



UNVEILING AND DEDICATION OF AN 8 FT. BRONZE STATUE OF DR. JOSE P. RIZAL AT THE CARSON INTERNATIONAL SCULPTURE GARDEN, CITY OF CARSON, CALIFORNIA



Among those in the photo: Serena I. Diokno, Chair of the National Historical Commission of the Philippines, and Mayor Jim Dear of Carson (2nd from left). Carson Councilman Elito Santarina is 2nd from right, Sir Tom D. Rodriguez, KGOR, USA Regional Commander is 3rd from right.

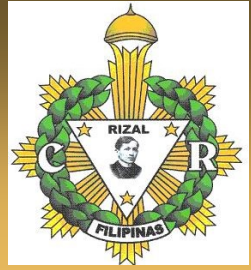
For the Order of the Knights of Rizal in the U.S., September 29, 2012 is a day to remember. On that day, marked the unveiling and dedication of an 8 ft. bronze statue of Dr. Jose P. Rizal at the Carson International Sculpture Garden, City of Carson, California.

Sir Tom D. Rodriguez, USA Regional Commander of the Knights of Rizal, when interviewed said, "My feelings as Knight of Rizal when I saw the beautiful 8 ft. bronze monument of Dr. Rizal with so many Filipino-Americans, community leaders as well as government officials and dignitaries gathered to see the unveiling and dedication of the monument, was beyond compare".

Sir Tom represented Sir Reghis Romero II, Supreme Commander of the Order of the Knights of Rizal, at the unveiling and dedication who was unable to attend because of conflict of schedule, while Sir Eddie Limon, immediate past USA Regional Commander and Deputy Supreme Pursuivant gave a message during the Gala Night held at the Double Tree Hotel in the City of Carson.

Mayor of City of Carson, Jim Dear, senior Councilman Elito M. Santarina and Sir Chito Mandap, former chapter commander of Los Angeles Chapter and chairman of Dr. Jose P. Rizal Monument Movement were on hand to welcome the large crowd.

Government officials from adjoining cities like the City of Cerritos and City of Gardena and from the U.S. House of Representatives representing the 37th Congressional District and the U.S. Senate came to attend the historic event.



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U.S. Army retired General Roger Rothrock, who is very close to the Filipinos, and who averred that he was one of those who landed in Leyte with Gen. Carlos P. Romulo and Gen. Douglas MacArthur during the Second World War was one of those spectators of the dedication of Dr. Rizal's monument.

Mayor Jim Dear gave the welcome remarks, while Sir Chito Mandap spoke and gave special thanks to those who supported his leadership. The teamwork and hardwork of the Dr. Jose Rizal Monument Movement, and the Knights of Rizal, led by Sir Chito Mandap, with the support of the City of Carson, led by Mayor Jim Dear, Councilman Santarina, the Philippine Consul General in Los Angeles, Consul General Mary Jo Aragon, the SouthBay Los Angeles Area(FACC-SLAA), and Filipino-American Organizations throughout Southern California made this project of magnitude became a reality.

Sir Tom acknowledging also the immense contribution of the City Mayor, Jim Dear, which elicited an applause from the audience, said in his remark, "To Mayor Dear, I read in an article written by Jose Pimentel that though some of your colleagues and community leaders from other ethnic groups complained at first about why a Filipino who died in 1896 should be erected first (at the Carson International Sculpture Garden), but you and fellow Councilman Elito Santarina quelled that controversy by teaching them about Rizal and the Filipino's message. Thank you so much. Now, you become a mayor – dearest to our heart."

The theme of the event was "Awaken the Hero in Us." That momentous event certainly inspired patriotism and evoke the finest sentiments of love of God, country and fellowmen, not only among those attendees but also those who were not present but in the coming days will have the opportunity to see the magnificent and noble monument of Dr. Rizal in the Carson International Sculpture Garden.

The L.A. Consul General Mary Jo Aragon, whose term expired the following day, also spoke and was thankful that she had the chance to participate in the unveiling and dedication of Dr. Rizal's monument before she went back to her assignment in Manila.

The main speaker of the occasion was Maria Sereno Diokno, chairperson of the National Historical Commission of the Philippines. Sir Councilman Elito Santarina delivered the closing remarks.

Part of the morning program was the recitation of Dr. Rizal's "My Last Farewell," and re-enactment of the execution of Dr. Jose P. Rizal with Teddy Ortega as Dr. Rizal with participation from the Jose P Rizal Monument Movement volunteers, Frank Paras, Jr. and company. The Boys Scouts, YFSC-PIA Venture Crew 120, and the Immaculate a of Mary Children's Choir as well as the Filipino American Musical Ensemble also participated in the event.

Delegates from the Arizona Knights of Rizal (AZKOR, INC.) graced the important occasion, namely:

Sir Conrado R. Ballecer, Jr., Deputy Area Commander for Western USA, and his wife Lady Amy; Sir Herman Mendoza, Chapter Commander of AZKOR, and his wife Lady Norma; Sir Ricardo Torno, Deputy Exchequer and his wife Lady Macbeth; and Sir Tom D. Rodriguez, USA Regional Commander and his wife Lady Fe.

Sir Tom D. Rodriguez, KGOR, USA Regional Commander