



# *the Living Stone*



The Official Newsletter of  
**Batong Buhay Lodge No. 27, F. & A. M.**

November 20, 2009

Jacobo Zobel Masonic Temple, Sacred Heart Street,  
San Antonio Village, Makati City, Philippine



## Message from the East

**WM Antonio J. Limpoco, III**  
**WORSHIPFUL MASTER**

It's All Downhill From Here

One of the most successful come-back performances ever in the history of the rock and roll was the 1994 Eagles concert - Hell Freezes Over. It opened with their new arrangement of the classic Hotel California that featured an extended acoustic guitar and percussion -probably the best version ever. The entire repertoire was a well-balanced mix of old favorites and new material, several of which climbed to the top of the charts. In the middle of the concert, just when things were really heating up, Glenn Frey joking remarked "it's all downhill from here."

In a way, our labors have been largely similar to this exceptional performance. We began the year with sound plans and programs. We knew our strengths and limitations. We rouse to the challenges and did seemingly ordinary things – extra ordinarily. We had our ups and down but these did not deter us from delivering excellence.

We had our differences but like the band, we fed on each other's strengths and came out guns blazing, working as a team. This lodge has always been proud of the way it blazed the trail, of being able to keep on track and perform at par but with a twist of finesse, always a cut above the rest. In the few remaining meetings ahead, my priority is ensuring a smooth transition to our new set of officers feeling proud that in some small way I may have contributed my share.

Hopefully the lodge might be a little better on several fronts and that the seeds for the future have been carefully nurtured.

I am proud to report of the quality of our petitioners and my personal desire and satisfaction that those that have been set-back (back-balled) may soon find their way back to the preparation room.

I urge you brethren to find in your heart a single reason to accept someone into our fold rather than the bitterness, nay vindictiveness that those outside our circles still chose to govern their passions

There are several conferrals in the pipeline and perhaps a quiet evening as we celebrate our charter day. I have not heard of any plans for a district Christmas party, so I guess I we might still make preparations for it. There is also our annual district wreath-laying on November 30 at the Libingan ng mga Bayani. But by and large, the highlight of the remaining activities will be ensuring an orderly election and then the installation of officers. Then I shall cheerfully take my place again at the sidelines, a mere brother among brothers.

I am grateful to everyone who chose to work with us. Our past masters who in their busy lives still answered the call to serve and the younger ones whose enthusiasm to learn makes them the genuine perfect ashlar they ought to be.

*Our course is run; it's all downhill from here.*



## **Message from the West**

**Bro. Xerxez S. Coronado**  
**SENIOR WARDEN**

Last October 10, Batong Buhay and Las Piñas Lodges went to Bahay ni Maria in Calamba, Laguna for a gift giving project. Bahay ni Maria is a Home for the Aged facility.

Representing Batong Buhay Lodge are WM Tony Limpoco III, VW Rei Cedeño, VW Jun San Luis, Bro. Tito Cuenco, Bro Romeo Calooy FCM, Bro Anil Amarnani EAM and petitioner Mr. Christopher Manalo.

The event was arranged by Bro JW, Tito Cuenco in coordination with Bro SW of Las Piñas Lodge, Rommel Cruz.

Fifteen Thousand worth of products were handed over to the institution. Basic grocery items: rice, canned goods, laundry and bath products to name a few were prepared by the two Lodges.

Also, Batong Buhay was tapped by the DDGM to perform the Lodge of Remembrance last October 24 at Jacobo Zobel Masonic Temple. The overall Chairman is VW Rei Cedeño while WI Augie Aguilar of Las Piñas Lodge helped as Ritual Director.

It was a well attended event and the ritual team did a good job in performing their assigned roles. Congratulations Lodge of Remembrance Ritual Team!

The team is composed of: WM Antonio Limpoco III, Bro Xerxez Coronado, Bro Omar Obias, VW Lauro Garcia, Jr., Bro Christian Lantoria, Bro Jovencio Reyes, Bro Ruferick Somera, Bro Joel Purugganan, VW Jaime Bacho, Bro Dino Maniquiz, Bro Charles Bañez, Bro Romeo Calooy (FCM), Bro Anil Amarnani (EAM) and petitioners Messrs. Christopher Manalo, Vincent Chua and Marv Morales.

Special thanks to Bro Pedro Maglaya, Jr. who delivered the Eulogy for all the departed Brethren of Masonic District NCR-G.

