in their homes just as how we live in NZ.” - Milan Alain Lucenara



“**Simplify the tax system**: Lobbyists, tax preparers, accountants, and rent-seeking parasites in various sectors figure out how to play these unnecessary elaborate systems to skim money from taxpayers and ratepayers. The complexity leads to revenue losses, inefficiencies and corruption from politicians (and friends) amassing wealth from government contracts.” - Rowel Botuyan

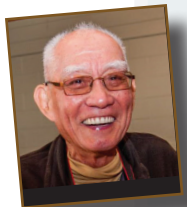
“**Reinvent the education system**: Schools are failing kids from poor and marginalised backgrounds. Perhaps, the President can create government incentives to bring people together at the local level to find fresh ideas and decide what their schools should look like.

Demolish oligarchy: Dynasties are the ones making the decisions now, which are based purely on what is best for them, and not for the greater Philippines collectively. “Equal rights for all, special privileges for none”. - Carmen Botuyan



“(Address) **Poverty**, and **peace and order**. Not having available jobs or having insufficient wages is the cause of a lot of criminality!” - Mary Velasco

“To re-establish peace and order and trust in the government, the newly elected president should focus on implementing rigorous solutions in **eliminating heinous crimes, abolishing drug problems and stopping graft and corruption** in the country.” - Sunshine Mabalot



“From 1903 to 1939, our educational system was K-11, 1940 to 2015 was K-10 and 2016 is K-12. **Make our schooling years a K-13**, patterned after that of New Zealand, (it has been) proven successful. **Stomp-out corruption and drugs** through due process in accordance with the law.” - Teodoro ‘Papa Doy’ Helbano



“Start with the most pressing issues as promised in his platform of government; **eradicate graft and corruption**, stop or at least **curb illegal drugs proliferation, improve and modernise the country’s infrastructure** to sustain the growing economy, put an **end** to the **decades-long conflict especially in the south** and **alleviate poverty** in general. These are just few of the major issues which will have immediate impact in the lives of every Juan.” - Marc Paul Gorospe



“I reckon the new President should focus on carefully **sorting out things that are already in place** and **make changes to things that are not effectively functioning**. He should only **fix the broken parts of government** and **retain those that are already doing well** both in their implementation and management. Para sa akin **corruption, peace and order, Manila traffic situation and employment** *siguro i-improve ng incoming administration, kung ituloy niya lang ang ginagawa ni Pnoy - solve na ako doon...*” - Manny Villanueva



It’s really hard to gauge the man at the moment. For me I think he’s doing ‘shock and awe’ tactics to make sure everyone is on the same page as him. However, some gullible and/or overzealous people will misinterpret his words and actions, jump the gun and make serious mistakes. But **I wish him luck in getting rid of the bad apples**. It’s gonna be an uphill climb. And then again, it will also need changes from the rest of our countrymen.” - Pat Salandanan

The man behind the title

by: Noel Bautista



Jesus Gary Domingo, the man, defies definition, escapes categorisation, and eschews the expected narrative of his life.

As our country's highest public official in Wellington, he meets and breaks bread with Prime Ministers, princes and ambassadors, but later in the day takes selfies with nurses, dairy workers and caregivers. As a diplomat in the Middle East, he employs every ounce of his energy and skill set to negotiate for and repatriate our wrongfully accused OFWs, and yet he serves as impromptu DJ in a *kabayan* dance party.

As a senior ambassador and respected policy maker in the Philippine Foreign Service, he firmly believes in the traditional government-to-government and institution-to-institution levels of interaction. At the same time, he tells you that there is no limit to the potential of every Pinoy to be his/her country's ambassador, a task for the nearly 50,000 Filipino ambassadors (and counting) currently living in New Zealand.

Having said that, it would be an understatement to say that Jesus Gary Domingo is a man who wears many hats. But right now his main preoccupation is the hat that says "His Excellency Jesus Gary Domingo, Philippine Ambassador to New Zealand, Cook Islands, Fiji, Niue, Samoa and Tonga." It is the gig of his life, and he has hit the ground running.

