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**THE CENTENARY OF THE PHILIPPINE NORMAL
UNIVERSITY'S MAIN BUILDING: A LANDMARK
IN PHILIPPINE EDUCATION (1910-2010)**

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INTRODUCTION

*"All fine architectural values are
human values, else not valuable."
- Frank Lloyd Wright*

*"We shape our buildings.
There after they shape us."
- Winston Churchill*

Celebrating a centennial or a hundred year anniversary is a milestone to any person, object, event or structure. Such is the case of PNU's Main Building recently named Geronima T. Pecson Hall which shall mark its centennial commemoration in 2010. This iconic structure has been a witness to a countless number of illustrious graduates, momentous events in Philippine History and has been a training ground so to speak of some of the luminaries in Philippine Education.

* A preliminary study on the historical foundation of PNU's Main Building recently named as Geronima T. Pecson Hall

With its construction completed in 1912, the Main Building was the 'largest school building' then, and was part of the American Heritage in architectural design which marked the rebirth of Graeco-Roman style. All the nearby building structures share the same theme and design: Philippine Legislative Building, Finance Building, Philippine General Hospital, Tourism Building and the National Museum. According to Architect Gerard Lico of the University of the Philippines - Diliman, the uniform design among the buildings was part of Architect Burnham's plan to initiate or copy the structural design of Washington D.C.'s Capitol Hills and to transform the City of Manila into a center of politics, education and culture.

With the coming centennial anniversary of the PNU's Main Building, the researchers would like to trace its historical development and its future role as an iconic structure and heritage architecture in the Philippine educational landscape; hence, this study.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This investigation is anchored on the concept that traces the history, describes the significant events held, enumerates the structural challenges, and discusses the initiatives of the PNU Administration in maintaining and/or preserving PNU's century-old Main Building.

Villalon (2005) notes that the Philippine Normal University's Main Building is a heritage architecture from the American Colonial Period, along with the Philippine General Hospital, the Philippine Legislative Building, Finance, Tourism and National Museum Buildings, and other structures which were part of Architect Burnham's plan to create/build the area to be a center of colonial power.

Santos (2008) believes that such structures have so much historical flavor which merits the attention of people in the community as well as in the whole country. It is just sad to note that according to the UNESCO Asia-Pacific's Cultural Heritage Conservation, a lot of historical landmarks in Manila like the Jai-Alai, YMCA and Metropolitan Theatre have fallen into ruins. Very few heritage building structures ever reach their 100th year anniversary because they are either demolished or left to deteriorate and became run-down buildings.

But some iconic buildings have been preserved and celebrated for their contributions. Just recently, the National Historical Institute (NHI), in cooperation with the National Museum, celebrated the centennial of the cornerstone-laying of the Philippine Legislative Building. According to Dr. Serafin D. Quiason, board member of NHI, it was on May 22, 1909 when the cornerstone laying of the Legislative Building (now part of the National Museum) was held. The actual construction was started in 1918 and the building was inaugurated on July 16, 1926. According to the present architect of the National Museum, the Legislative Building was originally designed as a public library by Ralph Harrington Doane, the American Consulting Architect of the Bureau of Public Works, and his assistant Antonio Toledo. The construction of the building was halted several times due to the lack of funds. It was actually Juan Arellano, the supervising architect of the bureau, who revised the plan of the building when the commission decided to convert the building from a library into a legislative building. The Legislative Building is a milestone in the landscape of politics and legislation during the American Colonial and Post-Colonial period. It is there where education, health, agriculture and sanitation laws were passed from 1907 to 1916 according to Dr. Celestina Boncan (2009). In mid-1996, the Senate of the Philippines moved out of the building and transferred to Pasay City. Renovated in 2003, the building now houses nine galleries of the National Museum.

The Empire State Building, New York City's most recognizable structure in the same rank as the Eiffel Tower or the Taj Mahal, turned 75 in April 2006. This famous structure was immortalized in countless films like "King Kong," "Independence Day," and "An Affair to Remember," to mention a few. Completed in 1931, this building was the world's tallest for four decades. However, due to the economic crises in the 30s and 40s, the building witnessed the 35 people who leaped to their deaths. But Hewitt reechoed Mark Kingwell's words: "This iconic structure has symbolized power in American landscape and the great American dream."

