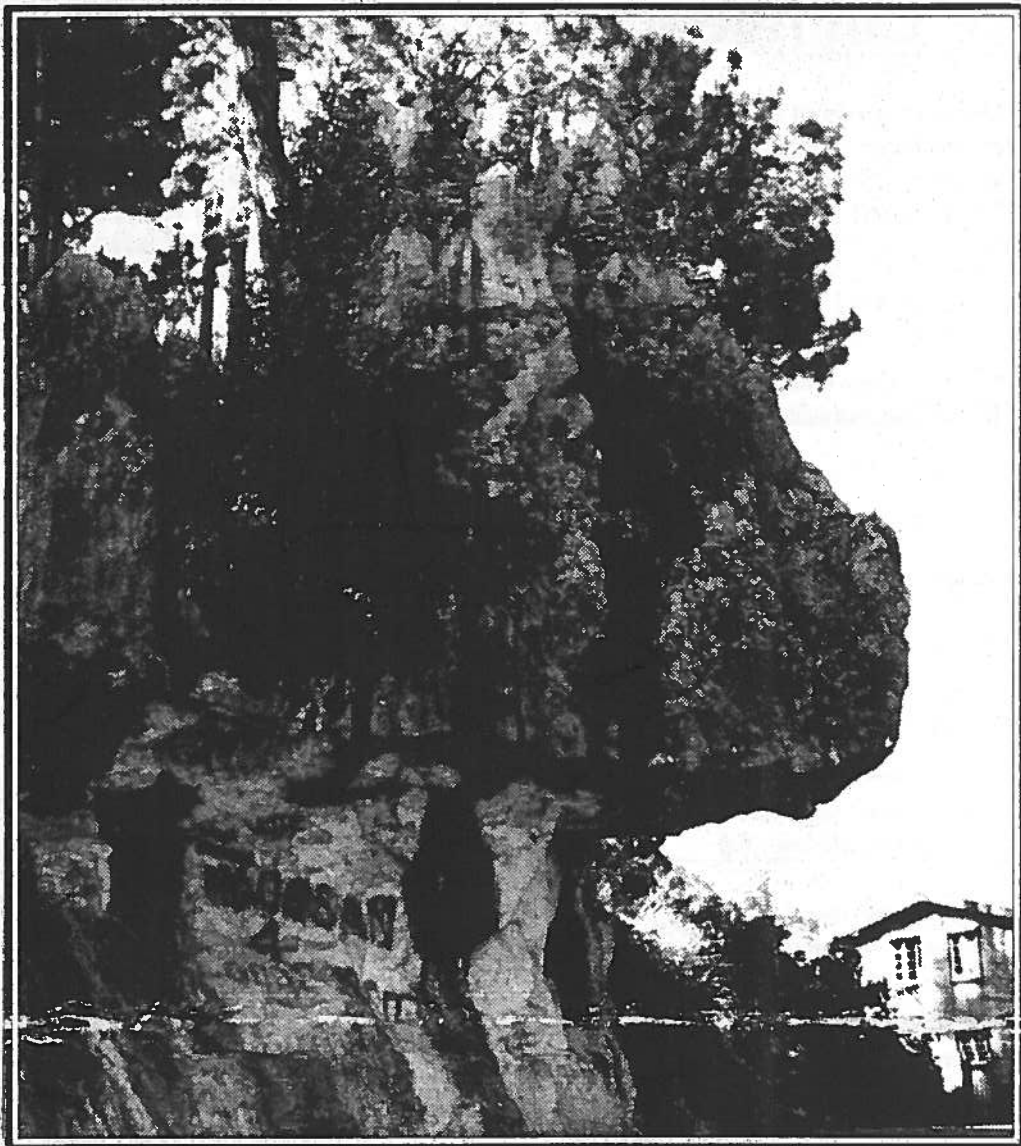


# HABAGAT *EXPRESS*

**Newsletter For Balikbayans & Door-To-Door Clients**  
**1995 New Year's Issue**



***Simply Sweet Sagada pp 5-7***

# Letters, Calls & Comments

We are happy and grateful to hear and to avail the Balikbayan door-to-door service. *Sana'y tuloy-tuloy na yan.* More Power!

**Saguibo/Cantor**  
Valby

*Natanggap na nila. Maraming salamat! Bigyan mo ako ulit ng karton.*

**Tess Farnæs Olsen**  
Helsingør

Thank you for the door-to-door service. My box arrived on schedule with no theft or pilferage.

**Mrs. Nita Berthelsen**  
Vanløse

*(Thank you also for the monetary contribution, Ma'am. Ed)*

Thank you for the copy of The Habagat Express. It is very informative, entertaining and well-written. Kudos!

