

Scholasticans true

This year — 2006 — marks the 100th year of St. Scholastica's College in Manila. First begun by five German sisters from the Motherhouse of the Benedictine Missionary Sisters of Tutzing, Germany, in Moriones, Tondo on Dec. 3, 1906 with an enrollment of six girls and two boys, it moved to its San Marcelino campus (the site of former St. Theresa's College and today's Adamson University), and then in 1914, to its present site on what was then Pennsylvania Avenue.

Last Sunday, in the Social Hall of SSC, hundreds of Scholasticans and a few faithful husbands attended the book launch of the book *Daughters True: 100 Years of Scholastic Education 1906-2006*. It is truly a book, not only for Scholasticans, but for lovers of Filipiniana and Filipino coffee table books.

The book does not follow the usual format of history books which normally focus on events and dates. It captures the essence of being a Scholastican through the nostalgic essays of 68 alumnae from the different decades and representing four generations of the school's graduates.

The essays are all about the formative experience St. Scholastica's and its sisters provided for its alumnae. The stories, for example, are not only about broadening intellectual horizons, but more about their awakening to a wider world. Many of the alumnae wrote how their Scholastican experience became their starting point for their lifelong exploration and transformation.

Here are some of the essays: "A Passion for Music and Dance" by Rosalinda L. Orosa; "Writing Lessons" by Anita Magsaysay-Ho; "One of the Naughtiest Girls on Campus" by Cecilia Muñoz Palma; "Like a Mother's

Womb" by Pia Hontiveros Pagkalinawan; and, "The Making of a Rebel and A Comedienne" by Ma. Alma "Mitch" Valdes.

Some essays were more about the Scholastican culture and life. Here are some essays: "Growing Up Scholastican" by Neni Sta. Romana Cruz; "Practice, Practice, Practice" by Lucrecia Kasilag; "Life on the Third Story" by Cynthia Nograles Lumbera and Eugenia J. Muñoz; "Sex Education from Sr. Odiliana" by Corito Fiel; and "The Good Girl" by Lara Saguisag.

Then, there are the essays that remind us of the major roles Scholasticans played in shaping contemporary Philippine history. There are three that are truly of historical note. These are "Defining Scholastican Leadership" by Corazon Cojuangco Aquino, "Cherith: From St. Scho to Life in the Sierra Madre" (the story of a former Scholastican student council president who died as an NPA leader in a military encounter) by Ma. Ceres P. Doyo; and "Scholastica's Daughters: Women of Character" by Leni Gavinio Sutcliffe. She writes a fascinating section containing a short essay on each of the college's PAX awardees, an annual award given to its most distinguished alumnae.

The list contains names that are considered hero-

ines of Philippine history and culture like Cecilia Muñoz Palma, National Artist Lucrecia Kasilag, Sr. M. Liguori del Rosario, OSB, Doreen Gamboa Fernandez, Corazon Cojuangco Aquino, Sr. Christine Tan RGS, Natividad Crame Rogers, Clarissa Grey Ocampo, Anita Magsaysay Ho, and many others.

My own personal favorite essay is the last one entitled "Campus Walk: Through The Arches of History" by Lizanne Uychaco and Obi Mapua. It is about the art and architecture of St. Scholastica's College. Let me quote some excerpts from the authors:

"In this enclosed three-hectare complex, its inhabitants have inherited beautiful surroundings. The main buildings, done in neo-Romanesque style, are elegant and impressive, ornamented with arches, towers, columns, and finely wrought details. Set against a brilliant blue sky, they look like a scene straight out of an Old World postcard ... A Swedish architect, George Asp, was awarded the contract over eight other architects. His handiwork was meant to deliver a strong statement — herein is found high-quality Roman Catholic education with strong European origins ... The architectural details (the 'art' on the buildings) like

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From S1/4

the bas relief of saints and Benedictine emblems are like reminders set in stone that the spirit of the founder lives on ... The chapel was built in 1922, but the Romanesque architecture that inspired it dates back to about 1000 AD. It is typical of medieval European abbeys ... St. Cecilia's Hall whose art deco architectural style brought modern architecture into the campus was built in 1930 and inaugurated in 1932. The architect of this magnificent architecture was Andres Luna de San Pedro, the only son of the great Filipino artist, Juan Luna ... St. Scholastica's College lives on, not only as a complex of beautiful structures, but as a haven in the mind and heart of every student who has walked through its arches and corridors."

For Filipiniana collectors, the book has more than 400 vintage photos from private archives, many of which are seeing publication for the first time. The book also highlights the school's architectural details with the use of duo tone design by its book designer, Lynett A. Villariba.

The book was originally conceived by Mother Mary John Manzanan, OSB, then college president and now mother prioress. Fortunately, she found four alumnae who were not only ardent Scholasticans, but were also experts and experienced in the field of book writing and publishing. These are Neni Sta. Romana Cruz, teacher in children's writing and author of several best-sellers; Paulynn Paredes Sicam, free-lance writer and 1989 TOWNS awardee for print media; Ma. Ceres P. Doyo, *Inquirer* columnist and PCIJ board member; and Karina Africa Bolasco, manager of Anvil Publishing and 1995 TOWNS awardee for book publishing.

The initial meeting was in 2000. After six years, *Daughters True* has set new standards for historical books. It is a book not only for Scholasticans, but for those who are truly looking for beautiful Filipiniana and wonderful reading.

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