This year will also mark the golden anniversary of the Social Security System (SSS) Building which was designed by National Artist Juan F. Nakpil. According to Alcazaren (2009), the SSS Building is a notable example of proper design, planning and construction excellence. It has outlined a lot of government buildings which have deteriorated beyond recognition. He further adds that the SSS Building stands out from others by its strength, practicality and the flawlessness of its modernist design. The iconic SSS Building on East Avenue has one of the country's best auditoriums built into its podium structure.

Perhaps the oldest and most popular building structure in the country is the University of Santo Tomas (UST) which will celebrate its 400th year anniversary in 2011. Founded on April 28, 1611, the UST was named after Saint Thomas Aquinas, a Dominican theologian. Its design was influenced by the 17th century Spanish architecture which features larger than life-size statues of saints by Italian sculptor Francisco Monti (Petron: 2008).

Figure 1 below shows the conceptual framework bearing the history, important events, challenges and development plan for PNU's Main Building.

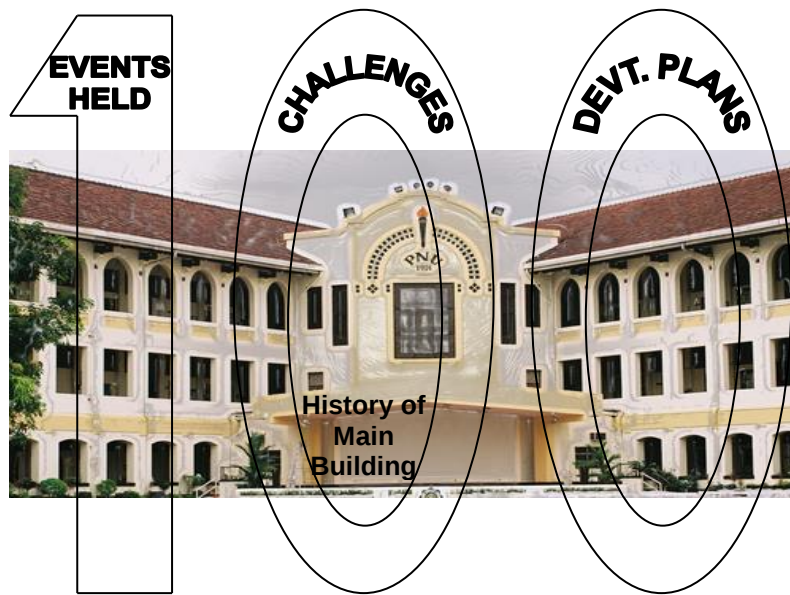


Figure 1
Centennial Commemoration on the Construction of PNU Main Building

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

This research endeavor aimed to trace and describe the significant events held and identify the development plans of the PNU administration in preserving the Main Building.

Specifically, it aimed to:

1. Trace the historical development of PNU's Main Building in terms of:
 - 1.1 Decree/Law Passed/Legal Bases
 - 1.2 Actual Cornerstone-laying and/or Groundbreaking

-
- 1.3 Finances/Budget
 - 1.4 Actual Construction and/or Building
 - 1.5 Inauguration

- 2. Identify the significant events held at the Main Building for the past 100 years.
- 3. Enumerate the structural challenges/problems experienced by the Main Building in the past 10 decades.
- 4. Discuss the initiatives of the PNU Administration in maintaining and/or preserving PNU's century-old Main Building.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This research undertaking is deemed relevant because of the fact that it is one of the very few attempts in writing a historico-descriptive research tracing the birth and development of a century-old structure.

This historical research is also deemed relevant because it offers first hand data on heritage education, local history, urban geography and heritage architecture.

Likewise, the writing of a person's, thing's, event's, or even structure's history is already an achievement in itself for the consumption of the future generations who will benefit from this humble endeavor.

It is the ardent desire of the investigators that this research will be of great use specifically in the centennial commemoration of the construction of the Main Building which is now an icon in the landscape of Philippine education.