**Mary Borromeo-Hedfors**  
Philippine Trade Office  
Stockholm

Bayanihan? Does it really work in a Western society? Do we Filipinos really know the meaning of the word?

**Eli-Elec Villanueva-Hanse**  
Odense

In your article, *Thoughts On Mother Earth*, open letter, you mentioned that we in DK are losing most of our production jobs to our brothers in the Third World, like The Philippines. But this has a good effect because their economic status are elevated, and can afford to buy the technology and products (cosmetics, PR, entertainment, designers', etc.) of the West. Again, it's us, immigrants who are in the service sectors who suffer most because we have to compete even more to each other for a bite of the remaining economic cake.

**Aida Jespersen**  
Ålborg

We welcome your comments through letters and telephone calls, but please make them brief, clear and reasonable. Some comments/inquiries we have received can not appear this issue because we are still waiting for clarifications. Anyway, *hurray madadala!* Once again thank you for your contributions!!

**The Editor**

# Full-Containerization Ensures Extra Safety Of Balikbayan Boxes

## 6th Shipment To Sail April 04, 1995

All balikbayan boxes will be fully-containerized like in the last shipment in order to avoid the mistakes of aloof port truckers in the unloading and re-loading of boxes during trans-shipment in ports, like Taiwan, Singapore and Hongkong.

This means that the shipments of balikbayan boxes will be reduced in

order to cope the allowance of 160 boxes in a full-container. Otherwise, the cost of a box will be expensive if sent as loose cargoes or in half-filled container. Moreover, a full-containerized shipment takes only 5 weeks to arrive in the Philippines, saving the 1 week that is used in trans-shipment of loose cargoes.

## Roll Back In Rates

New rates for the 6th shipment are as follows:

**850 kr.** for Manila destinations  
**+200 kr.** for out-side Metro Manila

destinations (See Metro Manila Coverage)

**800 kr.** special rates for pensionists for Metro Manila only.

## Metro Manila Coverage

To those who are still confused of the coverage of Metro Manila, there are 5 cities and 12 municipalities that comprise MM. The cities: Manila, Pasay, Caloocan, Quezon and Makati.

The municipalities: Muntinlupa, Valenzuela, Pasig, Taguig, Mandaluyong, Paranaque, Las Pinas, San Juan, Marikina, Malabon, Paterno and Navotas.

Place Your Orders For Next Shipment To:

Beem Adanico, Tel: 38 34 92 57

Titto Belardo, Tel: 40 11 99 89 or 38 33 99 89

# sStopPressStopPressStopPressStopP

## **The Blanket/Linen Device Against Pilferage (stealing)**

Our Manila office advises all shippers to line a blanket or linen in the box before packing the goods. This linen/cloth protects the goods against intentional and accidental holes or damages on boxes that tempt weak people to steal. This will make it easier to detect if any pilferage occurred once the linen is damaged.

## **Keep Low On Coffee And Sugar**

Aside from the contraband items and items of commercial quantities, Philippine custom officials ban the importation of coffee and sugar to protect the local industry on the said products. Coffee and sugar were confiscated during the custom examination on boxes that came from Hongkong. A sound advice to all shippers, keep low in sending sugar and coffee to your relatives until further notice.

## **Customs-Confiscated Goods, Where Do They Go?**

Appliances, electrical gadgets and excessive goods confiscated by custom officials are charged of importation tax to be shouldered by the consignee or receiver. Any delay of payment on fines, a storage fee will be charged per day (The amount depends upon the mood of the examiner). When goods are unclaimed, they will go to auction and receivers are not allowed to participate.

## **Beware: False Consolidators**

Be careful on prophets-of-doom who tend to offer you cheap rates on balikbayan door-to-door services. Anybody can be a consolidator but not anybody can be a tough broker, authorized and recognized by the Philippine custom authorities. Taking the risk is a expensive especially when there is no guarantee against loss and undelivered boxes.

## **A Day In The Life Of a Cargador:**

*O, Iho, dahan-dahan ka sa pagbuhat! Baka babagsak sa iyo ang karkon dahil sa bigat. Sayang naman kung ngayon pang puputok yan karkon namin!*

## **Tours and Travel**

# **Simply Sweet Sagada - A Door to The Center Of The Earth**

If you long for the once idyllic beauty of Baguio City when it was not so adulterated by the urban migrants and tourists, Sagada has just preserved the eldorado for you, with even much more to offer. Mother Nature generously bestowed it with beautiful limestone formations, caves and caverns, landscapes of pine trees, waterfalls, hot springs and ancient rice terraces.

