

# Dateline: Philippines—Summer 1973

By CARL A. ARGILA

De La Salle College and University of Santo Tomas, Manila

It was back in the December 1970 issue of THE DEAF AMERICAN that we first wrote an article about our work with the Philippine deaf, "Land of the Morning, Child of the Sun Returning . . ." Those of you who were in attendance at the National Association of the Deaf convention in Minneapolis in July of that year will recall that we made a bit of history with the establishment of the first teletypewriter communication for the deaf outside of the United States and the first transoceanic teletypewriter conversation between the deaf. Well, that was 1970. In the December 1971 issue of THE DEAF AMERICAN came a second article, "Land of the Morning, Child of the Sun Returning—A Sequel." This time we found ourselves back in the Philippines and what we had done a year earlier no longer seemed like such an accomplishment—actually we had just broken ground for what was to follow. Many of you were kind enough to respond to our appeal for help for work we were embarking upon in the fields of education and communication for the deaf. Well, that was 1971 and in the more than one year which has passed we have graduated from groundbreaking to foundation building. Though we promised that we would keep our foreign friends abreast of what was going on, the pace of our work left no time for writing.

Well, it's now 1973 and a lot of water has passed under the bridge, politically and otherwise—on both sides of the Pacific! But we're still here; our deaf are still here and our needs, though closer to being met, are very much still here. We'd like to share with you 10 vignettes of news events which took place since our last report. Though each one really deserves an article of its own, we'll just telescope them together and call it "Dateline: Philippines—Summer 1973."

## Special Education Teacher of the Year

Though a great deal of attention was focused on our work with telephone communication for the deaf back in 1970, another one of our projects was a Total Communication Seminar. Though the seminar ran for six all-too-short weeks, we did make an impression on at least one participant. Though there is only one state school for the deaf in the Philippines—and only one other school for the deaf in the entire country, the DEAF, Inc., missionary school which we wrote about in our 1971 article, the city of Manila does provide a limited number of special education classes which enroll deaf children. Manila is the only school district in the Philippines to have such classes for the deaf. One of our seminar participants, Mrs. Anita Dacles, whose training had been completely oral, started integrating "total communication" into her teaching program. Though at



Mrs. Anita Dacles glances our way (center of picture) during ceremonies at P. Gomez elementary school in Manila where she was named a "Special Education Teacher of the Year."

first parents and administration were against this, they couldn't argue with one thing—the kids were learning! And their speech and speechreading didn't degenerate—it improved!

Mrs. Dacles' class was the first (and only) class to use total communication in the Manila city schools. Mrs. Dacles' unbounded energy and dedication was rewarded when she was named one of the special education teachers of the year for 1972 at ceremonies held in P. Gomez elementary school in Manila. We hope that publicity like this will show our educators the value of total communication in education of the Philippine deaf.

As a sidelight, Mrs. Dacles was pre-



Aurora Esguerra, one of the deaf Girl Scouts, cleans up at camp. Aurora is from San Marcos, Bulacan.

sented her award by Dr. Josefina R. Navarro, Superintendent of Manila City Schools. Dr. Navarro has agreed to cooperate with us in our studies of the use of total communication and computer assisted instruction in education of the deaf. We hope to use Manila city schools as a showcase of education of the deaf throughout the country.

## Deaf Girl Scouts

We're not through with Mrs. Dacles yet! Hearing folks couldn't believe it, but the country's first three deaf Girl Scouts (all from Mrs. Dacles' special education class) participated in a summer camp last year in the mountain city of Baguio. The three girls, Lucena Asuncion, Aurora Esguerra and Elizabeth Gasingan, signed the Philippine national anthem while the hearing scouts sang it during the "Scout's Own." When it came time for the "Campfire Showdown" they signed a beautiful rendition of "I Believe." Little successes like these may not seem like much to the deaf of a developed country such as the United States, but to use every step forward is a milestone—maybe someday we'll have an entire troop of deaf Girl Scouts!

And we're lucky to have a diligent worker like Mrs. Dacles really to make things happen. But I have a sad note to report. On May 28, 1973, about twelve noon, we lost Mrs. Dacles. Mrs. Dacles boarded a Pan American Airlines jet bound for the United States where she is a "fly-now-pay-later" immigrant. In so doing Mrs. Dacles had completed the course that so many, too many in fact, of our Philippine teachers for the deaf follow. After training, hard work and diligence, they "graduate" as immigrants to the USA, Europe or Australia. There are few state schools in the USA which don't have at least one Filipino teacher; they're usually the top teachers in their school. I'm happy for them because life here is hard; we are a very poor country. I envy them because they have hot and cold running water, flush toilets and electric lights that work! But each one that leaves, leaves us a burden with no one to bear it. Mrs. Dacles is not sure yet if she'll be at the Pennsylvania School for the Deaf or in Albany, New York. I hope whichever school hires Mrs. Dacles appreciates her as much as we did!

