

“Mommy” Rose Ocampo : Multitasker Social worker



Rose Marie del Rio Ocampo died September 7, 2005 at the Bridgepoint Medical Center in Toronto, Canada. She was 73 years old.

Her husband, Dr. Teofilo “Pilo” Ocampo, said she suffered a heart attack from complications with her long-term diabetic condition. Rose has had several mild strokes until a severe one three years ago incapacitated her.

Before she immigrated to Canada in 1972, she served many functions with Operation Brotherhood in its Manila office -- in operations, training, and in personnel management.

She first joined OB in 1957 and was soon involved with helping manage a number of livelihood projects in various places in the Philippines – from Sapang Palay in Manila to Tawi-Tawi in Mindanao and Nasugbu in Batangas. The skills she learned as a social worker was so effectively applied in all these projects, she earned a commendation from OB’s Board of Directors on December 17, 1972.

It praised her for “her inspiring leadership and exceptionally outstanding devotion to duty in various capacities from February 1957 to November 1972; and for her invaluable contribution to social development in the Philippines and to the promotion of international friendship and brotherhood among men and nations.” For the latter achievement, she was honored on July 28, 1960 with the award of Chevalier of the Million Elephants and the White Parasol given by King Savang Vatthana of Laos.

After earning her degree in social work from Centro Escolar University in Manila, she worked with the Social Welfare Administration from 1950 to 1955. Then she was an office manager and private secretary to Senator Pacita Gonzales for one year.

In Canada, beginning in 1973 she was a library technician in Toronto with the Legislative Library, Technical Services and Systems of the government of Ontario province. In 1988, after being stricken with the first of many strokes, she went on disability leave.

Rose married Pilo, himself an OB doctor, in 1961 in Manila. He has retired as a school physician for a Toronto public school. He had joined Rose in Canada in 1983 after working in a hospital in Ghana, Africa. They have three children – Rollo who owns a Toronto gift shop; Conrad, a landscaper in Toronto; and Maria Marunochi, a housewife in Oceanside, California. They have six grandchildren. One of six children, Rose has three surviving siblings – two of them living in Canada and one in Iloilo.

She attended the Richmond Professional Institute in Richmond, Virginia; the Herzing Institute in Toronto; and the St. Nicholas Training Centre's Montessori Course in London. In Toronto, she was a founding member of the Kababayan Community Centre as well as the East York Multicultural Committee and a member of the International Program For Youth Leaders and Social Workers.

Address your cards and messages to Pilo at 5 Massey Square, Condominium 2609, Toronto, Ontario M4c 5LC, Canada (telephone 416 690 8475).

By Pete Fuentecilla