Last but not the least; I would like to bid our Bro JW Tito Cuenco good luck on his new work assignment. The support our Lodge got from you is highly appreciated and the personal insights you have shared made me realize and visualize what a true Mason is. We will surely miss you!

*Cheers!*



## **Secretary's Corner**

### **Bro. Ruferick Somera**

**SECRETARY**

Brethren the end of year 2009 is fast approaching, I'm reminding the Brethren of their unpaid arrears and current annual dues. I won't allow a Brother to vote in the incoming elections if he has arrears or have not paid their current annual dues.

Likewise I had already mailed my clarification letter to the Brethren who have arrears with the Lodge. My report was based on documents and yellow copy of Secretary's Official Receipt turned over by the previous Secretaries. I'm expecting a strong reaction regarding this matter, especially to those who have arrears way back 2004. Although I'm willing to amend my report provided you can show proof of your payment regarding the alleged arrears. I'm determined to correct all this problems before my term ends as a Secretary. Its part of the responsibilities I accepted when I took my job as the Secretary. I just wish I had more time and not just turn over the same to the incoming Secretary.

On November 6, 2009 we will confer the sublime degree of Master Mason to Bro. Romeo Calooy Jr., and the first Master Mason for this year. We have yet to await the schedule the other Brother EAM's and other Petitioners on their progress. Last October Stated Meeting, we balloted Mr. Christopher Manalo however I regret to inform you that he did get a favorable vote among the Brethren.

Likewise we will celebrate our 93<sup>RD</sup> Charter Day this November 11, 2009. The celebration will be done on our November Stated Meeting – November 20, 2009. We will be visited by dignitaries from the Brethren of Centenary Lodge No. 7629 E. C., who will attend the Raising Conferral of Bro. Markton Abu FCM, the first Filipino Muslim of Hadji Butu A. B. Rasul Memorial Lodge U. D. the next day. Together with other Brethren from Lodges of the Masonic District NCR-G, let us make this event a good one.

On November 30, 2009, I encourage everyone to attend the "Wreath Laying Ceremony" at Libingan ng mga Bayani for our Bro. Andres Bonifacio. This is a District event and will start at 7:00 A.M. hosted by Gen. Artemio Ricarte Lodge No. 322.

*On the level, my brethren!*

## **Trestle Board**

### **Petitioner:**

Name	Date Presented
1. Mr. Clint Vincent A. Chua	May 15, 2009
2. Mr. Christopher Manalo	June 19, 2009
3. Mr. Jonathan Tagala	July 17, 2009
4. Mr. Marv Morales	October 16, 2009

### **Entered Apprentice Mason:**

Name	Conferral Date
5. Bro. Anil R. Amarnani	June 20, 2009
6. Bro. Rixon Rey P. Ducusin	July 25, 2009

### **Fellow Craft Mason:**

Name	Conferral Date
7. Bro. Romeo G. Calooy, Jr.	August 21, 2009

## **Birthday Celebrants**

Brethren, this month two of our Past Masters will celebrate their birthday – WB Reinaldo Cedeño and WB Antonio San Luis, Jr. together with our regular members Bro's. Tito Cuenco & Charles Bañez. Let us ask our Great Architect of the Universe to continue to bless and keep them in good health always.

1. Bro. Tito Cuenco	November 5
2. Bro. Charles Bañez	November 8
3. WB Reinaldo Cedeño	November 11
4. WB Antonio San Luis, Jr.	November 18



## **Inspiring impressions at Singapore's St., George Lodge No. 1152 E. C. By. WB Eduardo S. Alcaraz**

St. George Lodge No. 1152 E. C. of Singapore aptly reflects the orderliness and unforced discipline of the City State, also call the Garden City, Southeast Asia's premier metropolis.

This is the atmosphere that a visitor to St. George No. 1152 never fails to notice.

It was truly a privilege and a source of pride that brother masons from Batong Buhay Lodge No. 27 to be invited by their brethren from Singapore: WM Antonio Limpoco III, VW Antonio San Luis, Jr., VW Reinaldo Cedeño, Bro. Omar Obias, and this writer. We were there for a good reason – to witness the conferral of WM Limpoco's blood brother Doy Limpoco.

The name St. George was taken from the well-known knight and mythical dragon slayer. English free masons of the 19<sup>TH</sup> century had the propensity of adopting the name of popular saints for their lodges.

