

2006 Jakarta Zone Institute

The 2006 Jakarta Rotary Zone Institute by Rtn. Josie D. Henson

No less than Rotary International President Bill Boyd and his spouse Lorna graced the Rotary Institute for Zones 4B, 6B and 7B held last December 1- 3, 2006, at the very impressive Gran Melia in Jakarta, Indonesia. Also present were Past RI Vice President Gary Huang and Trustee Bob Scott and spouse Ann (of Canada). The Convenor was Director Noraseth Pathmanand who was with his charming spouse Chotima. Chaired by PDG Mark Wong of District 3400, Institute attendance had more than 450 past, present and incoming district governors, and other Rotary leaders from various districts and communities in South East Asia.

We flew into Kuala Lumpur on November 30 for an overnight stay, after landing at the expansive Kuala Lumpur International Airport (KLIA) that won this year's award as the Best Airport in the World. The next day, we jetted to Jakarta.

The Institute was a perfect occasion to see many old friends and meet new ones from Pakistan, Bangladesh, Singapore, Macau, Malaysia, Thailand, Hong Kong, Brunei, and of course, the Philippines and Indonesia. It was also a good venue for the Pre-Institute GETS (Governors - Elect Training Seminar) from November 29 - 30.



The impressive Jakarta Gran Melia Lobby; Right: Josie, Chotima and Lorna at the House of Friendship

There were Plenary Sessions and many Workshops so it was hard to decide which one to attend. I chose the Workshop on Water. It started with PDG Melito Salazar's speech on "WATER FOR ALL - A 21st CENTURY PRIORITY". It was an interesting session on "Water For All? Can We Implement Meaningful Projects to Address It?" The world-wide problem on water was tackled and one of the most significant was that of PDG John Cheah Kim Loong's (D2210) talk on how to gather rain-water so that it could be stored properly to be used for laundry, watering the plants, etc. when there was not enough water supply. He cited the case in Australia where water is also stored in tanks during rainy months to be used when water was scarce in the summer. The Moderator was PDG Jason Leung (D350), and the other resource speakers were PDG Soerjo Wibisono (D3400), PDG Yu Beng Chua (D3879) and Datuk Dr. N. Lakshmanan (D3300). The Rapporteur was PDG Jimmy Hao (D3820).

The whole Institute Program was well rounded and some of the Workshops given were on Youth Exchange,

Enhancing the Positive Public Image of Rotary, Membership Growth, Polio Eradication, and the Strengthening the Family of Rotary. Success Stories on Overcoming Poverty Through Literacy Programs, Health & Hunger Concerns were also tackled.

There were some prominent Rotarians who were honored at the Institute. One of them was the late PRID Dato James Peter Chin of Malaysia represented by his widow, Datin Mei. Also present was Mien, the spouse of PDG Soedarpo Sastrosatomo, the father of Rotary in Indonesia. Mien was still an active Rotary spouse in Jakarta. Another important Rotarian honored was PDG Abidin Kartasoebrata, also known as the "6 Million Dollar Man". Ben coined this title during his stint as one of the 4 members of the RI Polio Plus Task Force worldwide from 1986 to 1989. He represented the whole of Asia and he and Polio Plus Chair Herbert Pigman traveled to many developing countries in Asia. Ben gave 6 Million Dollars to PDG Abidin for their Polio Eradication Campaign. At first, Rotary was not fully accepted by then President Soeharto, but after the success of the Polio Plus Campaign (thanks to Abidin), Rotary became fully-accepted and there are now more than a hundred Rotary Clubs all over Indonesia and women were now also accepted. There are now two lady past governors in Indonesia.



*Above: With the Moderator and Panelists at the Workshop on "WATER FOR ALL – A 21st CENTURY PRIORITY"
 Below Left: Ben with Abidin; Below Right: PDGs Chick Garcia and Nanette posing with Abidin and Ben*

Several programs were lined-up for the spouses. There was a tour of a Ceramic Pottery Factory, a History Museum tour, a demonstration of the traditional Indonesian wellness and spa beauty treatment at the House of Friendship, and of course, shopping tours at Bintara, Sarinah, Pasa Raya and other famous Jakarta shopping malls. The spouses were dressed up in their native costumes during the Host Hospitality night. There was a traditional Indonesian Wedding tableaux as well as a beautiful and colorful fashion show of fabulous traditional and semi-modern Indonesian costumes featuring tall, lovely female models and dashing male models. President Bill and Lorna, Director Norasoth and Chotima were all dressed in red Indonesian Batik



Upper left: With Letty Balmater of D. 3400, Indonesia, Chotima & RI Director Noraseth Pathmanand of D. 3350; Upper right: With Reni Asis of D. 3400, Indonesia; Above: The tall models posing with RI Director Noraseth, Chotima, Lorna and RI Pres. Bill Boyd

The next day after the Institute was over; we decided to take a city tour together with PDG Nuno Jorge of Macau. Nuno was a District Governor the same year as Ben and they fondly called each other "Classmates". Nuno hired a taxi that toured us around Jakarta's famous tourist spots. That evening, we were invited to a sumptuous dinner in the Dutch-style house of PDG Soedarpo and his spouse Mien, who were unfortunately both in the hospital recuperating. It was their eldest daughter Shanti and her husband who graciously hosted the dinner where-in special Indonesian cuisine and other native delicacies as well as continental food was served. Some of their native deserts were similar to some of our Filipino sweets.