SCOPE AND DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

This study was conducted using 10 sets of primary documentary sources to trace the beginning, the events that took place, the structural challenges experienced, and the development plan for the PNU Main Building from 1910 to 2010. It was not clear when the cornerstone-laying took place since as for this writing the administration cannot locate the cornerstone which will shed light on the exact day of the groundbreaking. In this study, the centennial commemoration will date back to 1910, the actual beginning of construction of the Main Building. A number of documents from the Records Management Office were burned during the World War II (1941-1945). The PNU Library has incomplete collection of Torchlight since they are just usually donated by PNU alumni.

DEFINITION OF TERMINOLOGIES

For clarity, the following terminologies are hereby defined in conceptual and operational terms:

Building. A usually roofed and walled structure built for permanent use (Webster Dictionary: 1964). In this study, it refers to PNU Main Building or Geronima T. Pecson Hall.

Centennial. A 100th anniversary or celebration (Webster Dictionary: 1964). It refers to the 100th year anniversary of the Main Building, from 1910 to 2010.

Cornerstone. A stone forming part of a corner in a wall at the formal beginning of the erection of a building (Webster Dictionary, 1964). It refers to the cornerstone-laying of the Main Building's construction in 1910.

Sources. Refers to the only solid bases of historical work, the original documents or witnessed to a fact (Good and Scates:

1954). In this investigation, it refers to the official documents from the Office of Property and Records Services, books from the library archives, Torchlights, The Torch Publications and interviews.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This research undertaking utilized a historico-descriptive method. Documentary analyses were employed to trace and describe the history, important events held, structural challenges met, and development plans for PNU Main Building (1910-2010). Interviews conducted with Mr. Leonarlido Pulido, director of PNU's Physical Plant and Campus Development Office, Architect Gerard Lico, Dr. Susan Declaro and Mr. Jose Magsino were also used in substantiating the findings. The documents served as primary sources which were analyzed by the researchers. In establishing the internal and external validity of the documents, the researchers sought the help of Mr. Jose Magsino and the librarians.

Documents Used

The following documents served as primary sources in the conduct of the study:

- a. Olayta, P.O. History of the Philippine Normal School published in *The Torch*. PNS. 1913.
- b. Borlaza, Gregorio. History of the Philippine Normal College. PNC. 1971.
- c. PNU Marker – PNU Main Building. PNU Records Management Services. October 02, 2008.

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- d. Centennial Publication Issue. PNU. 2001.
 - e. 1901-2001 Philippine Normal University: 100 Years of Service and Leadership in Teacher Education. PNU. 2001.
 - f. Philatelic Bulletin. Stamp Commemoration of Centennial Anniversary of the PNU. Philippine Postal Corporation. June 01, 2001.
 - g. The Torch Publications. 1913-2009. PNU.
 - h. Hines, Thomas S. Burnham of Chicago: Architect and Planner. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 1979.
 - i. Rodell, Paul A. Culture and Customs of the Philippines. Connecticut: Greenwood Press. 2002.
 - j. *The Torch*. Newsletters and Magazines 1950-2009. PNU.
 - k. Documents on PNU's Main Building. PNU Records Management Office.

Procedure

The researchers toyed with the idea of writing the history of PNU's Main Building in time for its centennial commemoration (1910-2010) from November 2008. The second semester of SY 2008-2009 was devoted to writing the research title, research proposal and review of related literature. Summer term 2009 was marked with the completion of the research proposal and the start of search for primary sources along with the initial interviews with Mr. Leonarlido Pulido, Mr. Jose Magsino, Dr. Susan Declaro and Architect Gerard Lico. The first semester of SY 2009-2010 was

devoted to the initial and finalization of the write up on the findings of the study, while the remaining days of the period were utilized in editing the research manuscript.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

1. Historical Development of PNU's Main Building

1.1 Decrees/Laws Passed/Legal Bases

Based on the records written by Borlaza (1971), Olayta (1913), Karaan (2001), and by the Manila Bulletin (2001), the Main Building was created by virtue of the **Act No. 74** which was passed and approved by the Philippine-American Commission on January 21, 1901. Articles 11, 13 and 16 pertained to the establishment of the Philippine Normal School. Borlaza (1971) makes specific by citing the provision **Art. 16 of Act 74** which states that “the amount of twenty-five thousand dollars or so much of it as may be necessary is hereby made available to the Insular Treasurer for the organization and maintenance of the Normal School in Manila for the year 1901. Though the creation of PNS was in a hasty manner to establish an educational system in the archipelago during the American period, it took nine years since the passing of the law before the actual construction of the Main Building began. The PNS was housed in Escuela Municipal, Intramuros (1901) and at the Administration Building of the Exposition Regional de Filipinas located at the present site of Philippine General Hospital or PGH (1902).