The Sagada adventure actually starts with the trip on the Halsema Highway from either Baguio or Banaue. The road is bumpy, rocky, partly asphalted and some parts cemented, worsened by the killer earthquake of 1990. BUT the panoramic sceneries are very compensating which make The Mines View Park of Baguio very inferior.

You pass by the salad bowl of the Philippines, Trinidad Valley, with its lush beds of "baguio" vegetables and temperate flowers. The cool air is scented with the aroma of pine trees (and sometimes, smell of chicken shit during fertilizing season, sad to write). Stop at the highest point of Luzon, (7,000 ft high above sea-level) to breathe the light clean air and watch the clearing of the fog. It slowly rolls up like a *dyne*, and make you feel the inspiration used by Carl Nielsen when he composed his classic, *Tagen Letter*.

The Sabangan bus stop looks like an unabandoned Western movie set. Should I not known where I was, I could easily mistake it as a small town nestled in the Andes of Peru. The Igorots resemble the

South American Indians with rosy cheeks, straight jet black hair, reddish-brown skin, aquiline noses, almond-eyes and wear dark sweaters and dark jackets. They look serious, not smiling. They actually gave me the creeps that they could be some gun-totting gringo and barbaric head-hunters. On the contrary, Igorots are friendly and ready to talk about their culture and fears of its decay. When asked how far was Sagada or Baguio, they responded with exact figures and politeness: "20 kms. to go, sir!" (unlike urban Pinoy's giving vague answers, "2 hours by bus" or "1.5 hours by car").

Sample their aromatic red rice with native pork adobo or with Igorot beef *tapa* (from carabao meat). Taste the exquisite *aso-cera* (dog meat), the should be favourite appetizer or *pulutan* of the machos of the country, to accompany their beer. My Danish companions tried dog meat viand and described the meat, as a cross between veal and venison. And what had they got to say to dog-lovers? "Well, if they can't lick them, eat them."

Midway, we overnighted at Mt.

Data Lodge. The hotel staff gave us an unusually hospitable service - the kind you experience when you visit Filipino ethnic villages, if you had tried one. There you can enjoy a brew of local coffee besides the biggest fireplace in Southeast Asia, while outside is down to 8 degrees. The chief receptionist entertained us with his stories of modern and traditional Igorot life.

The journey continued, passing by valleys and slopes of cala lilies, daisies, chayotes, sunflowers and thickets. The trip was slow because we could only drive maximum 10 kms. per hour on the ugly road. Those times we prayed that the President and the Public Highway Secretary should drive one day on the so called highway with their limousines, so something must be done with it.

Finally, we reached Sagada junction road. We drove on zigzag roads towards the top, a reminiscence of Baguio in the 60's, passing by old rice terraces but lesser in magnitude from those in Banaue. Rock formations are everywhere giving a dramatic landscapes of thick forests of more pine and hard wood. And my, how the air scented of pine.

Surprisingly, the town of Sagada is no primitive village. There are decent guest houses, a museum, cafes and restaurants. Traditional Bontoc huts (again different from the Ifugaos, with thicker roofs and no stilts) are built side by side or vis-à-vis the modern houses with temperate architectures, many of which are owned by Manila residents.

Sagada Igorots are entrepreneurial and have the highest literacy rates among the

cultural minorities of the Philippines - 87%, admonished a close friend who did social work there. That explained their big houses, neat roads and frank business-like guides who quote 250 pesos fee for cave trips, lamps included. It was take-it-or-leave-it. It was quite difficult to imagine what one gets out of the 250 pesos when one does not have an idea of the merchandize. Mind you, it was worth it. A town's map can be obtained at the meeting point, Shamrock Cafe, for a small fee. The map gives you an overview of the places you want to go and plan an itinerary.

Sagada is not only a place for hikers but also for spelunkers (people studying caves. Gotchal). The caves with its magnificent stalactites and the hanging coffins are main attractions. Show respect to the sacred burial caves with hanging coffins. One coffin is estimated to be 400 years old. Check out the caves of Sumaging and Latipan and see the banana-like stalactite formations with heraldic ripe orange colors - hence, the name Sumaging.

The most exciting trip was at the Bulangin caves which taxed us 2 hours to tread. It was an entrée to the belly of the earth. The locals believed that no one, up to this writing, had ever phatomed its deepness. I had tried flying, sailing and dived deep waters, but never before a journey inside the earth. We were advised to wear something light, no cameras and other unnecessary gadgets to make the trip easier. It was more exciting than an Indiana Jones movie because we were in real life studio. The chambers looked like cathedrals. There is underground river and a pool where one could swim. Our

hearts pounded of excitement. - scary but no bats, no coffins, no cobwebs and no fog effects. The walls glittered with minerals and rocks by the light of our lamps. When it was over, it was like leaving the Basilica of St. Peter after the mass, with our souls somehow spiritually cleansed.

