

MISSION STATEMENT
 TO CELEBRATE,
 SUPPORT AND
 CONNECT
 MULTICULTURAL
 COMMUNITIES OF
 MANAWATU

ETHNIGRAM



President's Report

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

President's Report	1
Meriam's Story	2/4
Delaware Students Visit	5
Upcoming Events	6
Migrants & Refugee's Picnic	7
MMC Women's Group Poster	7
Women's Group Events Only	8
Parson House of Travel Poster	10
Parson House of Travel Poster	11
Centre activities and events	12

Acknowledgement

Palmerston North City Council

PN. Community Service Council Small Grant

Lion Foundation

United Way

Lottery Grant

COGS

Eastern & Central Community Trust

DIA- Settling In

Mainland Foundation

Pub Charity

Hancock Community House
 77-85 King Street

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Happy New Year, New Year would mean new challenges and opportunities coming our way. Over the holidays there were lots of events happened around the city, there was celebration New Year with the Karen Community at the Bill Brown Park and at the Samoan Church Hall.

Visitors from Auckland and Wellington stayed in our city for few days which was good for our economy. The youth night and celebration of being here in New Zealand for 10 years among the Bhutanese community and the appearance of their popular Nepalese singer, Khalid Prasad have gathered a big crowd at the Globe theatre.

Last Sunday the Philippines Central Association had their community picnic at the Memorial Park and was participated by some guests from Tawa Wellington.

The huge presence of different ethnic groups in our city events like Christmas in the square and New Years celebration are very evident that Palmerston North indeed is Multicultural city. Most of our new migrant and refugees are enjoying their access to facilities and recreation places that Palmerston North provide.

On my visits to the Esplanade Rose garden I've seen few refugee families having their picnics. Long walks to the Manawatu river gave me chance to see some refugees enjoying a swim at clean swimming hole along Awapuni Area.

During Christmas period two Cane Ball players from the Karen Community travelled to Thailand and represented Palmerston North and New Zealand and it good to see them bringing the third price trophy back and putting Palmerston North on the map.

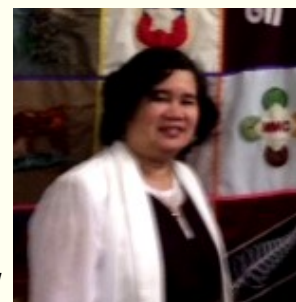
This year we have so many activities lined up to fill our calendar, there is Multicultural picnic at the Esplanade on February 24 and at the same time the Ethkick will be happening at the arena Manawatu with 32 registered teams competing for the Cup. Our 25th year of Celebrating the Festival of Cultures are well underway, with more activities included like the Potluck lunch at Te Manawa.

This is done in collaboration with English Language Partners. Fashion Show in the Square. On January 19, MMC was privileged to host 20 students from Delaware University USA. They wanted to learn more about NZ Culture so with the help of Todd Taiapa we are able to welcome them doing the Hongi

Stephanie Jeremie and Pascal were there also to present what Palmerston North has to offer to our visitors.

We require your full participation in these events to make it a success, so please put it in your calendar. More participation's makes it more fun.

Meriam Findlay
 President



Above Karen New Year's Celebration
 Two Karen Cane Ball Player s



Bhutanese Youth Celebration

Meriam's story

If I have to write a book about my life, the first chapter would be called "A Series of Unfortunate Events"

As the eldest child of two overcomers, my Father was denied higher education and robbed of his inheritance by a family member. My Mother, born during the war, was sent to live in the home of her elder brother so that she could, at the age of eight years, start her education. To earn the privilege of this education she had to do all the household chores as well as care for her nieces and nephews. She was however not allowed to go to High School, so she literally packed her bags and returned home, where she learned hairdressing skills from her friend. Soon she met my father and got married and three years after I was born.

As a young couple they ventured into many kinds of businesses, from selling clothing materials to selling lumber. I was four when my Great Aunt Gloria found my Father, and convinced him to join her and her family, even giving us the money, to sail to Mindanao. Mindanao, in some places, has a large Muslim population, there were however many people from different ethnicities, such as from Visayas and Luzon, that came and found new business opportunities.

We first stayed at my Great Aunt's place in Kabacan. My parents had brought some dried fish with them to Mindanao and this became their founding income generating business, which gradually expanded into groceries.

Later my Father's cousin introduced my Father to the coffee business, and we moved to another town named Tacurong, where my family are still living. Knowing the art of roasting and grinding coffee was the first thing that my Father learnt from his cousin.