## Handel's Messiah Aids Deaf

Ironic in a sense, but Easter of last year saw a "Holy Week Concert," presenting Handel's classic "Messiah" for the benefit of the deaf! The event was presented by the "Echo Fellowship" at the country's number one cultural spot, the Cultural Center of the Philippines. The "Echo Fellowship" was joined by four guest soloists from the Nationalist Republic of China and the University of the Philippines Symphony Orchestra to

give a truly stunning rendition of Handel's classic work.

More stunning was the object of all this high powered musical talent; the concert was held for the benefit of Christian Assistance for the Deaf, Inc., an organization whose sole purpose is providing support for the missionary work of Reverends Ada M. and Aimee Coryell. You may remember in our 1971 article we told the story of the founding of the country's first school for the deaf outside of Manila—the story of DEAF, Inc., and the pioneering work of this mother-daughter team, the Coryells.

We're not finished yet! In a message to those involved in the concert, Ferdinand E. Marcos, president of the Republic of the Philippines, said "I am . . . enthused because the concert relates to the activities of the Christian Assistance for the Deaf, Inc., which in itself is worthy of support from our people, and should indeed be encouraged in every way to continue its noble work." This is the first time that any president of the Philippines has made public note of the deaf and work related to the deaf.

#### Music for the Deaf

Seems like music and the deaf have been going together lately! Last year the Reverends Gene and Elsie Jagers, relatives of the Coryell team, spent six months working with our deaf. While Gene worked on agricultural and building projects at the mountain school, Mrs. Jagers performed at churches for the benefit of the deaf. And what does Mrs. Jagers do? She and Rev. Jagers are noted Gospel recording artists in the United States—though the deaf may never know the melodious tones of their Hawaiian guitar, they have felt the power of their music. We all enjoyed the Jagerses' visit very much and wish them well in their new work back in the United States.

#### Catholics Want In Too

As if to say they won't be left out, the Catholics have not let the Protestants do all of the work; not in a country which is about 90% Catholic! The Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Manila has a



Ireneo Cruz, one of the Philippines' most talented deaf artists, poses with his work at the Manila Hilton Art Center.

handicapped assistance program which provides some self-help handicraft projects for the deaf. Their most noted effort to date has been the presentation of a play, "The Day after Tomorrow," written, produced and directed by Father James B. Reuter. The play has had numerous presentations around the country and has a cast of 75 deaf, blind and disabled. We might also mention that Father Reuter has been most helpful in assisting us in establishing radio communication for the DEAF, Inc., mountain school for the deaf.

The Catholic Organization of the Deaf—a group of Catholic deaf young adults. This is the only organization of deaf in the country whose officers are all deaf! A forthcoming DEAF AMERICAN article will tell of their president, Rodolfo Soriano.

are behind that, too! In fact, last summer the Catholic Charities sponsored an art show at the Manila Hilton Art Center consisting of exhibits of nine of our most outstanding deaf artists: Joseph Bagaman, Cayo Baes, Jose Castillo, Ireneo Cruz, Wilbert Duenas, Emmanuel Gonzales, Verus Reyes, Franklin Uy and Sao Tack Wong.

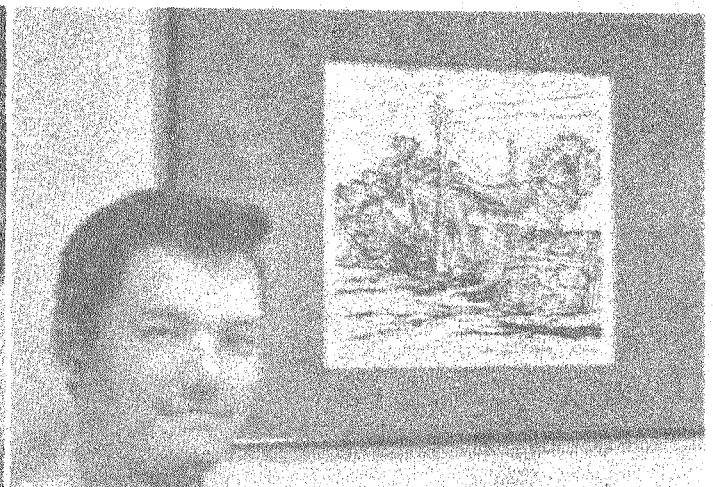
These boys are by no means new to the Manila art circles. Ireneo Cruz, for example, walked away with first prize in the "Sinning Kabataan '71" competition, the 21st National Students Art Competition, with his woodcut "The Temptation of Eve." We are all very proud of our deaf artists; they are able to compete with hearing professionals and surpass them!