1.2 Actual Cornerstone-Laying and/or Groundbreaking Ceremony

According to Mr. Leonarlido C. Pulido, all the buildings of PNU have cornerstones except for the Main Building. He believes that the Main Building's cornerstone was destroyed or

bulldozed after the World War II. As of this writing, the cornerstone is still nowhere to be found.

The researchers also made a short interview with Architect Gerard Lico, Head of the Architecture Department of University of the Philippine-Diliman, during the National Historical Institute (NHI) and National Museum's celebration on the Centennial of Cornerstone-Laying of the Philippine Legislative Building on May 21, 2009. Architect Lico pointed out that every building has a cornerstone which serves as a "record" and "witness" to the groundbreaking ceremony, a prelude to the actual construction.

1.3 Finances/Budget

Except for the record of Torchlight 1917, most of the records claim that the construction of the Main Building cost around PhP 300,000.00 which was quite a big sum of money during that time. A conflicting claim by 1917 class (Torchlight 1913) mentioned the cost of construction at PhP 450,000.00. According to Mr. Jose A. Magsino, the Main Building has a reinforced architecture wherein there are lots of steel bars utilized to ensure strong flooring, foundations and beams of the building. This probably explains well the expensive budget of construction. This was corroborated by Dr. Susan D. Declaro, Vice President for Administration, Finance and Development of PNU, that unlike other PNU buildings, the Main Building was proved to be strongest due to its reinforced concrete design. She further stressed that during the construction of SM Manila in 1998, the Medical Clinic Building and the Center for Teaching and Learning (PNU-Laboratory School) Building were greatly affected because the latter buildings showed signs of land subsidence and insufficient steel bars in their foundations.

1.4 Actual Construction of the Main Building/Design

The actual construction of the PNS Main Building commenced in 1910 during the second decade of the school's history. It took more than two years to build the original 53-room building.

According to Alcazaren (2005), the PNS Main Building was designed by William E. Parsons. Architect Parsons was hired by Daniel Burnham who was also an architect and urban planner responsible for constructing the site of World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago (1892) and for laying out plans for future of cities like Chicago, Manila, Cleveland, San Francisco, Washington, D.C., and Baguio. During the time of Governor General William Cameron Forbes, Burnham was commissioned to redesign and create a "capitol city" in Manila.

William E. Parsons, according to Hines (1979), was a graduate of Yale and French Ecole des Beaux Arts. Parsons was hired and he served as consulting architect from 1905 to 1914, working closely with Governor General Forbes. He also designed famous building structures like the YMCA, Manila Hotel, Philippine General Hospital, and Army-Navy Club as part of Burnham's grand plan. Parsons also served as consulting-architect to the Puerto Rican Government from 1924 to 1926 where he designed the Ocean Boulevard, the Muñoz Rivera Park and the extension building of the University of Puerto Rico.

According to Rodell (2002), Parsons brought the neoclassical or Greek revival style with its massive columns and steep marble stairwells to the Philippines. Hines (1979) mentions that by following the advice of Burnham in his report to learn from Spanish and Philippine examples, Parsons created eclectic designs of buildings of "warmth, efficiency, and engaging simplicity." He adds that Parson's buildings were

usually topped by handsome tile roofs and usually had plain, broad surfaces of solid pastel colors. Parsons' most dominant architectural elements were broad, deep archways and shaded porches and covered loggias appropriate for a tropical climate.

Alcazaren (2005) articulates that the Philippine Normal School (PNS) on Taft Avenue is one of the best examples of American colonial architecture in reinforced concreteness. He says that Parsons designed the building in a simplified neoclassicism that incorporated tropical interventions like the cross-ventilation, use of capiz windows and wide overhangs. Though the main building was a wreck during the World War II, the robust structure is still in use today after it was rebuilt in the mid-1940s.

