



Newsletter Knights of RIZAL



Diamond Chapter Antwerp—Flanders—Belgium

Issue 44

Volume 8

December 2015

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Knights of Rizal - Diamond Chapter - 2015

Introduction

Dear Brother Knights of Rizal Diamond Chapter and affiliated chapters in Belgium, Europe and worldwide,

Dear friends of our organization,

Again we are reaching the end of the year with its year End celebrations. Also the Diamond Chapter will have its celebration: our yearly Chartering Anniversary on the 30th January 2016. This is also a good opportunity to reflect on the past year activities and on the ones to come. It is also the perfect occasion to renew friendships and to meet new friends. And sometimes a friend leaves us. Like Sir Bien de Leon who passed away in the Philippines last October.

In this issue we will tell you about our project for the 125th celebration of the first publication of the El Fili in Ghent. We have defined the different tasks but there is still a lot of preparatory work to perform. But we have a good task team and I am convinced that they will do an excellent job.

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I would like to thank the board for helping me to achieve a better price for our annual Chartering Anniversary. I sincerely hope that we can satisfy all participants on the 30th January 2016 in De Watermeulen.

Reflecting back on the year, I also want to express my gratitude to all the members of our Chapter for their continuing support, not only to me but especially to the objectives of our organization. Thank you, Sirs and Ladies! Without you, we could not obtain the same results!

I hope that I can convey my wishes for the new year to everyone of you on the 30th January!

Non Omnis Moriar

Sir Ronny Felix, KCR

Chapter Commander 2015-2017

Distinguished Service Medal

Diamond Chapter - Antwerp

Board 2015

Sir Ronny Felix, KCR, Chapter Commander 2015 = 2016

Sir Paul Verloo, KCR, Past Chapter Commander

Sir Tony Guansing, KGOR, Trustee, Past Regional Commander for Europe

Sir Dominiek Segaert, KGOR, Past Area Commander for Belgium

Sir Peter Van Bogaert, KGOR, Advisor & Trustee

Sir Kris Van Thillo, KCR, Past Chapter Commander

Sir Roy De Mol, KCR, Exchequer, Deputy Commander

Sir Rik Van Tiggel, KCR, Deputy Commander

Sir Danny Vandenbogaerde, KCR, Chancellor

In Memoriam

Sir Bien De Leon



Dear Friends of Sir Bien and to all those who have known him,

He was a special friend, a good man, kind, helpful, generous and a gentleman. Due to his heart ailment nearly 30 years ago, his career being a Seaman in a shipping vessel as Radio/electronics Operator was cut short when he was hospitalized in Amsterdam with a serious heart condition and since then his heart functioned with the aid of a pacemaker. With his enthusiasm and positive attitude, since he could not go back to his old job because of his condition, Bien survived by his talent in cooking, creating Filipino Dishes, catering and helping friends who needed assistance in the kitchen during big events and this brought him closer to the Filipino Community in Holland and Belgium where he met Veronique, his Polish/Belgian wife who sadly passed away two years ago. Bien and Vero, survived by a single child, a 21 year old son Raphael.

Sir Bien was a Knight in the Brussels Chapter.

Bien went to the Philippines on Oct 10, 2015 to attend the funeral of the eldest brother in the family. He was supposed to be back this weekend of October, but he passed away last Tuesday, Oct 27, 2015 early dawn, he had a heart attack while asleep.

Sir Bien, will indeed be sadly missed. May he Rest In Peace.

Non Omnis Moriar

Rizal Autumn Activity & bbq

30/10/2015

Last October 30th the Diamond Chapter had their yearly autumn activity. We started with a small but pleasant lecture about the Other Rizal. Sir Paul Verloo talked about Rizal's travels and his exile in Dapitan, mentioning some trivia about Rizal that not many knights might be aware of. Sir Ronny Felix continued with a small presentation about Rizal as a freemason (a more detailed article is written in this issue). Finally Sir Dominiek Segaert showed us a lot of memorabilia about Jose Rizal.

After this presentation the bbq was ready and as usual very sumptuous and delicious!

After the meal everyone could try their luck with the tombola and a lot of practical prizes. It was about 10 pm when the lights went out and a new successful Rizal event had passed!

EL FILI CELEBRATION 2016: WOW!

