

## MBC President's Report for the year 2024

2024 started off with a flurry of financial activity as part of the program of the Secretary and myself to get MBC into a clean position with BIR and SEC. As a result of trying to get our 'Authority to Print' (Official Receipts) we opened the veritable can of worms at BIR. This resulted in MBC having to address many open cases of non-compliance. Thanks to the assistance of our auditor, Evangeline delos Santos, we got it all sorted out in record time and cleared all the problems, thus allowing us to file with SEC within the amnesty time frame. Inevitably a few other problems cropped up later, but these were dealt with by the Treasurer, Secretary and Auditor in a timely manner. I am pretty sure that the audit and submission of the 2024 accounts will go without a hitch for once. Finally, I feel that MBC is becoming fully compliant at BIR and SEC.

Having completed this task, we then heard the Barangay Chairman had been to Manila City Hall to check the 'status' of MBC. Apparently, he had ideas of taking over MBC for his own purposes and making it a tourist spot. Being fore warned is valuable. Our Hon Sec invited the Barangay for drinks at MBC in March and whilst the meeting was convivial, the very next day they sent a team of cleaners into MBC and then posted photos on Facebook. I had to request the removal of those (they complied) and reiterate that MBC was a Private Club. Unfortunately, only 3 weeks later Jovy found a couple of girls taking photos in the Club grounds and they claimed the Barangay had told them they could do that. Finally we got to the stage where the relationship with the Barangay seemed to be on an even keel.

At the beginning of February, we experienced some very low tides and this exposed the muddy bottom of the river around the pontoon preventing launching. That was the first time that I had seen that in my 15 years at MBC.

In March we were delighted to see the official announcement from SM Corp. that they were no longer pursuing the construction of the Pasig River Expressway (PAREX). However at the same time we started to see proposals of the extension of the Promenade along the Makati section of the Pasig. Come July we were concerned to see reports that SM were planning again to build PAREX. To date we have had no more information so the 'cloud' continues to hang over our head.

The pontoon had to be repaired again at the end of June and a fine job was done without affecting rowing in any way, BUT as of the end of this year, we have lost our striped pole and there are signs of new damage.

In late July we suffered the combined effects of Typhoon Carina and the SW monsoon. This caused a red rainfall notice to be issued and in the first 24hrs, we had over 450mm of rain. Our barangay was flooded, not helped by the pumping station being out of order. There were then a succession of smaller typhoons through to November and this caused several days of rowing to be lost.

In August, the Club hosted a medical mission organised by the 126<sup>th</sup> Squadron and the Barangay. This involved 200 patients who benefitted from medical and dental checkups.

In October we were saddened by the loss of our long-standing member David Charlton. Who died of a heart attack whilst in Turkey with his staff. David had been a stalwart

supporter of the Club and many years ago partnered with the late Eric McGaw to row 100 miles in 24 hours. Sadly, this tremendous achievement was not recognised by the Guinness Book of records. David will be remembered as a gentleman who loved his sports and was extremely supportive to many causes.

The Annual Kids Xmas party was held on December 7th. A total of 125 kids plus 125 guardian attendees and they enjoyed an afternoon of games and food with gift giving from Santa after. This year we asked the 126<sup>th</sup> Squadron who partner with MBC to finance the event, to invite 35 kids, either those of the PCG substation personnel along the river, or kids near their stations who they thought were deserving. MBC in conjunction with Bgy. 883 invited 90 local children.

I am sorry to have to advise members that Jovey, who has helped look after members and the Club for many years on a voluntary basis may have to return to Davao to look after her grandmother. There is a possibility that this will only be for a few months, we are awaiting her confirmation of this. However, the Board has been actively looking for a replacement replacement/solution to this problem to ensure continuity of service for members. We wish Jovey all the best in her selfless mission and good health to her grandmother should she have to leave us.

In closing, I wish to express my appreciation and gratitude to all the members for their continued and continuing support to the various club activities, to all our Club volunteers, without whose time and energy the Club would have been unable to service our general membership and lastly to my fellow Board members whose devotion and dedication to the Club are beyond quantification. Thank you also to those of you (and in particular Atty. Kris Ablan, ASEC DTI) who strive to promote MBC and in particular make the public aware of the importance of the Ilog Pasig to Metro Manila. For my part, it was a pleasure and an honor to have performed my role in serving the Club during this year that passed. I believe that 2025 will be an even better year for MBC.

Thank you.



James Stratton  
President  
Jan 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2025