1.5 Inauguration

Olayta (1913) narrates that the PNS Main Building was inaugurated on June 10, 1912 as the new quarter and largest school building in the archipelago located on Taft Avenue, in the heart of the City of Manila. He further adds that the Main Building is a reinforced concrete three-story building in the shape of a huge "V." The length of the structure is 544 feet and occupies more than an acre and a half of floor space. There are originally 56 rooms—25 of which were standard classrooms, drawing and music rooms, shops, necessary store rooms, business office, superintendent's office, library at the ground floor which could accommodate 500 students, and auditorium that could seat 1,000 people that was inaugurated on September 13, 1912. The big, stately V-shaped three story reinforced concrete structure located at the corner of Ayala and Taft Avenue measures around 3.7 hectares.

2. Significant Events Held at the PNU Main Building for the Past 100 Years

Below is the chronology of selected significant events held at the Main Building based on the existing the records and interviews. Also listed below are the milestones, activities, repairs and renovations, natural calamities, commencement speakers, project launchings, celebrations, inaugurations, conferment of honorary degrees, holding of conventions, conferences and seminars, alumni homecomings, etc.

**Chronology of Selected Events
History of PNU's Main Building**

January 21, 1901 - Passing of Act No. 74 by the Philippine Commission during American Period creating the Philippine Normal School

September 01, 1901 - Philippine Normal School formally opened in Intramuros.

1902 - Philippine Normal School was transferred to Administration Building of Exposition Regional de Filipinas (now Philippine General Hospital).

? - Cornerstone-laying of the Main Building located between Ayala Boulevard and Taft Avenue, before the start of construction.

1910 - The actual construction of the Main Building officially started following the design of William E. Parsons.

- Batch 1910 published the first Torchlight.

June 10, 1912 - Inauguration of the PNS Main Building as the new "home" of PNS, the "largest" school building in the country then.

September 13, 1912 - Inauguration of the "big" main auditorium in front of the main stairway of second floor, as an adequate assembly hall.

January 20, 1913 - Superintendent Townsend of Ambos, Camarines delivered an address on the human resources of the Philippines at the main auditorium.

February 13, 1913 - The Philippine Normal School Orchestra held its first concert at the main auditorium.

March 1913 - First commencement exercises at the new main building was held.

December 17, 1913 - The Second Annual Oratorical Contest of the UP College of Law was held at the PNS Auditorium.

1914 - Inauguration of the Normal Hall, a dormitory for female students

February 16-21, 1914 - The convention of Division Superintendents was held at the PNS Auditorium.

September 12, 1916 - Dr. Niewenhuis from Java, Indonesia, who was on a study-visit, spoke to students in a special convocation.

November 06, 1916 - Superintendent A.W. Cain of Pangasinan delivered a convocation address.

December 28-29, 1916 - New bulletin boards donated by the batch/alumni of 1915 and 1916 were installed along the PNU main entrance and Taft Wing entrance.

1928 - The Laboratory School Building (now College of Education Building) was constructed.

1941-1945 - Philippine Normal School was closed due to World War II. Class of 1942 held early graduation.

1944 - PNS Main Building served as garrison of Japanese forces.

February 1945 - All three PNS Buildings were heavily damaged during the War of Liberation, but the US-Philippine War Damage Commission subsequently undertook their reconstruction. Vintage bombs were removed from the grounds of the Normal Hall and Main Building.

A.Y. 1946 - Classes reopened after the war. The campus was not available for Physical Education classes because the U.S. Army's War Crimes Commission set up its quarter and held its trials of war criminals in the compound.

June 18, 1949 - PNS became Philippine Normal College (PNC) through R.A. 416 written by Sen. Geronima T. Pecson, the first Philippine Woman Senator.

1950 - Severino Montano set up the Arena Theater in Main Building Room 111. Under Naty Crame-Rogers, Speech Laboratory was housed in Room 303.

December 16, 1951 - PNC and Dr. Macario Naval celebrated 50th (Golden) Foundation Day. A marker from NHI presented by Dr. Jose P. Bantug was unveiled.

1953 - Newly constructed stage facing the quadrangle was completed with pre-cast seal.

May 16, 1957 - First Lady Leonila Dimataga-Garcia (wife of Pres. Carlos P. Garcia) visited the Audio-Visual exhibits by the PNC Training Department and Philippine Association for Curriculum Development Workshop.