As VW Rei Cedeño said, we were place through a "quality assurance" examination to be tested and proven before we were ushered into the ceremonial hall. That's how strictly our Lion City brothers guarded their lodge from unwelcome elements.

St. George Lodge No. 1152 enjoys a rich history since it was warranted on January 22, 1867 and consecrated on June 22 of the same year by R. W. Bro. W. H. M. Read, the first District Grand Master. W. Bro. Feliz Henry Gottlieb was installed by the R. W. Read as Founder Master.

During the initial periods after its inception, Lodge No. 1152 had very few Asian members. Things have since changed, and today it's happy conglomerate of Chinese, native Malays, Hindus and Englishmen. This is also the face of today's Singapore, a haven of expats-incessantly on the move, highly progressive, and permanently green.

Like their brothers in other Asian countries, the free masons of Singapore didn't escape the cruelty of the World War II; they served their city, and Malaya, of which Singapore was then a part, heroically well. In two weeks time the Japanese overran the city.

At the POW camps, the brothers blended well with the other prisoners and helped them in many ways. The British senior commander in the region, Sir Gen. A. Percival, lavishly praised the brothers for maintaining morale and discipline, instilled in their character by their lodge, which helped most of them to survive brutality and deprivation. Among the survivors was General Percival himself.

The Japanese ransacked the lodge and threw everything our on the street, including a most treasured possession – the Holy Bible. By a stroke of fate, the book was returned to its rightful owners 17 years later. A lady purchased the book from a bookstore and gave it to her son. Realizing its value, the son placed an ad in the Straits Times. Some of the brethren saw the ad. Arrangements were made and in due time, the book found its way back to its rightful place after a simple ceremony.

Like our own Batong Buhay Lodge No. 27, St. George Lodge No. 1152 devotes great effort to education and charity. They see to it that members are constantly trained on Masonic matters and values. The lodge conducts regular fund-raising activities to fund its community and charity projects, specially those for widows, orphans and children, and those who have no or lesser means to support themselves.

There are other things we learned from our fruitful attendance at this important occasion at St. George Lodge No. 1152. The few days and nights we spent together quartered in one room, and all the impressive undertakings we witnessed, brought us closer to each other, a closeness and camaraderie we share with brother masons of Batong Buhay Lodge No. 27.



## **They are all safely home**

**Compiled by: VW Reinaldo A. Cedeño, PDGL**

THERE ARE HOME IN HEAVEN, BROTHERS  
OH, SO HAPPY AND SO BRIGHT!  
THERE IS PERFECT JOY AND BEAUTY  
IN THIS EVERLASTING LIGHT.

ALL THE PAIN AND GRIEF IS OVER,  
EVERY RESTLESS TOSSING PASSED;  
THERE ARE NOW AT PEACE FOREVER,  
SAFELY HOME IN HEAVEN AT LAST.

DID YOU WONDER THEY SO CALMLY  
TROD THE VALLEY OF THE SHADE?  
OH! BUT JESUS LOVE ILLUMINED  
EVERY DARK AND FEARFUL GLADE.

AND HE CAME HIMSELF TO MEET THEM  
IN THAT WAY SO HARD TO TREAD;  
AND WITH JESUS' ARM TO LEAN ON,  
COULD THEY HAVE ONE DOUBT OR DREAD?

WE MUST NOT GRIEVE SO SORELY,  
FOR THEY LOVE US DEARLY STILL;  
LET US TRY TO LOOK BEYOND EARTH'S SHADOWS,  
PRAY TO TRUST OUR FATHER'S WILL.

LET THEIR PASSING REMIND US  
THERE IS WORK STILL WAITING FOR US,  
SO WE MUST NOT IDLY STAND;  
DO IT NOW WHILE LIFE REMAINETH  
WE SHALL ALL REST IN JESUS LAND.

WHEN THAT WORK IS ALL CONCEPTEED,  
HE WILL GENTLY CALL US HOME  
OH, THE RAPTURE OF THAT MEETING,  
OH, THE JOY TO SEE US COME!

DEDICATED TO ALL BROTHERS AND FELLOWS  
WHO HAVE GONE THIS WAY BEFORE.

# REMINISCING THE HISTORY OF **Batong Buhay Lodge No. 27, F. & A. M.**

## **THE BEGINNING:**

The origin of Batong Buhay Lodge predates the founding of the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of the Philippines. Returning from their individual pursuits of higher education in Europe, the Filipino patriots brought home with them the Masonic liberal tenets of liberty, equality, and fraternity. Indeed a good number of them not only embraced these egalitarian ideals and joined the fraternity. Thus in time, the profound tenets of the fraternity was also sown in the motherland.

