

The 100th. Birthday of Mr. Ernst Blumentritt

By Lucien Spittael



Mr. Ernst Blumentritt

Mr. Ernst Blumentritt is the only living grandson of Dr. Jose Rizal's most important and special European friend, Ferdinand Blumentritt. Rizal regularly addressed him as "*mein bruder*" (my Brother) in their correspondence.

His full name is Ernst, Ferdinand, Marian Blumentritt Ferdinand like his father and grandfather and Marian in reverence of his godfather: Mariano Ponce.

In deference to this wonderful man's great age and at the express wish of the celebrant, only two, non-family, guests were invited: Dr. Fritz Hack-Ullmer, great-grandson of Pastor Ullmer with whose family Rizal stayed while in Wilhelmsfeld, and Lucien Spittael. Mr. Ernst Blumentritt celebrated his 100th. Birthday on 8th. June 2011. We looked forward greatly to being reunited once again with our good friend, as we previously visited him twice each year.

After a very long trip by road (750 Km.), my wife and I arrived at about 11.00hrs at Mr. Blumentritt's residence in Germany. Having graciously and happily received all our congratulations he was presented with his very special gifts. These included:

- A collection of photographic streetscapes of Blumentritt Street in Manila; the railway station; LRT station; church; police station; pawn shop; plastic shop etc.; which I had taken during my Manila visit in February of this year.
- A photograph of the Blumentritt family showing his great-grandfather; he had never previously seen his great-grandfather in a photograph.
- Two works published by his Father. He had not previously owned a copy of these works.



Ernst Blumentritt & Lucien Spittaël, Folder with Blumentritt memorabilia

Dr. and Mrs. Fritz Hack-Ullmer also presented some special gifts with which Mr. Ernst was very pleased.



Lucien Spittael, Ernst Blumentritt, Dr. Fritz Hack-Ullmer

From Mr. Blumentritt's residence we drove to an exclusive restaurant where a sumptuous, celebratory meal had been arranged by a niece of Mr. Blumentritt.



Mr. Klug, Mrs. Hack, Ernst, Ernst, Mrs. Spittael, Dr. Hack (hidden Mrs. Klug)

Several hours later we returned to the residence, where we all partook of a quite magnificent birthday cake, made especially for Ernst by a good friend, and a cup of coffee.



Mrs. Klug, Mr. Klug, friend, Dr. Hack, Ernst Blumentritt

Unfortunately, at 17.00hrs we had to leave Mr. Blumentritt's house, having promised, at his insistence, to return for another visit quite soon. We arrived home safely in Belgium a little after midnight, tired but very happy to have shared such a special day with such a wonderful man. After a short night's sleep we were on the move again this time for our trip to Manila to attend the festivities of the sesquicentennial of Rizal's Birthday.

Sir Lucien Spittael.