It would be too long to put it here now, but he has around a dozen initiatives baking in the oven, not to mention keeping firmly in place the projects started by his predecessor Ambassador Virginia Benavidez. He has already touched base with the numerous Pinoy ethnic, civic and community organisations dotting the North and South Islands. He will not miss a club meeting, church event, *salo-salo*, *kasalan* or *binyagan*, as long as you invite him early and give him decent notice to iron his *barong*.

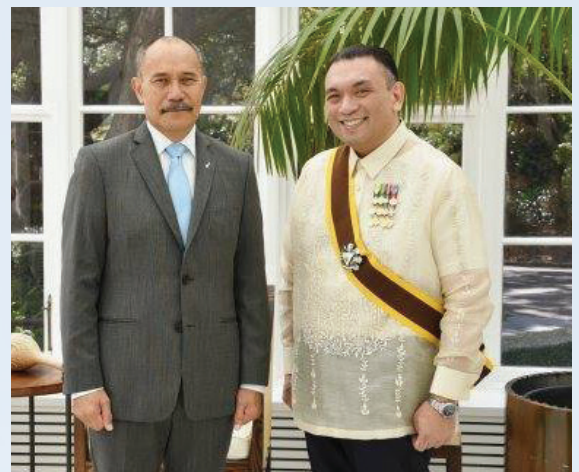
He claims not to possess a balladeer's voice *ala* Martin Nievera or Erik Santos, but a clever Eighties playlist will keep him on the dance floor until midnight (and beyond).

Don't worry *kabayan* if the usual list of accomplishments, credentials or curriculum vitae doesn't accompany Amba Gary's name in our story. You'll find it on any search engine worth the mouse click (he's not one to talk about what he's done, anyway), he usually lets his actions do the talking, and after all, the Pinoy community has the next six years to get to know this multi-faceted *kabayan*.

Welcome to New Zealand Ambassador Gary!



H.E. Jesus S. Domingo, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Philippines, presented his credentials to the Governor-General of New Zealand, H.E. Lieutenant General The Rt Hon Sir Jerry Mateparae, GNZM, QSO, at Government House in Wellington on 20 April 2016.



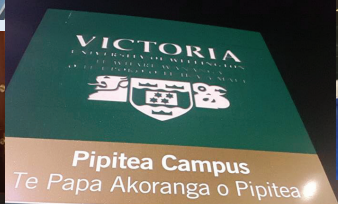
In the short time that he has been in New Zealand, Amba Gary has been around the country from Auckland to Dunedin and many places in between to meet with the different Filipino communities.



Jesus S. Domingo: Court decision on disputed islands will let us move on - Opinion - NZ Herald News ✓

The Philippines and China have enjoyed excellent relations spanning recorded history. Indeed, many Filipinos including myself have a degree of Chinese...

NZHERALD.CO.NZ



AmbaGary Domingo
June 17 at 7:33am · Wellington ·

Diplomacy. The Final Frontier. These are the voyages of the Philippine Embassy in New Zealand. Its mission - to lead the Philippine-New Zealand and Pacific relationship. To advance Filipino national security, economic & cultural diplomacy and diaspora interests. To seek out new partnerships and alliances with Kiwis and Kiwinoyes. To boldly go where no Diplomat has gone before !



Friends @50

Fifty years of Philippine-New Zealand diplomatic relations:
continuously evolving, continuously being strengthened

By Geo Robrigado



The year was 1966, a year filled with many events for both the Philippines and New Zealand. In Manila, Ferdinand E. Marcos had just started his first term as President of the Philippines, the province of Kalinga-Apayao was created, and the Beatles was embroiled in a controversy when they snubbed an invitation from then First Lady Imelda Marcos. Meanwhile, some 8000 kms to the south, the New Zealand-Australia Free Trade Agreement came into force, and the Grey River Argus, a 100-year old publication, released its final issue. However, one event literally tied the two countries together that year. New Zealand and the Philippines officially began diplomatic ties that continue to this day.