August 1958 - Kamol Thitakamol, Thailand's Secretary of Education, delivered a speech on the educational system of Thailand.

November 21, 1958 - Dr. Paulinho Garcia Jr., Chair of the National Science Development Board, was the guest speaker at the National Science Convocation entitled "Science in the Service of Man."

1960 - Construction of mezzanines in the offices was completed.

March 1964 - Regular repairs of gutters and downspouts were requested from the director of Bureau of Public Works.

December 15, 1964 - College Auditorium underwent renovations and repairs.

March 21, 1965 - President Diosdado Macapagal served as commencement speaker during the PNC's 57th graduation rites.

April 07, 1965 - Commissioner Celso Al Carunungan served as Torch Seminar speaker.

March 1966 - President Ferdinand E. Marcos served as guest speaker during the PNC's 58th commencement exercises.

March 1967 - Education Secretary Carlos P. Romulo served as commencement speaker during PNC's 59th graduation rites.

March 1968 - Doctor of Education (Honoris Causa) was conferred upon Sen. Gil J. Puyat who also addressed the graduates during PNC's 60th commencement exercises.

August 02, 1968 - Earthquake caused minor cracks on beams, columns, and partitions on the ground floor. Immediate repairs and/or replacement was undertaken. Some roofing tiles were detached. The repair needed not less than PhP 30,000 to keep the whole building from leakage and further deterioration.

October 02, 1968 - The first air conditioning unit was installed in Main Building Room 102 —President Ramirez' office.

March 1969 - Education Secretary Onofre D. Corpuz served as commencement speaker during the PNC's 61st graduation rites.

April 08, 1970 - Repairs on broken steps of Main Gate (Ayala Wing) due to an earthquake were done. Repairs on loose bricks of the roof which caused the flooding of the Auditorium and mezzanine of the College Library especially during heavy rains were made.

April 18, 1970 - Secretary of Finance Cesar Virata served as commencement speaker during PNC's 62nd graduation rites.

November 21, 1970 - Typhoon "Yoling" heavily damaged PNC Laboratory School roof and relocated classes. Tiles at the roof of Main Building were disarranged.

April 16, 1971 - Doctor of Education (Honoris Causa) was conferred upon Sen. Eva Estrada-Kalaw who also served as graduation speaker during the PNC's 63rd commencement exercises.

April 21, 1972 - Atty. Silvestre D. Sarmiento, Chief of Budget Operation Service, Budget Commission, served as graduation speaker during PNC's 64th commencement exercises.

July 24, 1972 - Dr. Bonifacio P. Sibayan sent letters to Senators Arturo M. Tolentino, Mamintal Tamano, Jose Diokno, Gerardo M. Roxas, Edgardo Ilarde, Salvador H. Laurel, Jovito Salonga, Ramon V. Mitra, Lorenzo Sumulong, John Osmeña, Lorenzo Teves and Leonardo Perez for the inclusion of the Main Building in future public works bill.

August 23, 1972 - Additional PhP 4,200,000.00 for rehabilitation program from Calamity Fund was requested by PNC President Bonifacio Sibayan.

April 12, 1973 - Hon. Jose A. Roño, Secretary of Local Government and Community Development, served as graduation speaker during PNC's 65th commencement exercises.

May 07, 1973 - PNC conformed to the ordinance of the City of Manila to replan the building to minimize accidents of students in during fire.

September 03, 1973 - Doctor of Humanities Honoris Causa was conferred upon First Lady Imelda R. Marcos at the College Auditorium.

March 22, 1974- Hon. Romy V. Diaz, Director General of National Manpower Youth Council (now TESDA), served as guest speaker during PNC's 66th graduation rites.

March 21, 1975- Hon. Guillermo de Vega, Presidential Assistant, served as commencement speaker during PNC's 67th graduation rites.

March 19, 1976- Dr. Manuel I. Alba, Deputy Director General of NEDA, served as 68th graduation rites speaker.

March 23, 1977- Dr. Jaime C. Laya, Commissioner of the Budget Department, served as speaker during PNC's 69th graduation rites.

July 26, 1977 - Main Building Room 316 was fully vacated by the Physical Education Department and it transferred to the gymnasium.