Dominiek Segaert

Recently a Task Force for the El Fili Celebration 2016 was formed and headed by our Chapter Commander Sir Ronny Felix. The group consists of devoted Rizalians and Knights of the Diamond Chapter: Sir Antonio Guansing, Sir Peter Van Bogaert, Sir Lucien Spittaël, Sir Danny Vandenberghe, Sir Paul Verloo, Sir Dirk Vandeweghe, Sir Eddy Verheye, Sir Guy Waterloos, Sir Willy Demeyere, Sir Peter Uhrig, Sir Kristoff Mortier, Sir Dominiek Segaert. The group came together until now two times but there were also in some small subgroups meetings to update all ideas regarding the celebration of the 125th anniversary of the publication of the Rizal's masterpiece El Filibusterismo and this during the weekend of Sep. 17 and 18, 2016 in the City of Ghent.

A short update and list of ideas that had been proposed: the publication of a unique bilateral post stamp with heading Rizal backed by the scenery of Ghent (design by Mr. Rik Driessen), a memorabilia t-shirt, an academic meeting and lecture with Sir Ambeth Ocampo about Rizal, exhibition of Rizal memorabilia, presentation of the German translation of the El Fili by Sir Fritz Hack, unveiling of a Rizal bust in Ghent.

Sir Ronny Felix, together with Sir Lucien Spittaël and Sir Dominiek Segaert had on Nov. 18 a first meeting with the Philippine Embassy to request them for assistance in the celebration. The fruitful meeting took place in the Rizal room of the Philippine Embassy together with Mr. Ralph Vincent C. Abarquez, Third Secretary & Vice Consul, who represented Ambassador H.E. Victoria Bataclan, together with Mrs. Faith Planas-Bautista, Cultural Attaché of the Philippine Embassy.



from left to right: Sir Lucien Spittaël, Mrs. Faith Planas-Bautista, Sir Dominiek Segaert, Mr. Ralph Vincent C. Abarquez, Vice Consul, Sir Ronny Felix

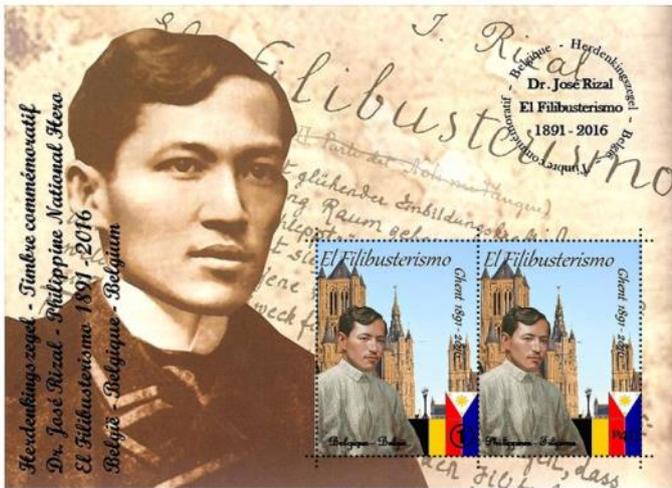
All these ideas are now in an implementation status and many thanks to everybody who backs these ideas. All this has been presented to the KOR Area Council Nov. 21 in Brussels. Only the KOR Diamond Chapter will organise the El Fili activities but the other Chapters of Aalst, Brussels and Charleroi promised to participate and to attend the activities.

On Dec. 14 Sir Ronny Felix and Sir Dominiek Segaert had a first meeting in Knokke-Heist with artist Mr. Bernard Vandenberghe of Ghent regarding the project of making a Rizal bust wherein the ideas of the El Fili will be implemented. Mr. Vandenberghe is a well known artist and made already a lot of beautiful sculptures for the City of Ghent, Ostend and other Belgian Cities. Currently Sir Ronny and Sir Dominiek are investigating the possibility for starting the project. For this a meeting with the Mayor of Ghent Mr. Daniël Termont and the Councillor for Culture Mrs. Annelies Storms is scheduled for January with possible also a delegation of the Philippine Embassy. In this

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meeting, also the Rizal post stamp project with Sir Dominiek and Sir Dirk will be hopefully finalised. A final decision will be made by Bpost by the end of January according to Mr. Bart Janssen of the Stamp Department of BPost. For the Philippine Postal Corporation, with whom Sir Dominiek had a meeting end of July in Manila, the idea of publishing a bilateral post stamp in the Philippines and