Officially, the ties between the two countries are highlighted by the presence of a New Zealand embassy in Manila and a Philippine embassy in Wellington as well as consulates in Auckland and Christchurch. This diplomatic relations have evolved over the past fifty years as more and more Filipinos choose to call New Zealand their home while many New Zealanders place the Philippines atop their must-visit places list. Latest figures estimate that there are almost 50,000 Filipinos living in New Zealand while around 2,000 New Zealanders live in the Philippines.

However, collaboration between the two countries started even before 1966. During the Second World War (1939-45), Filipino and New Zealand soldiers fought side by side in the Asia-Pacific region under the Allied Forces, the two countries being commonwealths of the United States and the United Kingdom, respectively. After the war both countries sent police and military resources to the Korean War and the Vietnam War, and peacekeeping forces in Timor-Leste and the war on terror after the 9/11 attacks. Today, the New Zealand Police and the New Zealand Army also provide expert training to the Philippine National Police and the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

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Image from NZ Trade & Enterprise (c/- Mr Hernando Banal II)

From military collaboration, the diplomatic relations have extended to trade. According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Philippines is among the top 20 export markets for New Zealand, a relationship catalysed by a free trade agreement called the ASEAN Australia New Zealand Free Trade Agreement (AANZFTA) as well as the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP).

In addition, many New Zealand-based firms have invested their back office operations in the growing business processing and outsourcing (BPO) and information and communications technology (ICT) industries. New Zealand companies are also present in the Philippine energy, construction, and banking industries.

Tourism is another area where both countries are forming strong ties. In 2014, both countries have ratified a working holiday scheme agreement that allowed Filipino citizens to work and travel in New Zealand for one year, and vice versa. Even more recently, Air New Zealand and Philippine Airlines, flag carriers of both nations, launched commercial flights between the two countries, providing easier tourism and commercial access to both markets. New Zealand also saw the rise of Filipino students studying in New Zealand since 2012, with at least 1,200 Filipinos enrolled in New Zealand tertiary education institutions in 2012 alone.

While 50 years may be a short period, both the Philippines and New Zealand have achieved a lot in terms of strengthening their diplomatic relations. What started out as a collaborative effort that was "coerced" through both countries' colonial ties became one of modern history's most enduring international relations.

Passion to Lead, Passion to Read (and "Side-Step")

Evita McGuire shares her life-passions

By: Judith Balares Salamat



Evita, fifth from left, taking her oath of office as Foreign Service Officer, under the then-Foreign Minister, Carlos P. Romulo.

In a span of thirty years or so, Evita Del Rosario McGuire leads us along the track of her passions. While in her 20's her passion was to reach the heights of her diplomatic career, and possibly, by virtue of hard work and dedication, to become an Ambassador or an undersecretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs.

Kabayan (Judith): Give us a brief background of your life, perhaps 25-30 years ago. Tell us about your family in the Philippines.

Evita: *Actually, 25-30 years are not enough. I've been living overseas for nearly 30 years. So, my life in the Philippines and/or outside of it will be traced from way earlier than that. I initially worked as Assistant Research Manager at the Foreign Service Institute (FSI), then became a Foreign Service Officer (FSO) at the Department of Foreign Affairs under the Marcos and (Cory) Aquino presidencies. A family of professionals, mostly lawyers, engineers and accountants, nurtured me. I graduated from Maryknoll College with a Bachelor of Sociology, and then I went to Ohio, USA, for my Master of Arts.*

Call it a leap of faith, destiny, *karma* (good *karma*, of course), or love, she left her diplomat's role and opted to enter another remarkably opposite role, that is, being a wife to a certain Kiwi who used to be a diplomat in Beijing, China, in 1987, when both were on official assignments. During those times, things were either black or white, especially for a female diplomat like Evita. Choose one and leave the other; choose marriage and leave your diplomatic/consular life. This passion may not have been realised as planned, but led to fruits of the same passion and more.

J: Was there any regret in your life, opting to follow your heart and giving up on your past diplomatic role?

E: *(Smiles but looks at me directly in the eye): Hmmm... so many people have asked me the same question. I would say, I have adapted to the different lifestyle, different place, different surroundings, but let me just say, I haven't realised the "depth of the changes" (laughing aloud at the end of this statement).*

She emphasises that what her son has become now (a Marketing Specialist at Facebook), himself a well-



Evita, answering questions with passion, during the interview with Kabayan

travelled, cross-culturally trained man, schooled in various International Schools in many countries, wipes out whatever tinge of regret that she may have.