March 21, 1978- Dr. Melecio S. Magno, Chairman of NSDB, served as commencement speaker during PNC's 70th graduation rites.

November 06, 1978 - Repairs on roofing at the Main Building by the Manila Engineering District Office of the Bureau of Public Works were completed.

March 27, 1979- Hon. Jacobo C. Clave, Chairman of Civil Service Commission, served as graduation speaker during PNC's 71st commencement exercises. The Doctor of Education Honoris Causa was conferred upon him.

March 20, 1980 - President Ferdinand E. Marcos, served as commencement speaker during PNC's 72nd graduation rites.

April – May 1980 - Major reroofing of Main Building (Phase 1 – PhP 512,919.94) was done by Felipe C. Hernandez Construction Company. Repair of drainage system (PhP 92,097.00) was done by RPT Construction Company.

March 27, 1981- Hon. Ismael A. Mathay Jr., Vice Governor of Metropolitan Manila Commission, served as speaker during PNC's 73rd graduation rites.

May 25, 1981 - Conferment of the Doctor of Education Honoris Causa upon William Watson Turnbull

August 09, 1981 - General repair of the Main Auditorium (PhP 178,975.00) was done by FCH Construction Company.

July 13, 1982 - Conferment of the Doctor of Technology Honoris Causa upon Masumi Esaki

March 25, 1983- Conferment of Honorary Degree upon then UP President Edgardo J. Angara who also served as graduation speaker during PNC's 75th commencement exercises

August 30, 1983 - Conferment of the Doctor of Humane Letters Honoris Causa upon Sen. Mack O. Hatfield at the College Main Auditorium which coincided with Sen. Benigno S. Aquino's funeral

March 28, 1984- Hon. Tito A. Mijares, Deputy Director General of NEDA, served as speaker during PNC's 76th graduation rites.

June 1984 - Social Sciences Department vacated Main Building 303 and it transferred to the P. Orata Building.

March 28, 1985- Hon. Vicente Valdepeñas, Minister of Economic Planning – NEDA, addressed the graduates during PNC's 77th commencement exercises.

June 1985 - Filipiniana Library permanently vacated the Alumni Hall and it transferred to the new Main Library Building.

April 04, 1986 - Dr. Minda Sutaria, Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports, served as speaker during PNC's 78th graduation rites that was also attended by the "new" President Corazon C. Aquino.

1987 - First few units of computers were installed in the Human Resource Office and Cashier's Office at the Main Building. Values Education Department was set in Main Building Room 305 with Dr. Twila Punsalan as the first head.

March 31, 1987 - President Corazon C. Aquino, served as guest speaker during PNC's 79th commencement exercises.

March 29, 1988 - Conferment of Doctor of Education Honoris Causa upon Geronima T. Pecson, first woman senator of the Philippines, during PNC's 80th graduation rites.

June 1988 - Social Science, History and Psychology departments transferred/returned to the Main Building from the Orata Hall.

March 21, 1989 - Sen. Santanina T. Rasul served as commencement speaker during PNC's 81st graduation rites.

June 1989 - Department of Home Economics and Department of Food and Nutrition vacated Room 116 and they transferred to the Health Building.

February 05-07, 1990 - Miriam Defensor Santiago served as speaker during the Convention on Values Education.

March 29, 1990 - Dr. Pedro San Vicente, Department of Education, Culture and Sports Undersecretary, served as commencement speaker during PNC's 82nd graduation rites.

June 1990 - Department of Drama, Speech and Theater Arts permanently vacated Main Building Room 307 and transferred to the Culture and Sports (CS) Building.

June 27, 1990 - Board of Trustees Resolution No. 2028 created the Peace and World Order Studies Unit (PWOSU) with its office in Main Building Room 203 A.

July 1990 - An earthquake with a magnitude of 7.7 on the Richter scale caused minor cracks on the flooring of Main Building Room 211 (Dr. Julieta Gregorio's office).

December 26, 1991 - Republic Act No. 7168 that converted PNC into a university was signed into law by President Corazon C. Aquino.

March 27, 1992- Conferment of Doctor of Education Honoris Causa upon Sen. Santanina T. Rasul and Carlos M. Padilla during PNU's 84th graduation rites

March 26, 1993- Sen. Leticia Ramos-Shahani served as commencement speaker during PNU's 85th graduation rites.