Stamp designed by mr Rik Driesen



In the City Hall of Ghent: Sir Dominiek Segaert, KGOR, Mrs. Annelies Storms, Councilor of Culture of the City of Ghent, Sir Dirk Vandeweghe - presentation of the design of Mr. Rik Driesen

Belgium is much appreciated and therefore there was a green light for this. Belgian Ambassador H.E. Roland Van Remoortele supports the project, an excellent idea to nourish the 70th anniversary of bilateral relations between Belgium and the Philippines. His message will be read on Jan. 30, during the 16th Chartering

Anniversary of KOR Diamond. Philippine Ambassador H.E. Victoria Bataclan is also invited to write a supporting letter for

the publishing of the Rizal stamp. Let's cross our fingers for this whole project!

A group formed around Sir Willy Demeyere will investigate a fundraising activity for shouldering the expenses in the whole project. More about a fundraising activity for the El Fili project will be announced soon.

So, what more can we want than a very vibrant El Fili Task Force to celebrate the 125th anniversary of Rizal's El Fili?

Indeed, it will surely highlight also the 70 years of bilateral relations between our two beautiful countries Belgium and the Philippines!

(D.S.)

Rizal as a freemason

Ronny Felix

In this newsletter, we will go more into detail on the topic of freemasonry in Rizal's life. As we will show, freemasonry has always been a part of Rizal's life, whether it was in his writings, his decisions or his relationship with friends and others.

What is freemasonry?

Freemasonry is a fraternal organization that traces its origins to the local fraternities of stonemasons, which from the end of the fourteenth century regulated the qualifications of stonemasons and their interaction with authorities and clients. Masons are members of the organization. The basic, local organizational unit of Freemasonry is the lodge. The lodges are usually supervised and governed at the regional level (usually coterminous with either a state, province, or national border) by a Grand Lodge or Grand Orient.

The idea of Masonic brotherhood probably descends from a 16th-century legal definition of a brother as one who has taken an oath of mutual support to another. Accordingly, Masons swear at each degree to keep the contents of that degree secret, and to support and protect their brethren unless they have broken the law.

The absolute minimum requirement of any body of Freemasons is that the candidate must be free, and considered to be of good character.[31] There is usually an age requirement, varying greatly between Grand Lodges, and (in some jurisdictions) capable of being overridden by a dispensation from the Grand Lodge. The underlying assumption is that the candidate should be a mature adult.

In addition, most Grand Lodges require the candidate to declare a belief in a Supreme Being. In a few cases, the candidate may be required to be of a specific religion. The form of Freemasonry most common in Scandinavia (known as the Swedish Rite), for example, accepts only Christians.[32] At the other end of the spectrum, "Liberal" or Continental Freemasonry, exemplified by the Grand Orient de France, does not require a declaration of belief in any deity, and accepts atheists (a cause of discord with the rest of Freemasonry).[

Freemasonry is an organization whose members are concerned with moral and spiritual values, self-improvement, and helping their communities with charitable endeavors. Masons (synonymous with Freemasons) take oaths to be good to their Brothers in Masonry, their families, and all people. They are taught that we are part of the brotherhood of man. While it requires candidates to express a belief in a Supreme Being, Freemasonry is not a religion or a substitute for religion, and it has no theology, dogma, or path to salvation.

Why did Rizal become a mason?

Rizal's decision to become a freemason came as a direct result of his well-rounded education, experience, travel and ultimately, his belief that fraternity and brotherhood would help him achieve his dream of the eventual liberation of the Filipino people and country from injustice, inequality and abuse from the religious friars and local Spanish rule.

Other possible influences included family members like his uncle, Jose Alonso, a mason and Knight Commander of the Spanish Order of Isabel the Catholic and Carlos III. It was in his house in Binan where

young Jose stayed when he was a student. Also, Rizal's elder brother, Paciano, worked for Father Jose Burgos and harboured bitter personal feelings about the Cavite Martyrdom of 1872. Paciano made a pact with his younger brother to continue their fight for the betterment of the Filipino people.