J: How's life these days?

E: *My husband and I retired in Waikanae (Kapiti). For one and a half years, my regular routine was looking after my sick husband. But thanks to Fr. Dennis Nacorda and a few friends, I am now able to share my limited time with the Filipino Community in Kapiti through the Barangay Santa Maria Assumpta (BSMA), the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB), and of course, for therapy and health and fitness, line dancing.*

J: You seem very passionate in everything you do. What is 'passion' to you?

E: *For me, passion is having 'deep interest or desire in something'. For the first 10 years of married life, I was still thinking of the possibility of returning to the diplomatic service, but after that, I realised, no, it's not gonna happen anymore. As what my husband and 25-year old son would tell me, "Live in your present moment". Nowadays, I've rejuvenated my other passion that reflects my academic background (Sociology and Anthropology) and my previous diplomatic roles. I read a lot of history and non-fiction books. I've lived in eight countries and mingled with different people from different cultures, so reading books (hard-copy and on podcasts) is like living a simulated experience. Books can also reinforce my observations about the cultures and values I've experienced.*

Truly, her life has been enriched by pursuing her passions and interests as a mum, a wife, a diplomat and an active member of the Filipino community.

Through my own experiences, I can share what I have learned about my passions:

1. Have an inquisitive mind.
2. Have a thirst for knowledge.
3. Have a "can-do" attitude.
4. Remember that things always change.
5. Do not be afraid of failures. You cannot win all your battles.
6. Face the consequences of your decisions.

Of Moths and Passion

By: Johnny Celeste



This issue's topic is "passion". Hmm... a few meanings and connotations of the word are starting to form in my mind. *Teka lang* (Hang on a second), isn't it already too late in the year for this? The time for *senakulo* (Filipino Lenten passion play) has long been gone. Surely, we are not expected to feature the *pasyón*, which is also known as *pabasa* (the Filipino Lenten tradition of uninterrupted chanting of the Gospel passages about the life of Jesus Christ). Nor are we discussing the nutritional details and health benefits of passionfruit. Even if I mispronounce the word, we are not expected to describe Filipino fashion trends (I may add at a stretch).

The passion we are talking about refers to an intense, almost uncontrollable feeling about a person, a thing or an activity. Thus, we hear such expressions as 'passionate desire' and 'passionate singing'. The word 'passion' is also used to refer to the object of the emotion, someone's be-all and end-all, someone's *raison d'être* (reason for existing), without which everything else makes little or no sense at all. Come to think of it, people who are involved in *senakulo* and *pabasa* must be passionate, especially those who undertake them as *panata* (perpetual vow). In varying degrees, the same can be said about passionfruit growers and fashion designers.

A vivid example of a story of passion is an anecdote by Jose Rizal. One night when he was a child, his mother Doña Teodora Alonzo was reading to him a children's book written

in Spanish, by the light of a coconut oil lamp. He could not understand most of it, and his attention was diverted to the two moths circling around the lamp. Noticing her son's inattentiveness to what she was reading, Doña Teodora decided to switch to a story regarding a mother moth and her child who were attracted to an oil lamp. The mother moth was cautioning her child not to go very near the flame. The young Jose actually witnessed the consequence of disobedience: one of the real moths was singed by the flame, fell into the oil and died. Jose Rizal understood that the moths had been happily circling the bright and dazzling flame, and he did not feel any dread when one of them died. We know how this understanding was very significant to the Filipino national hero.

Everybody is passionate about something. Your passion may not be as dramatic as that depicted in Jose Rizal's anecdote. You may not have a *panata*, but you may have intense feelings towards cooking or tending to a small garden or belting out in karaoke – engaging in something for which you have a penchant and doing it with gusto (*gustong-gusto*). Pursuing your passion may entail hard work, sacrifice and even risk (beware of the lamp's flame), but fulfilment is the fitting reward.

When opportunities eventuate, it would be advisable to *huwag ninyong i-pass 'yon* (don't pass them up).