It was a good thing to note that the caves and hanging coffins are not easily accessible to the pop tourists, risking vandalism. One mayor once proposed to install electric lights in the caves but thanks to the brainy Igorots who nipped the project in the bud.

Our journey culminated at Bokong Falls and Mainit (hot) Springs. It was rather chilly to take a dip but it was immensely refreshing and re-vitalizing. I thought I found the spring of eternal youth (If it was true? Then come up and see me sometimes!)

The next days, we took less hectic trips around the town: visiting weaving schools; the house of Spanish photographer Masferé, containing photographs of highland life which gained rave reviews in exhibitions abroad; and the nearby Igorot villages. As usual, many sights drew my curiosity, like the contrasts between the Ifugaos and Igorots, which erased my cultural bias towards them. I tried to find out why do they raise their pigs in pits; or why the Bontoc boys sleep in one house and the girls in another; and if the trial honeymoon before marriage is still practiced; or if the love nests called *ulog* are still being used (nothing sleazy, if you please).

You probably have some questions, but only in Sagada, where you, find the answers. Phone Benn, 38 34 32 37 for other information on Sagada.



*The 400 year hanging coffins. In Sagada, one easily finds real life movie sets for Indiana Jones.*

## Not For Catholics Only

# To Be Or Not To Be A Saint

Raise your eyebrows or hold your laughter, as you read this: as all my classmates in the graduating class in elementary course wrote all kinds of ambitions for the school yearbook, I wrote mine, "to become a saint".

My teacher feared of my megalomaniac tendencies and informed my mother about it. It out-raged my mother because the lives of a saint is a hard act to follow. Martyrdom, severe asceticism, and a sinner's life before encompassing great holiness was not exactly a normal mother's dream for her child.

All right, for peace sake, I rubbered the innocent dream out. And thinking about it now, I laugh as I probably thought then that it was a glamorous job to be a saint and a vocation or carrier which can be in blue print or a goal which could be attained by striving for it. Sainthood is nothing like that at all.

Saints are drawn from all levels of society: philosophers, educators, scientists, farmers, even kings and convicts. Some saints had led a sinful life before they became holy as in the case of St. Augustine who had lived a wild sexual life; St. Paul was a

persecutor of Christians; & St. Mary Magdalene was a whore. They gave a single minded devotion and service to God and placed God's interests above the demands of self, their family and even the established Church.

So how does one gets this title "San" or "Santa"? It takes time, money, patience and for all these efforts the award is posthumous with no trophies or cash prizes as in case of Nobel Prizes or Oscars.

A nominee must be dead after 5 years and proven to have led a holy life. Money is needed to finance the processing which can be done by a lawyer or a lobbyist who works for a religious group. St. Elizabeth Bayley Seton cost 300,000 USD for her canonization in 1975. The life is thoroughly investigated which include all scandals, gossips and other murky passages. Most of all, his/her work is studied to see its significance to religion and mankind. This investigation is done by a committee called the Promotor Dei or devil's advocate assigned by the Pope.

Once these are done, the report is presented to a saint-maker committee in Rome which seeks to verify evidences of divine intercessions or miracles. If the nominee's heroic virtue had been proven, the Pope declares him/her venerable and all Catholics can pray for his/her intercessions. If it results to miracles - the candidate is beatified, then later become officially a saint, a patron and

protector of people related to his/her field.

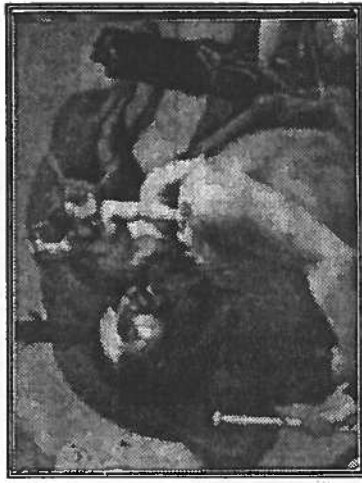
It is a hurdle to finish and patience consuming to wait for the results by phlegmatic and bureaucratic committees. Some saints were canonized a century later after their death. Some candidates didn't even make it all. Some were pulled out from the list of saints.