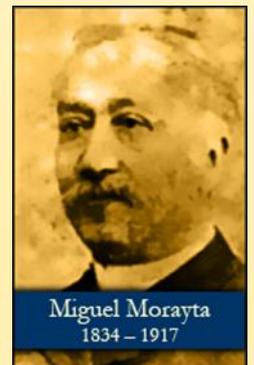
When Jose Rizal left Manila in 1882, he carried with him growing resentment after witnessing the injustices suffered by his mother and the people of Calamba, and after his own personal experiences of inequity and maltreatment by Spanish students and teachers at the Universidad de Santo Tomas.

Freemasonry throughout Rizal's life.

In fact it is astonishing to see that, although it is not mentioned very much in history books, throughout Rizal's life, as a student until his execution, Freemasonry has always been a guidance for him.

On his way to Spain, in 1882, in order to continue his studies, Rizal passed through Naples, Italy, where he spent two days observing national celebrations to honour the death of a great national hero Giuseppe Garibaldi. Rizal learned that Garibaldi was a 33rd degree Scottish rite Master Mason best recognized for unifying his country.

Upon arrival in Madrid, Rizal met many intellectuals who were masons and, to his surprise, exercised unbridled freedom of speech and activity – concepts unfamiliar to Rizal in his native country. Miguel Morayta, Professor of History at the Universidad Central de Madrid, and Ex-President Francisco Pi y Margall, both master masons, played a significant role facilitating Rizal's membership at the Acacia Lodge No. 9 of the Grand Orientes de Espana in Madrid. In accordance with Masonic practices then in Spain, Rizal selected a symbolic name by which he was to be known: 'Dimasalang' (Untouchable).



In 1889, he also joined the all-Filipino Solidaridad Lodge No. 53 in Madrid founded by Marcelo del Pilar, Julio Llorente, Antonio Luna, Teodoro Sandico and others.

The Gran Oriente Español, the principal federation of Spanish lodges that accepted members from the colonies, consented to establish lodges in the Philippines among Filipinos with Solidaridad Lodge taking the lead. Gran Oriente was headed by Miguel Morayta, one of several Spanish politicians who openly supported the Filipinos' struggle for political reforms in their homeland.

Solidaridad Lodge promptly assigned Antonio Luna and Pedro Serrano Laktaw to accomplish the mission in the Filipinas. Luna was mainly responsible for designing the organizational system that would allow the lodges to operate in the open as Masons and to pursue their propaganda activities as filibusteros. Due to previous commitments, however, Luna had to join his brother, Juan, in Paris. Laktaw returned to Filipinas in October 1891, after receiving his certificate of Maestro Superior from the Escuela Normal de Madrid.

Before his departure from Spain, the Gran Oriente Español designated Rizal as its Grand Representative with authority to represent the Body in France and Germany.

Masonic researchers claim that Rizal also became a lodge member in Germany where he went for further medical studies. Some of his German acquaintances were also Freemasons: Dr. Rudolf Virchow, an anthropologist, and Dr. Feodor Jagor, an ethnologist. These Masonic brothers of Rizal sponsored his membership in the Berlin Anthropological Society and the Berlin Ethnological Society.

In 1891, as his second novel, *El Filibusterismo*, was being printed in Ghent, Belgium, he applied for admission in the Temple de L'Honneur et de L'Union, a lodge in Paris, France that had Dr. Trinidad Pardo de Tavera, Valentin Ventura and Dr. Ariston Baustista as among its members.

Rizal's *El Filibusterismo* was published in September 1891, and in October he departed for Hong Kong. There he enjoyed a delightful reunion with family members. He wanted to return to Manila but desisted in view of the controversy his books had generated, especially his second, *El Filibusterismo*. While in Hong Kong, Rizal developed an extensive and lucrative medical practice. Meanwhile, a Lodge for Filipinos, Nilad No. 144, had been established in Manila. The Lodge membership honoured Rizal in absentia by electing him "Honourable Venerable Master" and had the Secretary inform him by letter of his preferment.



Rizal in the Freemason costume

Rizal arrived in Manila from Hong Kong on 21 June 1892. There was a surge to organize Masonic triangles and lodges. A month later, he mobilized the members to form another organization, *La Liga Filipina*. Rizal believed that the project of political and social transformation in Filipinas should be a project of Filipinos, not just of Freemasons. He viewed *La Liga* as the wider organizational vehicle for building one nation. This sense of national identity was crucial, according to Rizal, to significantly achieve political unity and democratic ends. It was founded on 3 July 1892 during a special assembly of Freemasons at the house of Doroteo Ongjunko in Ilaya Street, Tondo. Rizal was present on this occasion and openly encouraged the members of the new organization to participate and support the propaganda campaign for political rights that was already in motion.