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Image from: <http://www.bucketlife.com/blog/moth-to-a-flame>

My year in the Philippines

By Rachel Espejo

I was born in Taihape and raised in Wellington. During my childhood I met many Filipinos through my church and because in the early 90s, my parents befriended every Filipino they met. These days Filipinos are the third largest Asian population in New Zealand¹. This year marks 50 years of diplomatic relations between the countries.

Growing up I only visited the Philippines twice. Seven years after the second visit, when I was 23 years old I returned and returned again every year after that.

After finishing at Victoria University with an LLB and BA in International Relations and Political Science, I started working for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade when an opportunity came for me to intern with the Asia Society Philippines Foundation. I accepted and moved to Manila in March 2015. The role was for three months.

At the end of my internship, I was planning to travel but to my complete surprise - I was offered a legal position back in New Zealand. I needed to give an immediate answer. I decided to take the risk and decline the job offer. Two days later, I was offered a position with AGREA as Director for Partnerships and Advocacy Marketing. God had completely opened the door.

AGREA is a social enterprise based in Marinduque and Makati that is involved in (among other things) sustainable agriculture, community development and youth empowerment. I travel to Marinduque at least once a month and I love it there.

I am so blessed to have kept my New Zealand connection too. One of the major highlights of 2015 was when AGREA partnered with the Asia New Zealand Foundation

to host five New Zealand social entrepreneurs in the food and beverage sector. This included Wellingtonians - Roman Jewell, Founder of Fix and Fogg peanut butter, Rochelle Harrison, co-founder of Wellington Chocolate Factory and Kate Beecroft, co-founder of co-working space Enspiral and artisan gift box company Wellington in a Box.



Boodle fight with friends and riding a jeepney (top load)

Apart from the working aspect, I have made many new friends. I joined C3 Metro Manila, a church based in Makati. It is an incredible community. We have been involved in outreach programmes in Pasig, putting on free acoustic nights in the BGC and just loving the people of Metro Manila.

I often commute (yes using the MRT, FX, Jeepney and tricycle) out to Quezon City to visit my lolo, lola and family in Novaliches and Fairview. I know now why they call it FAR-view!

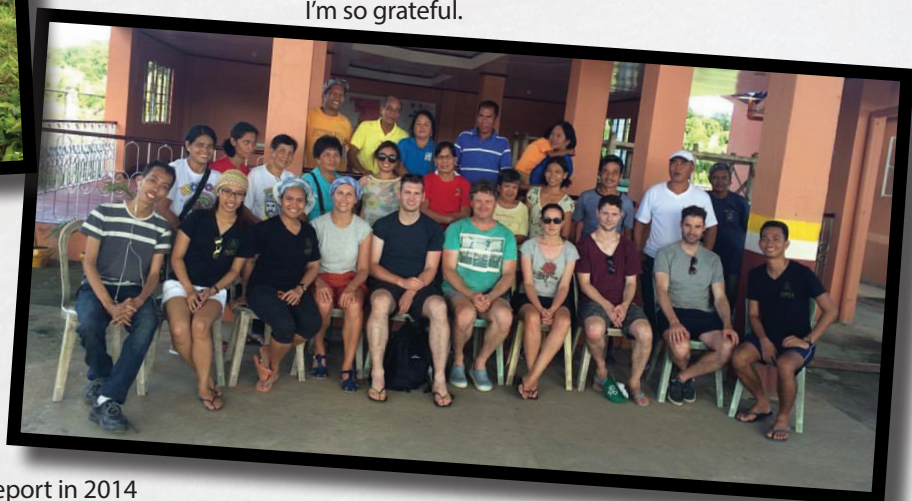
I've seen the different facets of the Philippines – from the sparkly stores of Metro Manila, the dirt roads of the provinces and the sticky heat of the slums. There is a rising sense of ownership in the Philippines. Especially in today's generation, Filipinos do not want to take the back seat anymore. The Philippines is an exciting place to be and it's thrilling to be amongst it all.

I'm so grateful.