Below Left: with PDG Philbert Chin of Singapore; Below Right: Shanti and her husband posing with Pres. Bill and Lorna



BALI

A trip to Indonesia is not complete without a visit to beautiful BALI, "The Island of the Gods" which is only an hour and a half by plane from Jakarta. The first time Ben and I visited Bali, the airport was tiny and the isle did not yet have the Nusa Dua 5-star hotel chains. At that time, the place to go was the Bali Beach Hotel at Sanur Beach and Ubud, its center of art and culture. This time we were booked at the Intercontinental Resort Hotel (located at Jimbaran Beach and a mere 15 minutes from the new big airport). Bali Intercontinental Hotel is a huge complex with a typical Balinese high-steeped roof soaring more than 30 feet high. Its open-air lobby was dominated by a modern metal sculpture with a glass-like fountain below it. Huge clusters of giant white butterfly orchids (phaelenopsis) in shiny dark clay pots were strewn around the many sitting areas with black oversized rattan wing chairs with pale khaki hand-woven seat covers with throw pillows on the soft comfortable sofas.



a spicier sauce).





One of his daughters handcrafts exquisite silver jewelry.



Left: Main living room of the Blanco House and Museum; Right: A photo of Mario Blanco in the Museum

Highly recommended was the special deep-fried crispy duck at the famous “Dirty Duck” restaurant located in Ubud’s main street. As we entered the restaurant we were amazed to be greeted by a huge bowl filled with white frangipani blooms and then with stretches of green rice fields as far as your eyes can see. There was even a bamboo trellis with gourds hanging down waiting to be picked. Along the arrow roads of Ubud are gift shops where one could shop for handcrafted souvenirs, done by talented weavers and carvers. On the way back to the hotel, we stopped to look at the finely-woven bags and baskets. At Batu Bulan, there were countless shops selling stone Hindu gods and goddesses. The driver stopped at a batik factory where we watched batik artists painstakingly create exquisite but expensive batiks. Then we were brought to a big art gallery where half a dozen artists were busy painting flowers and figures in acrylic and oil.



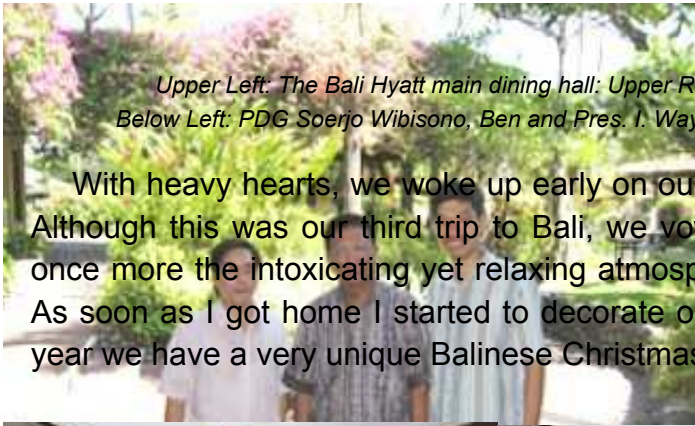
Back in Denpasar, Bali's capital, we were driven around by President Wayan at the local public market where we bought native decors made of Lontar palm called "cili". I had fun haggling with the vendors as we understood each other when I said "mahal" they said their wares were "mura". What is quite amazing was the people's devotion and religious fervor. Even in the marketplace there was a small temple where they could make flower offerings several times a day, even in the noonday heat. Men and women took turns making small square receptacles made of young coconut leaves which were filled with all kinds of flowers, so the flower vendors had brisk sales.



The next day, President I. Wayan Suryanam and PDG Soerjo Wibisono of the Rotary Club of Bali Denpasar invited us to speak at their meeting at the old Hyatt Hotel in Sanur, one of the first ever hotel chains built in the old typical Balinese Architecture. The main dining hall also had a steep roof but this time, its roof was of thick native grass (which lasts for more than twenty years). This would never last that long in the Philippines due to the countless typhoons that visit us every year. Indonesia is fortunate because it is located below the equator so they never have any typhoons, just a regular rainy season. That's also the reason why they could have buildings without doors and windows.

President Wayan Suryawan said that there was the new PASIFIKA Museum (one of their Rotary members, Popo Danes, a famous Balinese architect was a Museum Trustee) in Nusa Dua which had paintings exhibited from Indonesia, Melanesia, China, Japan, Vietnam and many other Asian countries. Even the Philippines was included and I was curious to see who was represented in the Museum. To my surprise, a big portrait painting by our late National Artist Fernando Amorsolo was hanging there. Although unfinished, it was in the unmistakable style of the Philippine master.





Upper Left: The Bali Hyatt main dining hall; Upper Right: Josie speaking before the Bali Denpasar Rotary members
Below Left: PDG Soerjo Wibisono, Ben and Pres. I. Wayan Suryawan at Hyatt garden; Below Right: Accepting the Banners

With heavy hearts, we woke up early on our last day in Bali to get ready for our flight to Jakarta. Although this was our third trip to Bali, we vowed to come back again in the near future to savor once more the intoxicating yet relaxing atmosphere of this unforgettable "Tropical Island Paradise". As soon as I got home I started to decorate our Christmas tree with my Bali "cili" finds and so this year we have a very unique Balinese Christmas Tree.



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