The Filipino Masons seized every opportunity to honour Rizal after his return, and the Spanish authorities, in turn, monitored his every movement. Worried about revolution, the authorities, constantly encouraged by Rizal's enemies among the friars, had him arrested and deported to Dapitan on July 6, 1892. Further, the authorities began to close Lodges and deport active Masons. When he was deported to Dapitan, most of the Masons were bounded, tortured then killed but their brothers still held on. Five of them formed the *Katipunan*, D. Arellano, T. Plata, V. Diaz, Ladislao Diwa and A. Bonifacio (July 7 1892).

On 7 May 1896 local newspapers published an article about the revolutionary activities of Filipino Freemasons in Hong Kong and Japan. Those implicated included Jose Ma. Basa and Mariano Marti (no relation to the Jose Marti of Cuba), both Freemasons actively engaged in the Filipino propaganda movement. Basa, a lawyer, had escaped from his exile in the Marianas and had turned to business when he made Hong Kong his base of activities. One of his tasks as Filipino patriot was the distribution, openly and clandestinely, of "*Noli Me Tangere*" and later on, "*El Filibusterismo*"—the novels of Rizal that the

Spanish colonial authorities took pains to ban from public circulation. Both Basa and Marti, had assisted Rizal in establishing his medical practice in Hong Kong during his stay from November 1891 to June 1892, while on his return journey to Filipinas.

The Jesuits made a determined effort to influence Rizal in his Dapitan exile, even enlisting former college professors. Their effort failed. Rizal enjoyed family visits in Dapitan, and friends of his sought to arrange a flight to safety. Rizal, however, did not want to embrace the safety net of a fugitive.

In late May 1896 Rizal received a guest from Manila - Pio Valenzuela. Valenzuela came as a brother Freemason and as a member of the Katipunan. Valenzuela was tasked to inform Rizal that the outbreak of hostilities between Spanish government and the Katipunan was inevitable. The arrests, incarceration and torture, and killings of Freemasons and suspected Katipuneros had reached a point that the revolutionaries, in order to survive and become a viable force, had to confront the Spanish onslaught with military action.

The leaders of the Katipunan wanted to consult Rizal before launching the armed revolution. It was obvious to everyone that Rizal in exile would be a helpless target to the Spanish political and religious authorities once the uprising began. Foremost in their minds was the attempted assassination of Rizal in Dapitan by Pablo Mercado, who was later exposed as an agent of the Spanish clergy. So a plot was also designed for Rizal's escape from exile.

Perhaps, because of the secrecy involved in the meeting of Rizal and Valenzuela, no documentation on this matter has been found by historical researchers. It's possible, however, that Rizal was meant to be smuggled out of the archipelago and to go into hiding in North Borneo which was then a British territory. The place had been surveyed previously by Rizal himself. During his stay in Hong Kong from November 1891 to June 1892, Rizal was able to arrange a trip to North Borneo. He reached the place in early March 1892. With the support of British officials in Borneo, he determined the feasibility of establishing an agricultural colony by Filipinos. The arrangements he had with the British authorities must have been quite positive.

When José Martí and his compatriots launched the Cuban Revolution in 1895, Rizal offered his services to the Governor-General as a volunteer physician. He preferred this choice above the proposal of his friends to escape to North Borneo. He was concerned that the Spanish rulers would persecute his family. By applying as a physician in the Spanish army, he hoped to be reinstated.

On 1 July 1896 Rizal) received a letter from Blanco indicating that his offer of voluntary service in Cuba had been accepted. Rizal eventually dismissed the escape plan to North Borneo because the opportunity to go to Cuba as a medical volunteer seemed to be a more viable scheme. He was anxious that if he escaped, members of his family, including his wife Josephine Bracken, would be subjected to further oppression and the people he worked with in Dapitan to reprisals. Paciano, his elder brother who later on became a respected leader of revolutionary forces in the Southern Tagalog region, was once deported to Mindoro and was again being threatened to be deported to Jolo. His mother and some of his sisters were being evicted from their land and were recommended for deportation after they accused the friars of land grabbing in their Calamba hometown.