My parents were also known for their hospitality and we often had our customers, who by now were our friends, come from nearby towns to spend the night with us. The business prospered and life was good. My parents shared their prosperity amongst our relatives and offered to sponsor them to come and live with us.

To save money for my education I have to work every Sunday morning I would pick a 10 kilo sack of onions and a crate of tomatoes from my parents store and sell them on the side walks. I would save any profit, and as a special treat for myself, I would be able to eat at one of my favourite restaurants.

My parents certainly taught us all about entrepreneurial skills at an early age.

Our prosperity caused jealousy to our neighbour to and in September 1976 our neighbour's husband came to our house and in front of my pregnant mother, stabbed my father and four days later my father died.

With no Insurance, my Mother tried to keep the business going, and would often have to leave me to mind the store while she was travelling to hopefully find new business ventures.

These responsibilities, unfortunately, deprived me of enjoying my teenage years and I began to lose trust in humanity and even questioned my purpose in life.

Good friends showed me the importance of the spirit of community, and how to overcome and stand up to the storms of life.



Meriam's Story continues

Thankfully I was eventually able to put aside my anger and focus on finishing my studies, that my parents had dreamt for all of us.

Going to a Catholic School a Nun advised me to read The Bible, when ever I felt down. The Psalms and Proverbs became my guide. My mother at this time decided to send me to Manila, where I could stay with relatives while I studied for a college degree.

Knowing the cost of studying Medicine, I opted to study Food and Nutrition. Although I was freed up from my responsibilities as the eldest child of 7 children, there were times when I felt very sorry for myself, such as when my allowance was delayed, and the times when I watched my cousins playing with my aunt and uncle. I found however that God is an amazing Teacher and Provider.

One time I really felt like going back to Mindanao and giving up but God showed me a family picking over left over food from customers in a restaurant and sleeping in a cart for the night. From that time on I learnt to be grateful and not think of my self and my circumstances all the time. I needed to look around me because there were always people far worse off than me.

I was in my third year at University when I had an encounter with a living and life saving God. It made me realise that no matter how good one looks on the outside, beneath can be anger and thoughts of revenge. In my case it was revenge towards the person that had killed my father. It was through this experience that I asked for forgiveness and accepted Jesus as my Saviour. I was now released from the burden and could forgive the man that had killed my father.

Four years of study paid off. I finished my study but chose not to attend the Graduation Ceremony, so that I could help my mother in supporting my siblings. With very little money, we started a small restaurant in front of our house, that was located adjacent to the school. Our Muslim friends entrusted their children to get their meals from us while studying at the school which was in front of our house.

My brothers helped me in my business by becoming the assistant baker and cook. The isolation and lack of social life whilst running the business, made me decide to try teaching. I was aided by some of the study manuals of one of our boarders, who had a MBA in Hotel and Restaurant work. I subsequently became a founding teacher of HRM in the newly opened Technology School in my town.

I learnt a lot about innovative thinking while teaching adult students and was able to secure my students' apprenticeships in both hotels and restaurants, in Davao and in my hometown. The situation at home was not however pleasant, some of my siblings being in their late teens, had conflicting values, so I decided to leave home and not return.

It was painful to leave home. At this time I was already turning 26 years and women of my age were usually married. I travelled to Manila and worked full time as a staff member in the Church that nurtured me, where I first became a Born again Christian.

Life does not always follow how we hope or plan it. I did not like how my life was at times progressing, so when my auntie and uncle from New Zealand offered to sponsor me to come to New Zealand, even offering to pay for my air fare, I grabbed the opportunity with open arms .

Trusting that with God on my side, good things can come from desperate decisions.

Arriving in Christchurch in 1989 and looking out at the scenery en-route to Invercargill I could not believe that my dream places from the movie The Sound Of Music, were now reality. Lew a family friend of my aunt and uncle had kindly offered to be the driver. As my uncle is a diabetic and has to have regular injections.

Lew was very direct with his intentions after meeting me, and after much wining and dining and long trips we got to know each other better, so at Christmas 1989 he proposed. Our life together did not however turn out as rosy as I had anticipated, We went through many trials in relation to Lew's business, but by God's grace the Lord provided us with the strength to carry on together.

Meriam's final page

We grabbed the opportunity to shift to the North Island and were offered free travel and a moving allowance by WINZ, on accepting a job in Foxton. Lew's job was not quite what we had expected, but in Foxton we were lucky to meet Ramon and Cora Herrera at one of the Filipino parties we attended. Lew encouraged Ramon to start a Filipino group with the aim of preserving and strengthening the Filipino culture for the Filipino women and their children, that were married to Kiwi men.