From those early lodges in the Philippines chartered under the Gran Oriente Español such as Walana Lodge, Araw Lodge, and others sprung forth Batong Buhay Lodge. The lodge however, was then known by a different name – Bagumbayan Manila Lodge. It was chartered by the Regional Grand Lodge of the Philippines No. 2 on August 13, 1914 with Worshipful Brother Jose Elchico as charter master. Among the charter brethren were: Primitivo Cruz, Patricio Mariano Cruz, Gonzalo Torrente, Francisco De Asis, Ruperto Del Castillo, Amando Solioko, P. Medina, Tomas Lorenzo, Aurelio Rusca, Manuel De Leon, and two others which records could not bear.

Now about this time, three other American lodges under the constitution of the Grand Lodge of California banded together and sought dispensation from their mother grand lodge to constitute what was the precursor to the Grand Lodge of the Philippines. It therefore made sense that in 1917, Bagumbayan Manila Lodge and 26 other lodges formerly under the Gran Oriente Espanol applied for dispensation to form a lodge and was granted on November 11, 1916 by MW Brother William H. Taylor. Bagumbayan Manila Lodge No. 27 was chartered on the afternoon of February 14, 1917.

The rebirth of Bagumbayan Manila Lodge No. 27 saw a steady rise in membership with three entered apprentices and twenty nine master masons in its roster including those of the original charter members.

As a result of both concerted efforts, the lodge's charter was rescued from imminent arrest, the enthusiasm and interest of the brethren rekindled and the long spell of lodge inactivity broken. In time, the lodge gained the reputation as a lodge of airline pilots a tribute and recognition of the magnanimous efforts and concerted actions of the members of the 357 Club.

## **THE GROWTH YEARS**

Under the stewardship of WB Ricardo Misa, the lodge relocated to Jacobo Zobel Masonic Temple in Makati City, a move designed to bring the lodge closer to the abodes and work places of the brethren. The decision was hailed by its members and attendance largely improved.

On the occasion of the 75<sup>TH</sup> Charter Anniversary (1991), the lodge undertook fundraising activities to improve its finances and coupled with intensive collection of arrearages, the lodge was finally able to settle its account with the Grand Lodge.

The following year saw the approval of significant amendments to its lodge by-laws under the term of WB Ben Maturan. Two terms later, in April 1994 Edict No. 167 was signed by MW Rizal Aportadera officially excluding the lodge from District 1-B and transferring the same to District 9-B through the efforts of the incumbent master WB Lauro Garcia.

In 1994 during the incumbency of WB John Llamas, the lodge initiated its first scholarship program at the Don Emilio Tria Tirona Memorial High School at Kawit, Cavite which benefited ten students. It was also during this time that "The Living Stone" the official organ of the lodge was revived after being dormant a couple of years.

During the district fellowship and awards night held in March 4, 1995, Batong Buhay Lodge No. 27 received its first distinction as outstanding lodge for the entire district. A feat which would again be replicated two more times, the following year under VW Antonio San Luis and in 2007 under the able tutelage of WB Eduardo Alcaraz.

1996 and 1997 saw Batong Buhay Lodge No. 27 passing a resolution adopting Union Lodge No. 70 in La Union, as sister lodge and the formation of the Batong Buhay Choir which would later sing the Pambansang Awit (National Anthem) and Grand Lodge Hymn in four voices at the April 1998 Annual Communications.

The lodge faced new challenges in late 1998 with the Philippine Airlines pilots' strike causing a significant number of its pilot brethren to seek employment abroad. However, with the influx of fresh brethren from the various sectors in business and the armed services, the impact of the loss attendees was somewhat mitigated. Over the years, continued its labors and slowly beefed-up its ranks to weather any storms under the competent tutorship of its distinguished roll of past masters.

However, the early months on 1921 would cast dark clouds over the newly formed lodge where its membership was divided over some of their brethren's participation in the organization of clandestine lodge Bagumbayan Lodge No. 352.