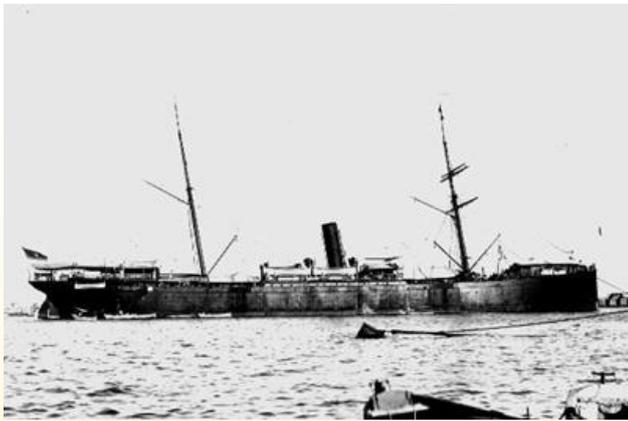
Rizal was well aware that the links between his family and Freemasonry made them vulnerable to violence. His brother Paciano associated with Freemasons during his student days in Manila when he worked with Fr. Jose Burgos in the *Comite de Reformadores*. Members of the *Comite* were implicated in the Cavite Revolt of 1872 and led to the execution of Fr. Burgos and two other Filipino priests, Fr. Mariano Gomez and Fr. Jacinto Zamora.

He was well aware that his sisters Josefa (Sumikat), Narcisa and Trinidad (Sumibol) were Freemasons; so were his nieces, Angelica Rizal Lopez and Delfina Rizal Herbosa. They were initiated in July 1893 and became members of *Logia de Adopcion*. A few weeks after their initiation, Narcisa and Trinidad together with their mother, traveled to Dapitan to join Rizal. Josefa, Angelica and Delfina later joined the women's chapter of the *Katipunan*.

On 31 July 1896, at midnight, Rizal departed from Dapitan after staying there for four years and 13 days. He left on board the ship *España* to fulfill his assignment in Cuba. The ship arrived in Manila Bay on August 6. He found out that he missed by a day the boat that was to transport him to Spain. The colonial authorities arrested and detained him inside the ship, *Castilla*, which was anchored off the coast of Cavite. While in detention, he received another letter from Governor-General Blanco endorsing his assignment to Cuba to the Spanish Minister of War. Blanco even mentioned that Rizal's conduct as an exile in Dapitan was exemplary.

The existence of the *Katipunan* was uncovered by the Spanish authorities while Rizal waited for an opportunity to sail to Spain and then to Cuba. Bonifacio (Sinukuan) launched his attack on San Juan del Monte on 30 August 1896, but the assault failed. The following day, Governor-General Blanco declared martial law in the city of Manila and the provinces of Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Bulacan, Pampanga, Tarlac and Nueva Ecija. On August 31, Emilio Aguinaldo (Colon), Candido Tirona, Baldomero Aguinaldo, Mariano Alvarez and Santiago Alvarez launched simultaneous attacks on Spanish troops in Cavite province. Revolutionary forces of Nueva Ecija province, under the leadership of Mariano Llanera of *Triangulo Centeno* in Cabiao and Pantaleon Belmonte of *Triangulo Morayta* in Gapan followed suit by staging a concerted assault on the provincial capital of San Isidro on September 2. Many of the leaders of the uprising were members of Masonic triangles and lodges and of the *Katipunan*.

Since the *Katipunan* was an underground organization, the Spanish authorities went after Freemasons who were suspected of being affiliated with the *Katipunan*. Those who were imprisoned included the writers Aurelio Tolentino (Pangahas) and Severino Reyes; the brothers Juan and Antonio Luna (Gay-Lussac); Vicente Lukban (Victor Emmanuel) who later became the politico-military chief of Bicol region and eventually, of the Samar-Leyte front during the First Republic; and Rosario Villaruel (Minerva), the first Filipino woman initiated to Freemasonry. Among those who were harassed and detained were Filipino priests who had been asserting their rights to be recognized by the Catholic Church.



