

*Everything in the Philippines*

## *Santa Filomena Statue in Baliwagan, Balingasag, Mis. Or.*



April 30, 2018



### STATUE OF SAINT FILOMENA IN BALIWAGAN BALINGASAG MISAMIS ORIENTAL PHILIPPINES.

According to our late grandfather, Simeon Cimafranca. This statue of Saint Filomena was found of our great grandfather Pedro Severino Aboy, in the ocean, in Macajalar, in between of Hermano and the town of Balingasag Misamis Oriental Philippines during WW1.

One peaceful night around 1918 Pedro Severino Aboy went fishing in the ocean. He threw his fishing net several times in a different direction to the ocean, but he doesn't catch any fish. However, he notices a piece of wood in his fishing net every time. He thought, he catches a lot of fish every time he pulls out his fishing net from the ocean, but the same piece of wood

coming back, over and over again inside his fishing net, not knowing he put the piece of wood inside his boat. Dawn has come he decided to go home without fish. At the seashore, people are waiting for him to buy his fish. They asked him what he got, he said I just got a piece of wood, people looked and found a statue of a woman 2 feet in height holding an anchor in the right hand and a flower in the left hand inside his boat. People said this is not an ordinary wood, this is a statue of Saint or something the time Pedro Severino Aboy, found out what he catches. He brought the statue in his home and put the statue to his tiny store right next to the coconut wine. Later in time, they found out the statue was a statue of Saint Filomena from the novena prayer book they read. Because of the anchor and flower in her hands.

Through the dreamed of Martina Catarong, from Barangay Blanco, told Pedro Severino Aboy, Saint Filomena was in her dream, told her to transfer her statue to a chapel. Because of the place where she had was nasty. So Pedro Severino Aboy built a tiny Nipa hut chapel right next to his house and they offer a novena prayer to the Saint every night.

Since then every time Pedro Severino Aboy fishing to the ocean, he comes home a lot of fish in his boat, he sold and shared some. By then he bought a big fishing net, boat, and land with the coconut plantation, later on, people called him Don Berok. They also admire his kind-hearted personality, he always gives those who are needy. He has sponsored the Saint Filomena feast day on August 11, every year. He liked to have a band playing instruments and sponsored dance in his Barangay. More people are present to the NOVENA PRAYER every night so they decide to build a bigger chapel and made Saint Filomena a Patron of four Barangays in Baliwagan, Binitinan, Baga-ay, and Puerto Musi-Musi.

Another year passed by, Storm washed out the Chapel of Saint Filomena, only her statue left standing up untouched at the altar of the chapel. The opinion of everybody there might be another storm coming, they decide to transfer the chapel to a different area near the crossing in Baliwagan beside the national road.

The land was donated by Pedro Severino Aboy to the church and it was registered by the Bureau of lands in 1961 to the Roman Catholic Church. They built the big chapel of Saint Filomena on the donated land in 1960.

