

Station BALANACAN marker unveiled

The simple rite held atop Mogpog's *Mataas na Bundok* in Barangay Hinanggayon started with the singing of the national anthem followed by the Marinduque hymn and a doxology. The Marinduque Provincial Capitol Choir guided the community singing. Afterwards, Mogpog Mayor Senen M. Livello Jr. welcomed the crowd eager to witness the momentous event.

Deputy Administrator (DA) and Interagency Task Group BALANACAN Chairperson Linda SD. Papa represented NAMRIA Administrator Peter N. Tiangco in the unveiling ceremony, including the parallel activities conducted during the day. Provincial Human Resource Division Chief Erma E. Reyes served as the master of the ceremony.

In a talk preceding the marker unveiling, DA Papa went down memory lane and gave a brief history of the Station BALANACAN and the objectives for its preservation and development. She likewise thanked the prime movers of the preservation and development project for their concerted efforts in bringing the endeavor into fruition. DA Papa moreover mentioned the request already submitted to the Office of the President for the approval of a Presidential Proclamation reserving 28 hectares of public domain land for the Luzon Datum Origin Historical Landmark site and for the provincial ecotourism development.

National Historical Commission of the Philippines (NHCP) Executive Director Ludovico D. Badoy and Marinduque Governor Carmencita O. Reyes led the key officials of the provincial government, the municipal government of Mogpog, NAMRIA, DENR Region IV-B office, the Lands Management Bureau, and the Geodetic Engineers of the Philippines Inc. in the unveiling ceremony. Rev. Fr. Edwin M. Sager of the Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish in Matuyatuya, Torrijos then officiated the blessing of the historical marker.

In his message, Executive Director Badoy said that "the Commission is proud to bestow this historical marker recognizing the significant role of the Luzon Datum of 1911 in the history of land surveying in the Philippines. This marker will serve as a symbol of our people's appreciation of the significance as primary geodetic reference of all surveys in the country." The presentation of the marker was highlighted with the signing of the *Certificate of Transfer and Acceptance of Historical Marker* by Governor Reyes, Marinduque Vice Governor Antonio L. Uy Jr., DA Papa, DENR RIV-B Regional Technical Director for Ecosystems Research and Development Vicente R. Cabrera, Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Officer (PENRO) Danilo R. Querijero, and Mayor Livello.

Governor Reyes in her acceptance message said, "*At ngayon ngang araw na ito ng Agosto 9, ating kinikilala sa buong Pilipinas ang pinaka-Nanay ng mga mojon na makikita dito sa Marinduque, ang Istasyon ng BALANACAN. Ito'y mataas na karangalang ipinagkakaloob ng ating Inang Bansa sa dakilang istasyong ito bilang di malilimutang bahagi ng ating kasaysayan. Naghubunyi ang buong Marinduque sa pagtanggap ng pagkilalang ito. Muli't muli, sa kagalakan ng akong mga mabal na anak dito sa Marinduque, pinatutunayan ng panabon ang napakahalagang papel ng aming lalawigan sa pagsulong ng ating buong bansa....Maraming-maraming salamat mula sa aming labat dito sa Marinduque, ang nag-iisang puso ng Pilipinas,*" she added.

Tree Planting

Following the unveiling ceremony was the planting of trees as a declaration of support to the National Greening Program. "*Isa pa po sa magaganap sa umagang ito ay ang ating pagtatanim upang suportahan ang isang malaking programa ni Secretary Ramon J.P. Paje....isang paghabanda para sa ikabubuti at ikagaganda ng ating kinabukasan,*" DA Papa concluded in her short talk.

With PENRO Querijero at the helm, the PENR office led the guests and participants in the activity which also marked the official launching of the greening program in the province. A total of 1,000 narra, molave,

and tauai seedlings were planted in the environs of the Station BALANACAN and its historical marker. The saplings were dedicated to the key officials of NHCP, NAMRIA, and DENR; the officials of the provincial and municipal governments; the representatives of other national government agencies; and the leaders of civil society groups.

Map Launching and Turnover

Capping the activities for the auspicious day was the launching of the new 1:50,000-scale topographic maps and the provincial map of Marinduque and their turnover to the various users. After partaking of a sumptuous *merienda* at the parking area of the marker unveiling site, the guests and invitees proceeded to the Palms by the Beach Convention Center and Resort in Barangay Balanacan, also in Mogpog, for the map launching event emceed by NAMRIA Engineering Services Department Director Enrique A. Macaspac and Ms. Reyes. Vice Governor Uy delivered the welcome remarks.

