

Chairman's Report

UK/ Philippine Friendship Week:3rd- 9th December.

Under the organization of British Alumni and British Embassy a number of events are being held during that week, including a Golf Day, an Equestrian event, a Gala Dinner and a Medical mission to Tondo. All are in aid of providing Chevening Scholarships for Filipino students to attend University in U.K. Circulars and our website will shortly provide event details on all the activities.



BCC-P briefings to UK Business Groups.

Briefings have been given this month to Oxford Business Group (OBG) and the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) on the Chamber's assessment of the current and future Philippines business climate, including its opportunities and threats.

These briefings were for a forthcoming first OBG Philippines yearbook and for EIU economic reports.

International Chambers of Commerce Retirement and HealthCare Coalition.

A formalised R & H Coalition has been established by the American, European, Japanese and Korean Chambers; of which the British Chamber is directly represented as part of the pan-European participation.

The Coalition is focusing on the expanding opportunities of attracting foreign retirees and medical tourists.

The primary aim is to secure long term visas (1 year) for potential retirees enabling them to come to assess possibilities of full retirement. Allied to this are reviews of possible retirement village sites, research into models established in Iberia and S.E. Asian countries; plus the essential provision of parallel long term health and medical facilities and effective transfer of medical insurance coverage.

We see these developments, as they progress, as presenting a clear and significant business opportunity for British companies in the medical and retirement services sectors.

European Nation's Council.

The Council, comprising of the European, British, French and Spanish Chambers; plus certain EU/ European business organizations, held their quarterly meeting in November.

The key focus was the possibility of having a "European Pavilion" at the WORLDBEX Construction and Building Exposition being held in Manila in March 2008. Each Chamber is now canvassing appropriate members in these sectors for their level interests in such an "umbrella" exhibition proposition.

Leslie Stokes



CLARK AVIATION
World Class Training for International Aviation Personnel



HSBC
The world's local bank



Corporate Governance and Social Responsibility (CGSR)

This year the Chamber set up a CGSR committee to facilitate and encourage the increasing amount of work done in the fields of Corporate Governance and Social Responsibility by member companies. The committee's primary aim to help optimise and maximise British efforts in these fields, not to raise money for charitable groups. In particular, the early focus has been to promote and facilitate Corporate Social Responsibility and be a leader in the CSR community.

In 2006, the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and the BCCP signed an important Memorandum of Understanding, which recognises the difficulties of Charities and relief agencies when handling customs duties and VAT. These have led to donations and disaster relief being refused because the duties and/or VAT cannot be afforded. Through the DSWD, a process has been established to fast track charitable donations to ensure that they pass through customs in a timely manner, and create instances where the DSWD will shoulder the VAT. Although it has taken some time both organisations to understand each other, we are now seeing some tangible results. In a recent success of the DSWD/BCCP initiative, the Kalinga at Pag-ibig Foundation (www.kalinga.nl) was able to accept a donation of items for use by the disabled of Rizal Province, which would otherwise have been declined because of known difficulties in customs clearance.



In another initiative, a BCCP member was able to arrange micro financing from the DSWD for one of their livelihood projects. A Peso250,000 facility has been made available interest free for a period of two years. The British Women's Association (BWA) regularly have livelihood groups selling goods at their meetings. One is the Piña Project, a group of ladies from Payatas who have organised themselves to make bags, decorations and other items by recycling rubbish. This micro finance will be used for product development and exploring marketing opportunities, thereby providing the fifty members of the group with more income for food and education.

There are a number of corporate social initiatives underway, and it has quickly become apparent that the BCCP has a vital role in disseminating information on them. This will be done through a CGSR page to be developed next year on the BCCP web site, and a database of organisations with CSR roles, now being collated, so that we can match skills where required. If you are aware of any groups that should be on our list please send contact details to me via the BCCP Secretariat.

On Corporate Governance, we have a joint meeting on December 5th with the Institute of Corporate Directors as part of the Philippine British Friendship week. It will be held in Roundtable format at 7:30 am at Hexagon Lounge RCBC Tower, Ayala Avenue. Enquiries should be to the BCCP Secretariat.

Michael Whiting

Events

Joint networking night with the Lighthouse Tuesday 20th November 07

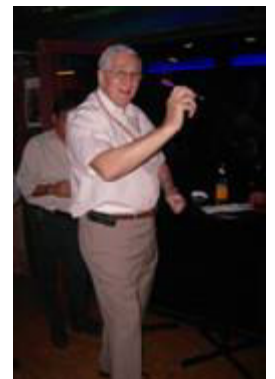
On 27th November, 57 members and friends enjoyed a fun night at JW's Lounge Bar where Jim Donald ensured that all were well fed and watered!

The main event for the evening was a Killer Pool competition. After fierce contests on 2 tables, the winners from each table met in a thrilling final. After a long struggle, Graham Wilkes overcame Steve Philips to become the ultimate winner of the night, while the play off led to Steve Arthur taking a respectable 3rd place.

