



Gloria Ross: Official Speech

Launch Day, 16 March 2013: Radyo Filipino Canberra (RFC)

Her Excellency, Ambassador Anota and her staff, our esteemed community leaders, distinguished guests, friends, on behalf of Radyo Filipino Canberra, (RFC) Incorporated, I welcome and thank you all for joining our broadcast.

I believe your presence today is a portent of good things to come for our broadcast service. Your presence demonstrates the dynamism and importance of the Filipino community in the Australian Capital Territory (ACT). Canberra city which largely makes up the populated boundaries of the ACT has just celebrated its 100<sup>th</sup> birthday. I feel so honoured that we can conduct our inaugural broadcast the same week as Canberra's centenary celebrations, and I'm sure you do too. Those of you who know Australian society know that this is a proud multicultural country and all people from all countries are treated as equals. Filipino Australians, also referred to as 'Ozy Filipinos' help make up the greatness of what Australia is today. We are proud of both the Philippines and Australia. Our neighbouring countries share many of the same democratic and personal values.

We are living in this era where we are bombarded by a plethora of technology and information. But, I must say that radio, or 'radyo' as Filipinos call it, has had a defining impact on my personal life. I'm sure many of you fellow Filipinos here who are my age or more can associate fondly with the all-consuming, addictive 'radyo' dramas that inundated the Philippine islands since the middle 1900s. And despite the advent of all other media, 'radyo' is still enjoying very high patronage, especially in the village areas outside the major cities where tens of millions of people live. There was a song in the late seventies called "Video Killed the Radio Star", referring to the golden days of radio. It was assumed at the time that 'radyo' was passing away. However, despite the great communication technology of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, which has now gone well beyond the achievements of video more than 30 years after this song was recorded, 'radyo' still remains an important medium for billions of people on this beautiful planet which we all share.

I'm convinced that my Tagalog language skills had been greatly developed by my one and a half average hours/per day of listening to Simatar, Tagani and other popular radio soapies those days. I'm a self-confessed radio soapie fan and I love the power of the spoken word. In fact, in the first 16 years of my village life, my only source of current news, information and entertainment was the radio. Yes, I am a product of my times.

In early 1986 I moved from a village in the south of Luzon Island into Central Manila, as a teenager to take up a university scholarship at the height of the tumultuous 'People Power Revolution'. Most of my university peers were born and raised in Manila, but thanks to 'Radyo' I felt that my Tagalog/Filipino language skills and knowledge about the latest events was that of an equal standing to those around me. One vivid memory I have during this period was being asked, "Taal na Tagalog ka ba? Which means, are you a native Tagalog speaker? This was quite a complement, considering I had come from a non-Tagalog province. So I can thank the 'radyo' for a big part of my early language education.

In the same token, I hope the Filipino community in Canberra will benefit greatly by tuning in to CMS 91.1FM every Saturday from 10-11 and by appreciating what Radyo Filipino Canberra will offer them. Our national Filipino language is a great language and it helps define and unite us as a Filipino nation of people who are proud of both our Filipino heritage and our adopted country, such is the great country of Australia which welcomes our cultural and linguistic diversity.

Again, thank you and enjoy our 'radyo' program.