The lodge ultimately decided to expel all those members, and to further distinguish it from another similarly named lodge (Bagumbayan Lodge No. 4) the remaining members decided to rename it to Batong Buhay Lodge No. 27. The name was chosen to allegorical refer to the granite stones hewn, squared, marked, and numbered in the quarries which were used in the building of King Solomon's Temple

On August 20, 1945 the first candidate raised to the sublime degree during the post war years was Bro Felix Gabat. Years later, in December 7, 1968 and under his stewardship, the maiden issue of the "The Livingstone" was published to serve as trestle board on the lodge's activities and to reach out to brethren from all over world. This special edition of The Livingstone Trestle Board, therefore also commemorates its 40<sup>TH</sup> anniversary.

## **THE CHALLENGING YEARS**

The late sixties up to the early eighties were most difficult times for the lodge. Membership was at its lowest and dues remain unpaid. The lodge had difficulty mustering a quorum and accumulated payables to the Grand Lodge were at its peak. Batong Buhay Lodge No.27 found itself in dire straits with its charter on the very brink of being arrested.

About this time, valiant master masons belonging to the 357 Club came to its aid and affiliated with the lodge literally resuscitating it. Founded in 1983, the 357 Club is an organization composed of brethren from various lodges - airline pilots and personnel from the nation's flag carrier Philippine Airlines whose purpose was to promote camaraderie and fellowship amongst its membership. Among those who came over were VW Tito F. Garcia, WB Ernesto Pabalan, WB Evaristo Leviste, WB Tolentino Arguelles, Bro. Ronnie Mendoza, WB Carlito Blanco, Bro Manuel Juan, Bro Ernesto Llamas, and Bro Jose Apacible. In time, the lodge was rejuvenated and the long drought was broken.

Also, the new lease on life of Batong Buhay Lodge No. 27 can in no small measure be attributed to the dedication and concern of spouses WB Reynaldo (also a member of the 357 Club) and Sister Baby Paz who personally arranged to settle the lodge's arrearages with the Grand Lodge of the Philippines, in a clever offsetting scheme thus completing the recovery of Batong Buhay Lodge from the quagmire of financial distress. The lodge gratefully acknowledged the financial assistance extended by WB Reynaldo Paz, slowly amortizing the amount with whatever amount it can spare during its monthly meetings.

## **INTO THE FUTURE**

The lodge today is as vibrant as ever. Its roster composed a healthy mix of professionals who are not only active in the craft but are excellent exemplars of the glorious tenets of freemasonry. It continues to stand proud among the halls of the fraternity and a shining beacon in the community.

Batong Buhay Lodge No. 27 has been adjudged Most Outstanding Lodge in the District NCR-G thrice and its sons stand proud among the luminaries of the fraternity occupying respectable high positions both in the Grand Lodge and appendant bodies.

The lodge has produced two Grand Lodge's "Ten Outstanding Masons of the Year" awardees in the person of Bro. James Reamon (1994) in the field of Science and Technology and VW Tito Garcia in the field of Technology. Two have occupied the position of Senior Grand Lecturers, VW John Llamas and VW Juanito Vaño while three District Deputy Grand Masters, VW Ricardo Misa, VW John Llamas, and VW Antonio San Luis. A total of seventeen past masters and honorary members have served in various capacities as Grand Line Officers.

On the eve of its centennial celebration in 2016, Batong Buhay Lodge No. 27 continues to work silently according to the very best Masonic traditions, offering refuge to all who knock at her doors, believing in the noble aims of our gentle craft, taking good men and making them better.

## **Masonic Quotes**

*"Freemasonry is a beautiful system of morality, veiled in allegory, and illustrated by symbols." --Hemming*

Source: A Dictionary of Freemasonry  
Compiled by: Robert Macoy

# Pictorial

LODGE OF REMEMBRANCE  
Batong Buhay Lodge No. 27 – October 24, 2009/ JZMT



# Pictorial

LODGE OF REMEMBRANCE  
Batong Buhay Lodge No. 27 – October 24, 2009/ JZMT



# Pictorial

LODGE OF REMEMBRANCE  
Batong Buhay Lodge No. 27 – October 24, 2009/ JZMT



## Schedule of Activities

November 7	Third Degree Conferral of Bro. Romeo Calooy Jr.
November 20	Stated Meeting & 93 <sup>RD</sup> Charter Day Celebration
November 30	Wreath Laying Ceremony – Bro. Andres Bonifacio
December 5	Multi-District Convention

*Brethren, please exert extra effort to participate in all our forthcoming activities. Let's enjoy our Masonic life!*

THE REAL SECRET OF  
**FREEMASONRY**  
MAKING GOOD MEN BETTER

## Editorial Board

Chairman	WM Antonio J. Limpoco III
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