Above: tree planting

Right: The volunteers in Marinduque



¹ Asia New Zealand Foundation Report in 2014

A Passionate Polyglot

By: Geo Robrigado

I experienced something funny while traveling in Europe. After a day of exploring Berlin, I went to the Berlin Zentraler Omnibus Bahnhof (ZOB) to catch my bus to Vienna. I decided to go early because my online booking request did not push through, and I was hoping for a last-minute ticket sale as it was already 6pm. The officer in the ticketing office had Southeast Asian features but I could not distinguish which specific country. Our conversation went like this:

Geo: *Guten Abend, Dame. Gibt es noch eine verfügbar Reise zu Wien?* (Good evening, Ma'am. Is there still an available trip to Vienna?)

TO: *Guten Abend. Ja, 10 Uhr.* (Good evening. Yes, 10pm)

Geo: *Danke. Ich würde eine Ticket zu Wien brauchen, bitte.* (Thanks. I would need a ticket to Vienna, please).

TO: *Okay. Ich brauche deine Identifikation oder Reisepass, bitte* (Okay. I need your ID or passport, please).

Geo: (handed my Filipino passport to the lady)

TO: (with a smile) *Kabayan! Nagpakahirap pa tayo!*

Until now, I catch myself laughing when I recall that story. I really made an effort to determine her nationality, and we would have had a conversation in Filipino, or even in English. Being in Germany, I took the opportunity to practise my German. Turned out pretty well, right?

I discovered my knack for learning languages in early 2015, although I always wanted to learn a third language since I was in grade school. Since my very first language course via the language-learning app Duolingo (you can get it for free and it's really effective!), speaking different languages has become a passion. I complement it with reading books, watching foreign films (I now have a growing collection of Dutch films), and listening to music on my target languages.

I also join language exchanges on Skype and WhatsApp, as well as this new social network purposely built for language exchanges called GoSpeaky. I have even changed my phone and Facebook language to Dutch. I am now at least conversational in five more languages (Spanish, Italian, French, German, and Dutch), while studying five more (Swedish, Polish, Portuguese, Danish, and Esperanto).

What do I get out of this passion for languages? Don't

take my word for it, but here are some benefits of learning languages:

1) It expands your horizons and gives you a better understanding of the world.

2) It can open more opportunities for your career. Studies have shown that firms tend to put a premium in hiring multilingual employees.

3) It is beneficial to your mental health. Studies have also shown that learning languages can delay the onset of many brain disorders such as Alzheimer's and dementia.

4) Obviously, it makes travel easy.

5) It gives you a better appreciation of your native tongue and culture (probably because you have something to compare it with).

6) It makes you more attractive (there are actual studies about this!).

Languages (and learning them) are truly a rewarding passion. While you may be able to get bragging rights that you can speak seven or more languages, acquiring a broader horizon through the languages that you have learned can be much more than a "bragging right".



Some sources and further reading

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KABAYAN TURNS 3

By Matilde Tayawa Figuracion

Thirteen issues released, 147 contributors outside of the Editorial team, 69 photo credits, more than 50 featured *kababayan* and organisations during our three years of existence. Isn't that wonderful?

We have come a long way. We have avid fans eagerly waiting for the release of our next issue. We have youth and young professionals offering their skills or rather co-opted or arm-twisted to help. We have sponsors who continue to be with us and new businesses coming on board so we can continue to print limited copies of our magazine. We have the Filipino community in Wellington willing to share their stories or contribute an article or two.

Recently, I read an email from a young professional, a lawyer, who grew up in NZ but had an opportunity to do an internship in the Philippines for a few months. After her internship, she was offered a job in a law firm but she had decided to go back and work in the Philippines in a social entrepreneur company. She wanted to share her story and experience to the Filipino community via KABAYAN. Isn't that nice?

True to our name, KABAYAN is becoming the medium for sharing Filipino happenings in Wellington, lessons in Philippine history, our Filipino food, stories about Filipino achievers in our community, viewpoints of our younger and older generations and other kababayans on some issues, tourist destinations and other interesting places in the Philippines, and more. We are starting to put our indelible mark in the community.