In January 1991, and 16 days after our eldest daughter Sarah was born, the Philippines Central Association was founded under the leadership of Ramon and Cora Herrera. Trips to Palmerston North became more frequent as we attended different functions with other Filipino-Kiwi families. We also moved to Levin when new employment opportunities opened up for Lew.

In 1993 we were expecting our second child, John, when the International Day was started in Palmerston North, this being later renamed the Festival of Cultures. The same year Lew came home from work with chest pain and was admitted to hospital. His recovery and rehabilitation led us to move to Palmerston North, where we were greatly touched by the kindness of the people that helped us when we arrived in the city.

Palmerston North was where we also had our third child, Hannah. Being in a wheelchair and walking with a tripod Lew had great difficulty trying to look for employment. He was however offered a part time fundraising job, with the addition of a vehicle for his use.

Lew was out with friends one night when he saw that some young people looked as though they needed some help. So in 1995 the Palmerston North Street Van was established. Being active in the Filipino community, in 1997 I was asked by our President Cora Herrera if I would like to represent the Filipino Community on the Manawatu Multicultural Council. Getting involved with the MMC has given me the opportunity to meet people from all ethnicities who may be going through some of the same experiences such as isolation, discrimination and lack of employment that we did.

In 2004 I was asked to stand as President. That year the National Government came up with a project called Settlement Support and with the help of the PNCC, the MMC became the host agency for this project. Going to various meetings taught me a lot, but with the pressures of a growing family I stepped down after 2 years as President.

Fast forward. Now my children are grown up, and in 2015 I made myself available to serve again. I am continuously learning new things and meeting new migrants and refugees that are coming to our city. It always brings a smile to my face when I see how well they are settling in and have decided to stay in Palmerston North.

It is often said that Palmerston North is a place that is small enough to care, but big enough to be a city for new opportunities and for making new friendships.

Meriam Findlay



Visit by Delaware University students.

On the 19th of January a group of 20 University of Delaware students visiting Massey University along with 3 staff members visited the Multicultural Centre.

I must admit that although I had learned something about Delaware at High School, a quick Google search proved helpful!

One thing I did learn was that Delaware is the 49th smallest of the 52 states in the United States of America. The aim of the visit was to discuss the challenges that Migrants and Refugees face.

Todd Taiepa, the Maori Adviser at the Palmerston North City Council welcomed the guests with a Karakia, followed by Meriam, who gave an outline of the history and work of the MMC.

Christine and Noorangi spoke from personal experiences on the topic followed by Stephanie Velvin from the newly formed Welcoming Communities initiative.

Booranee, known to many of us because of her amazing ability in weaving, in this case Flax, showed some of her exquisite work and Noorangi managed to get everybody on their feet with a simple Cook Island item, but entertaining action song!

We are lucky to have so many people from different countries coming to the centre via Massey University.

Hopefully what they heard and experienced at the centre will benefit them in their continued studies back in the University of Delaware

Ange Joblin



Up Coming Events

The Esplanade Day. Sunday the 4th of March.

Every year the Victoria Esplanade, known as 'The Esplanade'
 Opens it's gates to
 With stalls ,food ,entertainment ,
 Bands and choirs, it's a great place to spend the day with family and friends.
 So take a picnic and have some fun!,

FASHION PARADE 18th of March 2018. In the Square.

On the 26th of January we had our initial meeting for the
 MMC Fashion Parade, which is part of the Festival of Cultures.

If you could not attend the meeting--all is not lost !

If you wish to join the other models on Sunday the 18th of March
 on the stage, and have a really great time, you will need to fill out an
 enrolment form, obtainable from the Centre asap.

Regards

Ange and Noorangi

Festival of Cultures from the 17th-24th of March 2018.

This annual festival of Palmerston North that takes place in and around the Square, is one of the highlights of the Palmerston North calendar.

It starts on the 17th of March-with an amazing Lantern Parade at dusk, and finishes with probably the biggest attractions, ethnic food , dancing and entertainment-a week later.

You will hear a multitude of different languages and see an amazing variety of different ethnic clothes, and we guarantee, you will have fun !

More importantly don't forget to come and support

MMC'c Ethnic Fashion Show!

So please come and relax while watching beautiful people wearing beautiful clothes while listening to some beautiful music.

Check out the activities on the PNCC website for times and dates.



Meet & Greet Family Picnic

At the Esplanade Saturday 24th
February 2018 11am—2pm

Games-Fun-Music

Bring your family, friends

Bring food & drink to share.

Hope to see you there!



Manawatu
Multicultural Council

Multicultural
Centre

Manawatu
Newcomers Network
Connecting People

Multicultural Women's Group Poster

Multicultural Women's Group

Our Place – a dance and arts project for the
Multicultural Women's group 3rd Friday of the month.