#### Deaf Pride! Deaf Power! Deaf Art!

Why not? The Filipino deaf have demonstrated their ability to perform in "The Day after Tomorrow"—why not in other areas of the fine arts? And it shouldn't be surprising that the Catholic Charities

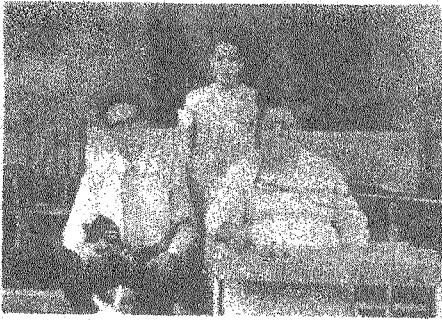
#### Training in Total Communication

There's a good reason why our deaf excel in the field of fine arts but, for example, we have no deaf engaged in "academic fields" and of the handful of deaf college graduates in the country, only one is in a field other than fine arts.



Left: Joseph Bagaman (right) shakes hands with the buyer of his work, "The Crucifixion." Right: Franklin Uy, another participant at the Manila Hilton Art Center, poses with his woodcut entry.





The Reverends Gene and Elsie Jagers pose with their daughter Hazel at one of their engagements in a Manila area church. Mrs. Jagers is shown with her Hawaiian guitar which has made the Jagerses a noted Gospel recording team.

The reason, of course, is education. As mentioned in earlier articles, the pure oral method at the state school for the deaf has "wiped out," educationally, a generation of our deaf. Our prewar deaf most often are the only ones who can express themselves in correct written Communication. It is with this in mind that we have always tried to "indoctrinate" educators of the deaf in total communication.

Last summer we gave our second six-week seminar in total communication (the first was in 1970). Of the 17 people who attended we issued three "Certificates of Completion—With Honors" to Mr. J. Abante, Miss M. Yagui and Miss A. Blacano; we issued four "Certificates of Successful Completion" to Miss O. Aranda, Miss R. Quindoy, Mr. B. Abante and Miss J. Austria. At the closing exercises for the seminar, which was held at the Coffee Shop of the Deaf in Rizal Park (see our 1970 article) Dr. Matilde Valdes, chairman of the Special Education Unit at the University of the Philippines, gave a most inspiring address.

#### Teacher Training

Well, what can you accomplish in six weeks? Not a whole lot we've learned, having taught total communication seminars in the United States and in the Philippines. What is needed, of course, is an intensive teacher-training program. Well, there's only one school in the country that offers courses for teachers of the hearing impaired, Philippine Normal College, one of the state colleges and the top teacher-training institution in the country. Hence, it was with great pride that we accepted an invitation to speak at a Philippine Normal College graduate assembly last September 16. Most of the students, even those enrolled in the "hearing impaired" program (which, of course, is completely oral), were surprised to learn of the poor educational performance of our deaf students and were seeing total communication for the first time. Though we probably made more foes than friends that day, we did stir up some concern and interest.

To make a long story short (after all, this is a vignette), beginning with the 1973-74 academic year we will offer an intensive one-year course in education of the deaf. The course will meet three hours per week with both a lecture and

laboratory and we will cover everything from Ameslan (or should we call it Phils-lan?) to SEE, and that includes computer assisted instruction, another of our projects. The course will be the first of its kind in the country to teach total communication and computer assisted instructional techniques. Though the course will be given by our own institution, De La Salle College, it will be given in a unique consortium arrangement between De La Salle College and Philippine Normal College.

We don't want to end without giving credit to Mrs. Juliet Gregorio, coordinator of special education at Philippine Normal College, who first invited us to speak at the college; Dr. E. Dagot and Brother P. Hebert, FSC, deans of the graduate schools at Philippine Normal College and De La Salle College, respectively, without whose help the course could never have been given; Dr. J. Navarro, superintendent of Manila City Schools, who has continued her generous support of our work by promulgating announcements about the course to all Manila schools; and last, but not least, to Dr. F. Tan, head of Special Education for the Bureau of Education and Culture of the Philippines. Though Dr. Tan was trained for five years at the Central Institute for the Deaf in the United States, he agrees with us that the needs of each student varies and no single method can be proclaimed as the method for education of the deaf.