The Darts competition was more difficult to organise as there was only one board. John Aspinall rallied the troops to a professional (not really) competition of 301 down. BCCP won the team match against the Lighthouse Club. The three member winning team then went into a hotly fought individual challenge between James Johnson, Annette Helbig and Mike Marden. Annette conquered all with a final 3 dart throw of 115 (very professional finish!).



Thanks must go to the staff at JW's who looked after us well.



Joint Networking Evening with British Women's Association Tuesday 27th November



On 27th November, nearly 70 members of the BCCP and BWA heard inspiring, fascinating and amusing presentations from Arturo Valdez, his team of women mountaineers, Janet Belarmino, Karen Davondan, and Noelle Wenceslao, and Leo Oracion.

While Leo made the first successful Filipino ascent of Everest in May 2006, Janet, Karen and Noelle were the first Filipinas, and the first women from an ASEAN nation to reach the summit of the 29,198 foot mountain, and, astonishingly, the first women in the world ever to traverse Everest from one side to the other, on May 16th, 2007. We heard of their training experiences from 2004, and the mental, physical and family hardships they endured without any guarantee of success or reward. Nevertheless, they persevered to conquer a formidable challenge, proving that Filipinos of both genders can achieve anything they put their minds to with the minimum of resources, and become members of an elite club of the few who have stood on the earth's highest point.

Dates for the Diary

- 20th December 2007 Christmas Drinks with British Women's Association and the Lighthouse Club, Palawan Centre Makati 6:30 to 9:30 pm
- 17th January 2008 Joint European Chambers Social Networking Night Prince of Jaipur Fort Bonifacio 6:30 to 9:30 pm

Sarah McLeod

BCCP Membership

The Membership Committee comprises Keith Perrin, Michael Whiting and Steve Phillips

The current membership stands at 181, comprising Premier Sponsors (7), and Corporate (99), Associate (20), Individual (45) and Honorary (10) members.

Activities planned for the coming months are:

- propose reclassification of membership categories and simplify benefits for each class
- recruitment drive targetting
 - o lost members and encouraging rejoining
 - o new members
- simplify and streamline the membership process from recruitment, approvals, induction, invoice payment and reminders, and tracking.
- simplify access to application form through website

Keith Perrin

KEY ACTIVITIES
December 2007

DATE

30 Nov – 2 Dec

3 December

4 December

5 December

EVENT

'Visit Britain' Travel Exhibition EDSA Shangri La Mall with Standard Chartered Bank, Baron Travel, Rajah Travel and Cathay Pacific Airlines
Contact: Eileen Vizmonte (eileen.vizmonte@fco.gov.uk)

Reception for UK Waste to Energy Missioners
Contact: Fidel Ventura (fidel.ventura@fco.gov.uk)

UKTI Seminar - Innovative Environmental Solutions Peninsula Hotel
Contact: Fidel Ventura

Launch of Waste to Energy Facility at Rodrigo Rizal landfill site.
Contact: Fidel Ventura (fidel.ventura@fco.gov.uk)

John Chick



British Council

The British Council was on an education roll as it unveiled a series of education events beginning with the Commonwealth Education Fair from the 8th-12th of November. The Commonwealth Education Fair – now on its sixth year is a project of the Commonwealth Education Group (CEG) composed of the British Council, Embassy of Canada, IDP Education and the New Zealand Trade and Enterprise. It aimed to offer Filipinos access to quality international institutions and courses. This year's fair introduced a new level of accessibility for Filipinos as it travelled to Marriot Hotel Cebu on the 8th of November, 9th-10th in Dusit Hotel Makati and the 12th of November in Brent School, Baguio City.

On the 19th of November the annual World MBA Tour was held at the Mandarin Oriental Hotel in Makati. This enabled people seeking higher education opportunities abroad to meet with admissions officers and alumni of over 50 of the world's top business schools. The British Council was present at this event to give information on education in the UK.

The European Higher Education Fair (EHEF) takes place at the Makati Shangri-La Hotel from the 23rd – 24th of February 2008. This is a major education exhibition where as many as 100 universities and institutions from Europe will take part.

Andrew Picken

The British School Manila

As always, the build up to Christmas is an exciting time at the British School, Manila.

From November 19th until 25th we had 19 students in Brunei attending a Federation of British International Schools in South East Asia (FOBISSEA) Music Festival, and at the same time, Year 12 are in Chiang Mai, Thailand, at the Prem Centre completing community service and a variety of intensive team building activities.

Nineteen students in Years 10-13 are also participating in the Model United Nations in Singapore. This is a worldwide organisation that provides opportunities for young people to debate issues of international significance, and the United Nations format for debates are closely followed. Between November 27th and December 2nd the Under 13 squads are at Tanglin School in Singapore for the FOBISSEA Games.



The School is looking forward to British Philippines Friendship Day which will be celebrated at the school on December 6th, with the Key Stage Two Christmas performance on December 5th and the Key Stage One performance on December 12. The school's annual carol Concert will take place on December 13th. The staff pantomime is scheduled for December 7th, but that is assuming that all the cast learn their lines in time, and can squeeze into their costumes.

The term will close at 12 noon on December 14th, after a final assembly.

Chris Mantz