With 400 years of devotion to the church, anyone wonders why Filipinos had produced only one saint so far - San Lorenzo Ruiz whose works and life story are so obscure. (Well, Fr. Bujatao S.J. has great explanations to this, in his studies on Pinoyos "split-level" Christianity.)

Upon a page on Phil. history, I found one that could likely become a saint. Apolinario de la Cruz was beheaded by the Spaniards because of his veneration to St. Joseph and the Virgin of the Holy Rosary on the slopes of Mt. Cristobal in Tayabas in October, 1841. He was a pious youth who had been refused membership in Spanish monastic order because he was an *indio*. He founded a lay confraternity dedicated to spreading the gospel and healing the sick. His sermons were innocent pleas for love with a mystical twist which he picked up in Spanish medieval literature. The frustrated, heavily taxed farmers hailed him as the "King of Tagalogs" (familiar story, eh?). The authorities excommunicated him and called him a heretic. The Spanish troops besieged his followers who fought suicidally with the belief that the angels would come down to rescue them. Apolinario was caught and beheaded. His head was displayed in a cage to serve as a reminder to others.

A Spanish priest who witnessed his execution wrote, "he died serenely showing unusual greatness of spirit!" Two hundred of his followers got caught and when asked why they revolted, they answered "to pray".

Efforts in Monaco are put up to hail the late Princess Grace a saint. Some claimed evidences of her divine intercessions. Many adore her goodness during her reign as well as many frown on her playgirl life in Hollywood. Most likely, she'd make it to the list of saints faster than Apolinario because of her popular and colorful life, Monaco's money and proximity to Rome.



St. Christopher, a myth, like Santa Claus, is one of the many saints rubbered out from the list.

I found my school yearbook lately and smiled when I read under my youthful innocent photo, it read: *to serve God and fellowmen*. Thanks for the advice, Mom and Ma'am. If my friends now learn that my childhood dream was to become a saint - they would award me the title right away & put a halo of joke on my head for my guts & venerate me as the patron of *mataatapang-ig-apog*. *Ora pro nobis!*

## Attitude

### Do You Have ADD? - Attention Deficit Disorder

Do you have friends or you, yourself daydream a lot, procrastinate, impulsive, worry often, have difficulty of having organized, low self-esteem, restless, speak your mind when you probably should have kept your mouth shut, can't tolerate boredom, have trouble focusing attention, drift in the middle of conversation, start many projects and never finish one, finish a project but half-baked, perfect time-waster, intuitive, intelligent and predictable?

Don't panic! You or your friends are not classified under undisciplined, lazy or irresponsible people. You simply suffer an *attention deficit disorder* or ADD, as

we often joke in Pilipino, *KKP (kulang na Kulang sa Pansin)* or TH (trying hard) or AVIS director (try harder).

Specialists claim this syndrome is caused by a glitch in the brain's wiring. It is a kind of childhood hyper-activity which you haven't outgrown. This is not caused by bad influence, too much TV or stress or bad loving or any such thing. Either you have it or you don't. Specialists teach sufferers strategies for staying organized and focused. If it's morbid, a special drug called Ritalin are prescribed to them together with therapy.

If you are one who is skeptic on drugs and distrust therapy, then learn to ignore your subconscious and listen to that little voice saying "take a break!"

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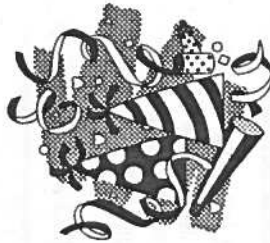
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*Manigong*

*Bagong Taon Sa Inyong Lahat!*

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TPA Carrier & Brokerage, Manila,  
Tito Belardo & Family**

*Wish You All  
A Joyous, Prosperous, New Year!  
Marami salamat po sa inyong pagtangkilik!*

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**Transport:** Tito Belardo, JMJ Services, 2000 Copenhagen F., Tel.: 40 11 99 89  
**Manila Principal:** TPA Carrier, 9790 Kamagong St., San Antonio Village, Makati  
**Shipping Line:** Scan-Shipping, Snorresgade 18-20, 2300 Copenhagen S

*Habagat Express* is an independent quarterly newsletter for Balikbayans and door-to-door clients. It endeavours to inform and entertain the specific audience, tackling Filipiniana, Philippine tourism and trade and other Filipino related activities and issues in Denmark. *Habagat* reserves the right to print, however with responsibility anything it wants and not let anyone sue us because we don't have any money anyway! We welcome very much contributions: big money and short, relevant and meaty articles.

**EDITOR:** Benn Adriatico

**ADDRESS:** Falstersvej 6, 4th, 2000 Copenhagen F., Denmark Telephone: 38 343237