We hope to write one year from now that we have a corps of highly trained dedicated teachers of the deaf who will revolutionize education of the deaf in our country and bring education to the deaf throughout our country; pray with us for the success of this program!

Those of you who might be able to provide us with advice, suggestions or help (we're in desperate need of classroom materials), we would appreciate hearing from you. You may write directly to us at De La Salle College, 2401 Taft Avenue, Manila.

#### Radiowealth . . . Tunay na Filipino!

Radiowealth . . . Truly Filipino! It's just a slogan for the Radiowealth Corporation. Nope, you've never heard of them. They manufacture radios, televisions and other appliances. In fact they are the only company in the country to design locally and manufacture home appliances. So what do they have to do with the deaf you ask? You'll remember that the DEAF, Inc., school for the deaf is isolated by a five-hour hike up a mountain. Since we last wrote about the school in 1971 one boy has drowned (on an unauthorized trip from the school) and others have taken deathly ill. Radio communication you'll remember was our number one priority for the school—the radios would then be hooked up to TTY's and eventually used in our computer assisted instruction program.

Well, I spoke to Mr. E. H. Ozaeta, senior vice president and general manager of Radiowealth, Inc., about the needs of the school. With the help of Mr. R. S. Guevara and Mr. G. M. Mercado two "police type" VHF radio transceivers were donated to the Philippine Teletypewriter Network for the Deaf (see story below) for use by the school. These are "base station" units which will serve the school for many, many years.

In a forthcoming DEAF AMERICAN article we'll have pictures of the installation of the radios and the school as it looks today. To Mr. Ozaeta, Mr. Guevara and Mr. Mercado and to Radiowealth, all we can say is Marami Pong Salamat (Thanks a million) . . . Radiowealth, Tunay na Filipino!

#### TPBP

So what's TPBP? Well, take a deep breath . . . it stands for "Telepakinil-yang Pinag-ugnay-kawad ng mga Bingi ng Philipinas"! Which means "Philippine Teletypewriter Network for the Deaf." Inaugurated on August 1, 1970.



G. Mercado (left) presents the author, acting director of the Philippine Teletypewriter Network for the Deaf, with two VHF police type transceivers to be used by the D. E. A. F., Inc., mountain school for the deaf.

with a simultaneous telephone call between the American and Filipino deaf, the TPBP has had its administrative birth in the spring of 1973 when it published its first newsletter.

The TPBP is dedicated to the application of technology for the social, educational and cultural welfare of the deaf of the Philippines. In addition to maintaining the country's telephone communication for the deaf and the DEAF, Inc., radio installation, the TPBP is embarking on a project of computer assisted instruction for the deaf which will use the regular telephone TTY's and which we hope will improve education of the deaf.

The TPBP is in desperate need of teletypewriter equipment. Teletypewriter equipment here is very expensive—a Model 15 unit (looking like something of a museum piece) costs nearly \$300 (as compared with about \$60 in the United States); and that doesn't include the cost of the acoustic coupler required to connect the TTY to the telephone. We ask the American deaf for help in expanding our work with the Filipino deaf. Any donation of teletypewriter equipment (or cash to be used in the purchase of teletypewriter equipment) can be made directly to:

Philippine Teletypewriter Network  
for the Deaf  
85-E Kamuning Road  
Quezon City, Philippines

We are currently requesting that the National Association of the Deaf act as "forwarder" for donations for income tax convenience on the part of those who wish to donate. In particular, we are now desperately looking for two TTY's for the DEAF, Inc., mountain school. The radios they have won't be much good if the deaf can't use them themselves, so we've got to connect TTY's to them like we do for telephone communication.

All donations will be commemorated by a plaque permanently affixed to the teletypewriter equipment. We would like to thank Mr. and Mrs. E. Bloom, Jr., Miss F. M. Parsons and Mrs. B. McGaughers for their contributions towards the purchase of a TTY. We would also like to thank

Miss L. O. Robinson  
Maj. Gen. and Mrs. E. Walter Opie, Sr.  
Mr. and Mrs. E. W. Opie, Jr.  
Mr. and Mrs. H. L. Opie, Jr.  
Mr. and Mrs. M. Seiferth  
Mrs. George W. Robinson  
Mr. and Mrs. P. Robielean  
Mr. and Mrs. S. Wheller

for their joint contribution of one entire teletypewriter unit. In a country for which professional persons such as doctors, lawyers or teachers earn barely \$100 a month, we can only depend upon the generosity of those of you abroad who care enough to help the deaf of another country in their quest for what you already have. Thank you.