First session for 2018
Friday 16 February 1 to 3pm.

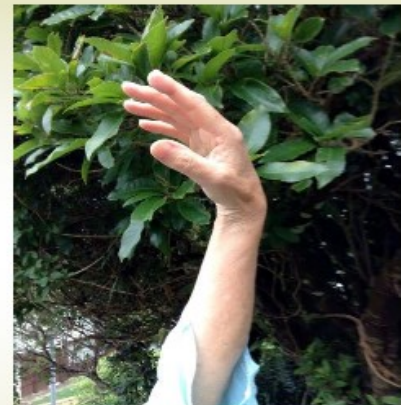
Join us to dance, create, have fun, meet new friends,
explore our beautiful cultures!

Dance/arts tutor Tania Kopytko.

Meet at the Multicultural Centre.

Wear comfortable clothing.

You can join at any time.



For more information phone

Centre: 351572, Email: ask@mmcnz.org.nz

Kindly funded by



Women Only Events

Zumba Women Only

Free classes are starting on Saturday 27 January from 4pm-5pm at St Peters Church Hall located at 229 Ruhahine Street, there is plenty of parking behind the building (follow the red arrow)

We will run these classes every Saturday at the same time, however there might couple of classes that will be in other days/times due to prior booking for the hall but I will communicate that before hand.

For more details:

Email: _Rana.Naser@fonterra.com

Rana.Naser@fonterra.com

or text Rana: 027 405 2230



Women Only Camp

The Women camp is at the Sixtus Lodge Friday 23 February from 6pm and will leave the place around lunch time Sunday 25 February 2018.

- Cost: 2 nights, \$25 per person
- Free activities: Games/Movies/Limestone Caves (Glow worms)/Streams and Rivers/ Various bush walks and tramps around the Lodge/Forest Park/The Iron Gate Gorge at the Oroua River/Hills and Terrace
- Across the road there is horse trekking school, if you are interested to do horse trekking with competitive price, let me know
- We will stay in Dorms with beds ,hall ,commercial kitchen, plenty of toilets and showers (we will NOT stay in tents.)
- Bring your toiletries, sheets, pillows, sleeping bags.
- We can accommodate up to 50 people, so first in.
- Last day for registration will be 6 February 2018 sharp
- Registration :email: Rana.Naser@fonterra.com or text Rana: 027 405 2230

More details re-food/commuting to and from/ programme ,etc will be followed before the camp

www.sixtuslodge.co.nz

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HOUSE OF TRAVEL

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BAHRAIN DINAR	INDIA RUPEE	QATAR RIYAL
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BERMUDA DOLLAR	ISRAEL SHEKEL	SAUDI ARABIA RIYAL
BRAZILIAN REAL	JAPAN YEN	SINGAPORE DOLLAR
BRUNEI DOLLAR	JORDAN DINAR	SOLOMON ISLAND DOLLAR
CAMBODIAN RIEL	KUWAIT DINAR	SOUTH AFRICA RAND
CANADA DOLLAR	MACAO PATACA	SOUTH KOREA WON
CFP FRANC	MALAYSIA RINGGIT	SRI LANKA RUPEE
CHILE PESO	MAURITIUS RUPEE	SWEDEN KRONA
CHINA YUAN	MEXICAN PESO	SWITZERLAND FRANC
COLUMBIA PESO	MOROCCO DIRHAM	THAILAND BAHT
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HOUSE OF TRAVEL

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WESTERN UNION
MONEY TRANSFER

Multicultural Centre Activities & Events

Manawatu Multicultural Centre

Opening Hours: Monday–Friday 10am–4pm

- Practice your English
- Make new friends
- Share information
- Interacts with other migrants
- Use your interpersonal skills
- Work together with other community groups and organization
- Learn about New Zealand customs and culture

Weekly Activities

Advanced English Conversation Groups:

Monday morning 10am–11.30am

Monday, Tuesday & Thursday 1pm–3pm

English Beginner's Conversation Groups

Tuesday, Thursday & Friday

10am–11.30am

Lunchtime Conversation—Shared Lunch

Every Friday 12–1pm

Women's Sewing Group

Wednesday 12–2pm

Arts & Craft Group

1st & 2nd Friday of the month 1pm–3pm

Monthly Activities

Newcomers Morning Tea

3rd Wednesday of the month

10am–12noon

Multicultural Women's Group

3rd Friday of the month 1-3pm

Newcomers Potluck Dinner

Last Friday of the month

6pm– 8.30pm

