The eID is now available for our Belgians living in the Philippines.

Since January 1, 2011 our embassy is issuing the Belgian Electronic Identity Card (eID) to the Belgians living in our jurisdiction and registered in the Embassy.

This card offers several advantages.

Due to its small size it's easier to use than a passport and is accepted by over 50 countries as a valid travel document. The eID is also much cheaper than a passport. And they remain valid even if one moves to another country or back to Belgium.

Finally, using a normal card reader one can perform certain administrative actions via the internet. The eID for our Belgians abroad is not only the product of a good cooperation between the FPS Foreign Affairs and Interior, but is also a symbol of our efforts to bridge the gap between Belgium and its nationals abroad.

Surf to our Embassy's website to find out how to apply for the eID card:

- In Dutch IDENTITEITSKAART
- In French CARTE D'IDENTITE

Voices From Sulu

GERARD RIXHON, is a Belgian-born Filipino citizen who dedicated his first twenty years in the Philippines working in the Ungus Matata and Sibutu villages of Sulu and Tawi-Tawi. He founded the Notre Dame of Sibutu high school, after which he was transferred to Siasia to head the Notre Dame of Siasia high school and start a two-year normal education program. After obtaining an MA in Anthropology from the Ateneo de Manila University, he was appointed director of the Coordinated Investigation of Sulu Culture at the Notre Dame of Jolo College, Jolo, Sulu, and there began recording the oral traditions of the Sama and the Tausug. After the battle of Jolo in 1974, he left to work in various scholarship and development programs under the Ford Foundation and Winrock International.
Professor Rixhon has continued his academic work and writing at the Department of Sociology and Anthropology and the Institute of Philippine Culture, School of Social Sciences, Ateneo de Manila University. He is married to Felicitas Consignado Rixhon.

Political conflict and religious fundamentalism coupled with the advent of audio-visual media have made it difficult for traditional oral literature to remain in the popular consciousness, especially in Sulu. This book is an attempt to preserve and present to a new generation some of the Tausug oral art forms that were recorded and collected over fifty years ago in the Sulu Archipelago.

The storytellers and singers then are the real authors of this book. It contains their stories, chants, poems, proverbs, and riddles that first saw print in earlier Sulu Studies issues. Included as well are the contributions of H. Arlo Nimmo from his own collection of Tausug tales from the early 1960s.

The rich and diverse pieces are introduced and annotated by G. Rixhon and H. Arlo Nimmo who, as anthropologists, attempt to present them in their original form and substance even if some deviate from traditional Islamic teachings or normative canons of morality. As a fitting last part of the book, Rixhon offers an overview and a classification of the Tausug oral traditions for further study and discussion.

http://www.ateneopress.org
Street in Ghent named after an Igorot tribesman

Sad story in fact.

Back in 1913 it seemed perfectly normal to exhibit exotic people at a World Exposition. So 97 years ago Igorot Indians from the Philippines were brought to Ghent. One of them, Timicheg, died in Ghent of one of our Western diseases. Gent will now remember him by naming a street after him: the “Timichegtunnel”.

The unfortunate Timicheg was one of about fifty Igorot tribesmen recruited by an American impresario to show the (what was then considered as “civilized”) world their primitive way of life.

Young tribesmen especially were seduced by what must have seemed like a lot of money in the Philippines.

After Paris, Brussels, London and Amsterdam the group arrived in April 1913 down at the World Exhibition in Ghent. The Filipino Igorots were in fact a living attraction.
At the exposition an Igorot village was rebuilt, the Igorots were weaving baskets, crushing rice, engraving wood, making music with their typical gongs, dancing war dances and held competitions in spear throwing and tree climbing.
The 28-year-old Timicheg apparently caught a cold, he slowly dwindled away in our inhospitable Belgian climate, far from his country where the sun makes everything so wonderful, he must have felt homesick and on August 19, 1913 he succumbed to tuberculosis.

Filipino – Belgian Dancer

A Filipino-Belgian dancer is making waves in the Netherlands for pioneering and taking contemporary urban street culture to a higher level through dance and theater performances.

Marco Gerris is popularly known as one of the members of the jury of the hit dance show “So You Think You Can Dance”. But he is also the founder and artistic director of “ISH”, a dance company which aims to train young people interested in underground disciplines like hip hop, break dancing, skating, martial arts and beat box. He adopts these disciplines and transforms them into dance and theater shows for the general public.

Gerris, who grew up in Belgium, was adopted by his Belgian parents from an orphanage in Cebu when he was 3 years old. He moved to Amsterdam when he was 23 years old, discovered street dancing and started his own company “ISH”.

“ISH” quickly jumped to popularity after its first show in 2000, and has since then gathered several recognitions. Their shows were a hit, not only in the Netherlands but also in the United States and Canada, as well as other parts of Europe.
Gerris' life also inspired the award-winning documentary “Wheels of Fortune,” and he has played in several dance movies. With an initial crew of 7 young people, Gerris strived to develop his company, and in 2005 achieved his dream of playing in Broadway at the New Victory Theater in New York together with his crew.

THE BOX SHOP, the relation between nature & the human soul

In September 2003, this company started with the import of high-end luxury boxes from the Philippines to Belgium. Sales and distribution was organized in their office in Ghent.

In September 2005 the office moved to the Philippines, although stock products are still available in the showroom in Belgium.

All designs are made in the Philippines and the factory is for 100% managed by a highly skilled Filipino team. All craftsmen and craftswoman have the Philippine nationality.

In the Philippines, the largest and most prestigious account was with the Office of the former President, which bought products ranging from desk accessories for dignitaries such as Ambassadors, Ministers, Consuls, Congress members, Mayors; to a humidor with an engraved golden dedication plate for former President George W. Bush.
For many years, one of the largest customers was the global licensee of ‘Porsche Design Smoking Accessories’, for whom the company made a suit of 5 humidors, pocket cases and a special cigar ashtray. Today, the company has designed nearly 4000 pieces of a range of products which has been sold worldwide.

Designs, all handmade in wood, are finished with beautiful veneer or carbon fibre. There is a choice of high-gloss finished and matt finished items as well. Most items can have your company name or logo, either printed under the lacquer or engraved on a precious dedication plate. Designs are made to order.

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Member of the Belgian-Filipino Business Club Manila
Tradition muss sein…

It seems that there just can't be a Newsletter without a Breaking News article on our Belgian Women tennis stars. Let's all rally behind the ladies on the tennis court, Henin and Clijsters.

Seven-time Grand Slam winner Justine Henin, continued her comeback from injury with a 6-1, 6-3 win over Elena Baltacha of Britain. Clijsters started her Australian Open run with a 6-0, 6-0 romp Tuesday against three-time Grand Slam finalist and former No. 1-ranked player Dinara Safina. Safina had no answers for Clijsters, who sprayed winners all over the court!

And last but not least

Feel free to make contributions to our next local newsletter by writing to rene.peeters@diplobel.fed.be

Christian MEERSCHMAN
Ambassador

René PEETERS
Consul