NAMRIA Mapping and Geodesy Department Assistant Director Ruel DM. Belen briefed the audience about the topographic mapping of the Province of Marinduque. His presentation covered the historical background of the 1:50,000-scale topographic map series; the mapping methodology used in the updating of the Marinduque maps; and the map contents. He also discussed the various application areas of the topographic maps.

The four topographic map sheets were unveiled after the provincial map. Assisting DA Papa were NAMRIA Hydrography Department Director Commodore Romeo I. Ho, Director Macaspac, Adir. Belen, and Head Executive Assistant Rowena E. Bongalos. The maps were then turned over to the officials or representatives of the provincial government and the six municipal governments of Marinduque. The provincial planning office, the municipal planning offices, national and local government institutions, the academe, and nongovernmental and peoples' organizations also received one copy each of the maps.

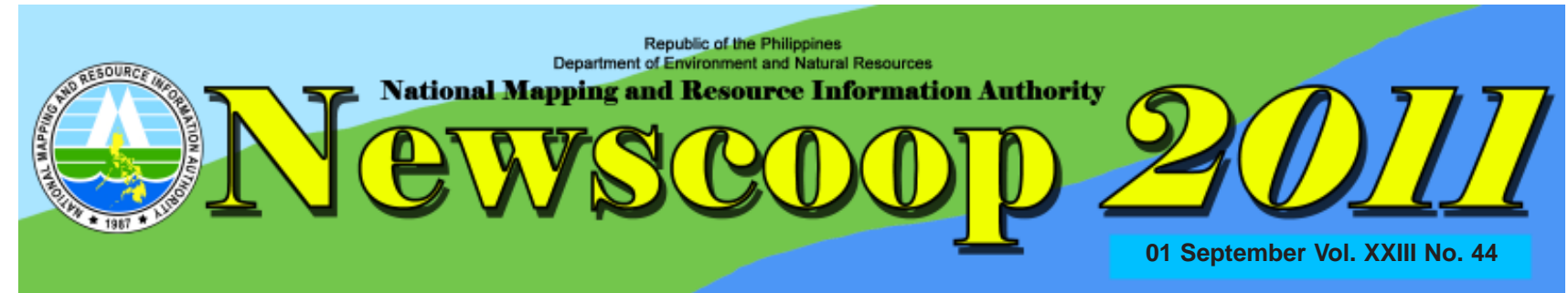
In her message preceding the map unveiling, DA Papa said that NAMRIA has long established its roots in Marinduque through the Station BALANACAN and the extant Balanacan primary tidal monitoring station in the province. "Marinduque is very lucky to have been a priority province for the basemap updating project [of the Agency]. Now, we are launching and turning over to you the medium-scale topographic maps and the provincial map. To the officials of the province, may we continuously and greatly serve you through our offerings," she added.

In a speech after the map turnover, Governor Reyes said that the Provincial Tourism Office, in partnership with other government agencies and the local communities, will start the Heritage Mapping Program in September 2011. The colossal program involves "an unprecedented set of activities designed to uncover the wealth of the heretofore obscure legacies that will further strengthen the identity and consciousness [of the Marinduqueños] as a people."

In closing, Commodore Ho said that the map launching and turnover provided NAMRIA with the opportunity to reach out to the provincial government and showcase how the Agency can best serve the information requirements of the province. "We look forward to bringing our services nearer to the public through our cooperative undertakings with you, such as building your capability through GIS...and to supporting the present and future activities and programs for your majestic and beloved Marinduque," he added.

Commodore Ho moreover expressed thanks to those in the province for the warm welcome to NAMRIA and to everyone who contributed in one way or another to the success of the day's triple occasions—from the unveiling of the centennial historical marker to the tree planting, and to the map launching and turnover.

Xenia R. Andres



Station BALANACAN marker unveiled

One fine day in August 2011, during a period which the convivial Marinduqueños call "little summer", the centennial national historical marker for the Station BALANACAN was unveiled amidst hearty applause and the flurry of butterflies. Mounted on a marble pedestal, the marker recognizes the significant role of the geodetic station in the history of Philippine surveying and mapping and perpetuates the memory of our forebear surveyors and mapmakers.

...at the back, please



Final Preparations

Courtesy Call on Marinduque Governor Carmencita O. Reyes

Putong: A Welcome Ritual

Reception Dinner

On the Road to Station BALANACAN

Prelude to the Marker Unveiling

Unveiling of the Centennial Historical Marker Station BALANACAN: Datum Origin of the Luzon Datum of 1911

Signing of the Certificate of Transfer

Tree Planting

Launching and Turnover of Marinduque Topographic and Provincial Maps

An August to Remember

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