Thanks to our contributors, photographers, featured individuals and groups, generous sponsors and our readers far and beyond. Special thanks to our 3rd year anniversary event sponsors (Kravings NZ, Philippine Pacific Product, Ltd, Grill Republic, Royale NZ, Silhouette Productions), entertainers (Pete Delmiguez and Kathy Lopez) and attendees.

On behalf of the Editorial team, *maraming, maraming salamat po sa inyong lahat!*



A Piece of Cake

By Meia Lopez

According to Annabel Langbein, "Anyone can bake." But not everyone can bake **well**. This, I know from experience because the first brownie I ever made was as hard as a rock. Ask my sister; she'll tell you. But that was a long time ago and I can now claim that I can bake a pretty decent brownie.

But for some people, learning to bake was much easier. Michelle Javines and her siblings grew up amidst the family business where cakes were constantly being made, tested and sold. Her parents owned a successful cake shop in Ilocos Norte when she was growing up. They would make cakes for weddings, birthdays, anniversaries and other special occasions and the orders would come from as far away as Baguio and La Union. How's that for market reach?

It would have been a good business to pass down to their children but neither Michelle nor any of her siblings was keen to go down this path. Michelle went to university, became a nurse and later moved to Wellington. She is currently a theatre nurse at the Southern Cross Hospital.

While other newcomers were busy checking out Wellington sights, Michelle was busy checking out cakes. She couldn't find anything like what her parents used to make so she made them herself. Pretty soon she was baking cakes for friends and workmates alike.

At about this time she met a chef named Billy Valenzuela, a Pinoy who grew up in Hawaii and attended culinary school there. His mentor was another Pinoy chef whose best advice was probably "*sundan mo lang ako*." He learned by watching and doing. He smiled as he recalled, "My mother used to say 'Billy, stop playing with your food.' But now I am playing with my food to experiment." When he arrived from Hawaii, he worked as a chef at Bolton Hotel and Mari Luca restaurant in Thorndon where he had to follow the recipes but still managed to make them his own.



Billy at work. Michelle says he carries on working at home, "*Minsan may naririnig akong kumakalabog sa gabi. Yun pala nag-e-experiment sa kusina. Paggising ko sa umaga, ipapatikim na sa akin. Uy masarap.*"

For obvious reasons, Billy and Michelle found food as their common ground. But more than that there was real chemistry between them. So it was inevitable that they fell in love and got married; now they have two lovely children and a new 'baby'.

A couple of years ago, Michelle and Billy teamed up with Robert Ty, another Pinoy chef, to form Kravings NZ. Robert came up with this fitting name for a cake business featuring Pinoy specialty cakes we craved for – ube macapuno cake, buko pandan cake, mango caramel cake. But for Billy it was more than just a craving. He had a loftier goal, "When I go to Moore Wilson's and I see the cakes, I say to myself, one day there will be Filipino cakes here."



Michelle and Billy Valenzuela with New Zealand celebrity chef, Simon Gault

While Robert moved on to pursue other ventures, Michelle and Billy continued to run Kravings NZ and registered it as a limited company in 2015. They now supply cakes at the café Cha on Courtney Place and accept online orders too. Michelle still works as a nurse but Billy now works for the family business full time. Theirs is a busy household but they always put their kids first. When Michelle's mum came to visit a couple of years ago, she passed on all their cake recipes and trade secrets to her daughter with a wise advice "*Huwag mong gawing buhay ang kusina*. Enjoy your kids." This is something Michelle and Billy have taken to heart. Between the two of them there is double the passion to make their business work and keep their family happy.

The reluctant baker in Michelle has found herself re-igniting her love of baking from a simple craving of her parents' cakes. Chef Billy who would like to lift the stature of Filipino baked goodies and cuisine, has now found an avenue to realise this dream. It's a taste of home in Aotearoa.