Isla de Panay



Spanish cruiser Crisobal Colon

Finally, on 3 September 1896, Rizal departed from Manila for Spain on board the ship *Isla de Panay*. When he landed in Spain on 6 October 1896, Spanish soldiers brought him straight to the prison castle of Montjuich in Barcelona. A military officer informed Rizal that various newspapers in Madrid identified him as one of the leading conspirators of the revolution in Filipinas. After being detained for eight hours, he was deported back to the colony on board the boat *S.S. Colon*. His chances of reaching Cuba vanished. Rizal arrived in Manila on November 3 and was immediately imprisoned in Fort Santiago.

Governor-General Blanco, who refused to impose the death sentence on Rizal, was undermined by the Spanish clergy, who wanted a written retraction by Rizal of his Masonic membership. He was replaced by Camilo Polavieja. On December 29 the new Governor-General affirmed the death sentence of Rizal for being “the principal organizer and living soul of the insurrection in the Filipinas.”

In his memoir, *The Katipunan and the Revolution*, Gen. Santiago Alvarez of Cavite relates how leaders of the Katipunan prepared a plan to snatch away Rizal from his guards while on his way to the execution grounds. Rizal, however, rejected the plan because its implementation would involve the loss of many lives.

Early morning on December 30, Rizal was killed by firing squad at Bagumbayan field. On 11 January 1897 another group was executed on the same site, 10 of them were Freemasons. Another 13 Filipinos from Cavite, 10 of them Freemasons, died by musketry on September 11 and they are remembered today because one of the towns in that province is now called *Trece Martires* (Thirteen Martyrs).



The Philippines declared its independence on 12 June 1898. The first commemoration of Jose Rizal’s death happened on 30 December 1898. It was Emilio Aguinaldo (Colon), as President of the First Philippine Republic, who assigned that day a public holiday for recalling the life and deeds of one also known as *Dimasalang*.

In 1912, Rizal’s family did not heed the Jesuits’ request to rebury their eminent pupil. That honor was instead bestowed upon the Masons, led by Timoteo Paez who, in full regalia, carried Rizal’s remains in a long procession to the Masonic Temple in Tondo for funeral rites, before final interment at the Luneta, where he had been executed.

What was the name of Rizal's girlfriend in Brussels?

All Rizal's biographers mention that Rizal had a romance with Suzanne Jacoby.

Rizal arrived in Belgium on 28 January 1891.

As it was his custom, Rizal took his lodging in a private house in Brussels. In the house two ladies and their younger niece were living. These ladies were identified as Catherine Jacoby and her younger sister Suzanne Jacoby, running the house with their niece also named Suzanne.

Suzanne Jacoby and Catherine Jacoby was registered in Brussels, Rue Philippe de Champagne, 38.

The niece Suzanne joined her aunts in Brussels on a later date.

All three were born in Asselborn, Grand Duchy of Luxembourg.

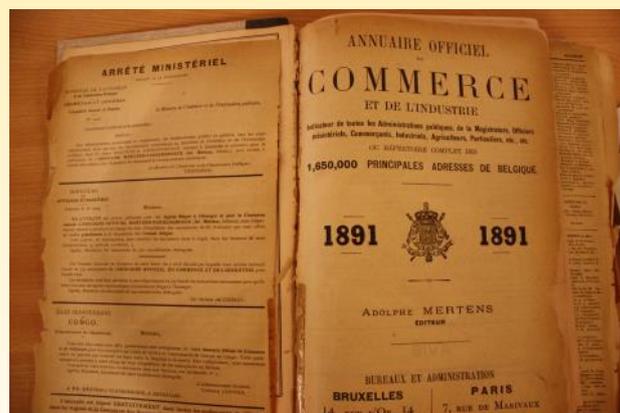
My attraction was caught by an undated love letter sent to Rizal in Madrid in August 1890. It was written in French and was signed by Suzanne T.

Who was Suzanne T.?

In 1993 I started my Rizal research in Brussels in order to find out who was Suzanne T. In the old city books I found that Catherine and Suzanne Jacoby lived in house number 38, Rue Philippe de Champagne but also their niece with the name Suzanne Thill.

This means that Rizal's girlfriend was the niece Suzanne Thill who signed the letter with Suzanne T. and not Suzanne Jacoby.