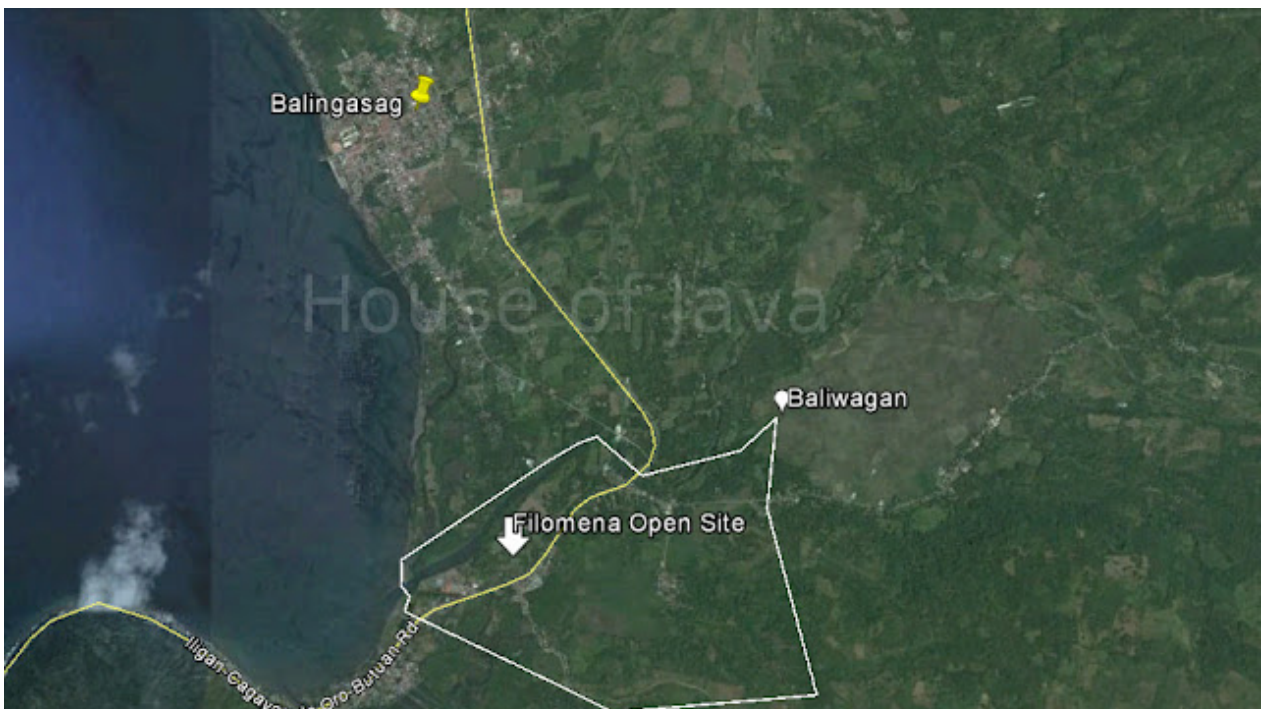
### SANTA FILOMENA CHURCH

An Archaeological open site has been identified in Barangay Baliwagan, particularly at the abandon Santa Filomena Church, ruins constructed in 1960.

The site is recorded as a Filomena open site, where a small number of earthenware sherds and trade ware sherds were recovered.

It has geographic coordinates of 8°43'13" north latitude and 124°46'98" east longitude with an elevation of 12 masl.

Picture of 2009





Many years after, people decided to change their Patron in Baliwagan from Saint Filomena to Mother of Perpetual Help. They built the church in the land donated from the Salvaleon family after the crossing in Baliwagan.

As I remember when I was a kid back then, playing around the yard in this chapel with some kids in the neighborhood, the chapel still intact, it was built hollow block cement, metal roof, column connected to the beam was hardwood. This chapel of Saint Filomena was pretty clean even the yard. I have seen some wooden chairs inside the chapel. Every year on her feast day most of the family of Aboy and Salvaleon was there and some people of Baliwagan attending the Novena Prayer for the feast day, August 11, of the Saint Filomena.

From the 1980's-1990's storm after storm coconut trees fell in the middle of the chapel broken wall and roof. Although my grandparents save some of the roof and wood, it spoils on time.

The altar where the Saint in it, standing untouched. The year 1997 we remove the Saint Filomena from her chapel because it's really broken from the storm, and we put her to the big church in Baliwagan. Year 2005 my grandmother Nicolasa Aboy Cimafranca dreamed her father, Pedro Severino Aboy, told her, on her dreamed to remove the Saint Filomena from the big church in Mother of Perpetual Help, because somebody cut and remove some finger of the statue of Saint Filomena, so my grandmother Nicolasa Cimafranca asked permission to the priest assigned and told about her dreamed. The priest agreed and gave her the statue of Saint Filomena and brought it home. Started that time my grandmother told her family to build back

the Saint Filomena chapel, but due to lack of funds, the chapel still unspoiled. The only same front part of the chapel left standing up at the moment, my mother built a tiny chapel to the back using the bamboo walls so that we can still celebrate a mass, once every month.

Picture of 2018



2016 my husband Charles Maldonado, wondering where this statue came from since it found in the ocean. We did research on the Internet during the time of WW1. We found the sailing vessel name mama Filomena sunk by the U-boat, last June 7, 1917, in the gulp Lyon. Is this Statue came from the Wooden brigantine. Or *Mamma Filomena*, built as *Nuova Giulia in Italy*. We still don't have an answer, but a possibility. Anyway thanks for reading.



From the original story written by Simeon M. Cimafranca, Columnist.



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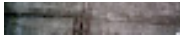
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