Some of their specialty cakes and treats. From left: Princess Sylvanas, Mango Caramel Cake, Ube Pandan Fantasy, Ube Macapuno Cake, Mocha Crunch Cake and Yema Roll

Fudge Brownies by Kravings

Thanks to Kravings NZ for sharing this scrumptious recipe



Fudge Brownies recipe:

Ingredients:

- 1-½ cups butter
- 2 cups sugar
- 5 eggs
- 2 ½ cups all-purpose flour
- ¾ cup Dutch cocoa
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 1 tsp salt
- 1-½ cups nuts of choice

Procedure:

1. Cream butter and sugar thoroughly. Add eggs one at a time, beating well after each addition. Mix in vanilla.
2. Combine all dry ingredients except for the nuts and add to butter mixture and blend.
3. Stir in nuts and pour into greased 9"x 13" pan.
4. Baked in preheated 155°C oven for about 40 minutes or until toothpick inserted comes out clean.
5. Cool and frost with fudge icing or dust it with icing sugar. Cut it into squares.

Fudge Icing Recipe:

Ingredients:

- 1 ½ cups sugar
- ¼ cup cocoa
- ½ cup milk
- Pinch of salt
- 1 tbsp butter
- 1 tsp vanilla

Procedure:

1. Mix all ingredients, except butter and vanilla in a thick heavy pan.
2. Cook over medium heat until it reaches the soft ball stage.
3. Remove from heat, add butter and vanilla.
4. Beat one minute at high speed.

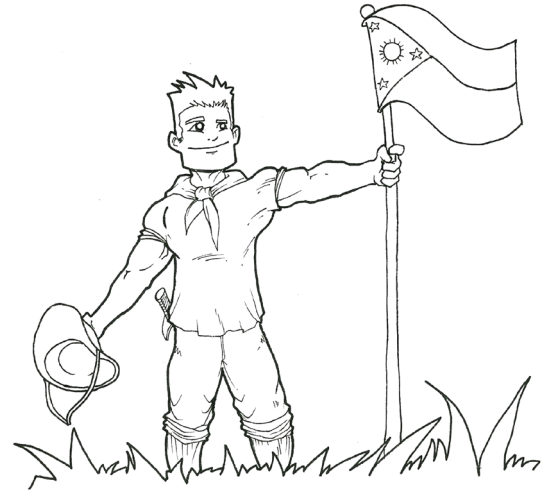
When boiling sugar syrup, the different syrup temperatures define how it will look when it has cooled. The longer you boil the sugar the less liquid (in this case milk) remains in the syrup and the harder it becomes. At lower temperatures (110-113°C) the syrup is runny and can be used to pour over ice cream. When the syrup reaches a really high temperature (148-155°C) the syrup turns hard and becomes candy. The most common and probably the easiest way to determine how the syrup will be like when it has cooled is by using the cold water test.

How do you test for a soft ball stage (113-116°C)?

Prepare a bowl with about a cup of ice and water. After you have boiled the syrup for about 10 minutes, scoop a teaspoon of the syrup and drop into the icy water. Let it cool for a moment and then remove from the icy water. If it forms a soft ball which you can shape easily, you have reached the soft ball stage. If it is still runny, let it boil for a couple more minutes and then check again.

Remember: Do not stir the syrup once it has boiled to stop the sugar re-crystallising.

Lupang hinirang
Duyan ka ng magiting



Up coming Events

July 16

Jeproks and Bagets (70s and 80s Dance Party Night),
Filipino Community Centre
Petone

July 23

Filipino Food Festival (featuring Pinoy Masterchef
Finalist Leo Fernandez)
Filipino Community Centre
Petone

15 September

Young Singers
in Harmony
Barbershop National
Competition
Te Rauparaha Arena
Porirua

October 21-23

Pistang Pilipino
2016
ASB Sports
Complex, Indian
Hall and other
venues
Kilbirnie

Every Wednesday of August starting

10 August (10, 17, 24 and 31 August)
Filipino language course for beginners

Society for Southeast Asian Communities
together with the Philippine Embassy
celebrate Buwan ng mga Wika.
Chancery of the Embassy of the Philippines
50 Hobson St., Thorndon



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V. Garnett (Vendor) - Henrietta was extremely kind, considerate, helpful and extremely professional.

N. Adip (Purchaser) - We were very happy with the service we received from Heni being our sales consultant. She was very honest and cooperative. She provided us with most of what we expected, especially in dealing with the few discrepancies that were in the house personally before we could proceed with the deal. It was our pleasure working with Heni.



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