Lucien Spitael



Knights of Rizal **Diamond Chapter Antwerp**

Invitation

16th Chartering Anniversary **Saturday 30th January 2016**

VENUE

- ❖ *Salons De Watermeulen – Burchtstraat 160 – 9150 KRUIBEKE – www.watermeulen.be*

PROGRAM

- ❖ *17:00 Welcome – reception*
- ❖ *Dubbing, elevation and exaltation rituals*
- ❖ *Inspirational speeches*
- ❖ *Group pictures*
- ❖ *Fraternal dinner – buffet style*
- ❖ *Dessert – coffee – fellowship*
- ❖ *Dancing – disco*

PARTICIPATION

- ❖ *55,00 Euro per person – children 4 to 14: half price*

PAYMENT

We prefer payment by bank transfer to our account no. 979 6095137 50

(IBAN: BE86 9796 0951 3750 - BIC: ARSBE22)

Diamond Chapter Rizal – Venneborglaan 90 – 2100 Deurne

RESERVATIONS

Please make your reservations through one of the board members below before Sunday 18th January:

Ronny Felix: felilong@gmail.com – Tel. 03/252 77 81 Mob.:0473 491 482

dominiek.segaert@skynet.be – Mobile 0479 691 865

paul.verloo@hotmail.com – Mobile 0486 565 806

Memorial Service Sir Danny Deckmyn

Sir Willy Demeyere has asked our support for a memorial service for Sir Danny Deckmyn. Sir Danny was a Knight Officer of Rizal and died 10 years ago dramatically after a work accident. He was 46 years old.

On the 10th April 2016, a mass will be held at 10.30 in the church of Ninove followed by a flower ceremony at his grave.

All knights are invited to attend in their Rizal barang.

Decisions from last board meeting in December

Following items were discussed in our last board meeting on the 3rd December 2015.

- 1. New candidates for the Diamond Chapter were reviewed and decisions were made about elevations and exaltations.*
- 2. A status of the preparations for the El Fili Celebrations was presented.*
- 3. Feedback on our Rizal autumn activity showed again a nice profit.*
- 4. The pricing of our Chartering activity in the Watermeulen was discussed after meetings with the owner. We could obtain a better price.*
- 5. Preparations were made for our Rizal Spring activity.*
- 6. Sir Tony will follow-up the status for next year's Philippines Independence Celebration. This should be hosted by the Diamond Chapter.*
- 7. Our attendance for the memorial service of Sir Danny Deckmyn was approved.*

CALENDAR

- ◆ *Wednesday 30th December: Commemoration of Rizal's Death Anniversary*
- ◆ *30th January 2016: 30th Chartering Anniversary, De Watermeulen, Kruibeke*
- ◆ *10th April 2016: Memorial service Sir Danny Deckmyn - Ninove church*
- ◆ *Saturday 23rd April 2016: Spring Activity Rizal in 'De Schuur' Kruibeke, Broekdam Noord*
- ◆ *12th June 2016: Philippines Independence Day Celebrations*
- ◆ *19th June 2016: Rizal's Birthday Celebration*

NEXT NEWSLETTER

Our next Newsletter will be published in February 2016. Please feel free to forward this Newsletter to anyone who shows an interest in the Knights of Rizal! They are always welcome at one of our activities.

Also former members who wish to receive again news from our Chapter are free to request to put their email address again on our list. We respect the view of everybody!

Please send suggestions, articles (also from the OTHER BELGIAN CHAPTERS) to the Chapter Commander.

THE BOARD OF DIAMOND CHAPTER

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CHANCELLOR

Sir Kristoff Martier, KOR – Mob. 0486929628

Webmaster

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THE MEMBERS

MEMBERS (UPDATE SINCE Jan. 2014)

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Sir Frank VAN OVERLOOP, KOR

Sir Frankie VERCAMMEN, KOR

Sir Gert MEEUWSEN, KOR

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Sir Joeri VERTONGEN, KR

Sir Marinus Eijke, KR

Sir Wolfgang Nieman, KR

Sir Roland VAN REMOORTELE, KCR (Hon. Member)

Sir H.E. Christian MEERSCHMAN, KCR (Ambassador of the Kingdom of
Belgium in Manila – Philippines – July 3, 2010)

Sir Fr. BAGO, KCR (Hon. Member)

Sir Grégoire VARDAKIS, KCR (Hon. Member)

Sir Fr. Paul ZWAENEPOEL, KCR, (Hon. Member)

Sir Thomas ROMAN (Hon. Member)

Sir Alain RENS, KCR (Hon. Member)