March 29, 1994- Sen. Ernesto M. Maceda served as commencement speaker during PNU's 86th graduation rites.

March 31, 1995- Sen. Raul S. Roco served as the commencement speaker during PNU's 87th graduation rites.

January 10, 1996 - Doctor of Education Honoris Causa was conferred upon Sen. Ernesto Maceda during the University Week Celebration at the PNU Main Auditorium.

January 11, 1996 - Pres. Fidel V. Ramos served as the guest speaker during the inauguration of the newly constructed Maceda Building.

March 27, 1996- CHED Chairman Angel C. Alcala served as guest speaker during PNU's 88th commencement exercises.

June 1996 - President's office vacated Main Building Room 102 and it transferred to the Maceda Building. Main Building Room 102 became the office of the dean of College of Arts and Social Sciences (CASS).

March 21, 1997- DECS Secretary Ricardo T. Gloria served as the commencement speaker during PNU's 89th graduation rites.

June 1997 - The stage fronting the University Quadrangle was renovated and redesigned.

January 1998 - Investiture of Atty. Lilia S. Garcia as the 2nd President of PNU

March 20, 1998- Conferment of Doctor of Pedagogy Honoris Causa upon Victor Ordoñez who also served as speaker during PNU's 90th graduation rites.

June 1998 - Center for Research and Development in Education (CREDE) transferred to Main Building Room 211. Social Science Department transferred to Main Building Room 209-A that was vacated by CREDE.

September 01, 1998 - Launching of PNU's Centennial Museum at the Alumni Hall of Main Building

September 01, 1999 - Sen. Tessie Aquino-Oreta served as guest speaker during PNU's 98th Foundation Day Celebration. Main Building Room 204 became the office of the dean of the College of Science (COS).

December 11, 1999 - A 6.8-magnitude earthquake caused minor cracks on the Main Building.

March 28, 2000- Speaker Manuel "Manny" Villar served as graduation speaker during PNU's 92nd commencement exercises.

January 12, 2001 - Doctor of Humanities Honoris Causa was conferred upon George Ty of Metrobank Foundation during the 10th University Week Celebration. PNU's Centennial Year was launched with a year-long celebration and activities.

March 28, 2001 - CHED Chairman Ester A. Garcia served as guest speaker during PNU's 93rd graduation rites.

August 2001 - Restructuring of Main Building Rooms 203, 205 and 207 funded by Dayrit-Go, Coralejo and Dancel and restructuring of Mathematics classrooms funded by PNUAA-USA and Fr. Corsie Legazpi as "Centennial Classrooms"

- Philippine Postal Corporation released a commemorative stamp featuring the PNU Main Building.

September 2001 - Inauguration of the Buenaseda Hall (3rd Floor, Ayala Wing) funded by the Alumni Bachelor's Club

- Unveiling of the Centennial Marker fronting the Main Gate

- Grand Alumni Homecoming parade and program were held.

March 27, 2002 - President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo served as guest of honor and commencement speaker during PNU's 94th graduation rites. Dr. Nilo L. Rosas was installed as the new PNU president.

2003 - Office of Admissions was set up in Main Building Room 104.

April 02, 2003 - President Fidel V. Ramos was the guest of honor and graduation speaker during PNU's 95th commencement exercises.

March 24, 2004 - Mr. Aniceto M. Sobrepeña, Executive Director of Metrobank Foundation, Inc. and President of Manila Doctor's College, served as guest of honor and commencement speaker during PNU's 96th graduation rites.

2005 - More bulletin boards were installed for offices, departments and department-based organizations' (DBOs) use during the administration of Dr. Nilo Rosas. Main Building was renamed as Geronima T. Pecson Hall.

March 30, 2005 - Conferment of the Doctor of Humanities Honoris Causa upon Eduardo Galang Fajardo, Chairman of Helenica Foundation, who also served as graduation speaker during PNU's 97th commencement exercises.

November 26, 2005 - Launching of Mathematics classrooms, faculty room and library funded by Helenica/Natividad Galang-Fajardo Foundations

March 29, 2006 - Dr. Reynaldo Dante G. Juanta from PNC Class 1960, former Philippine Honorary Consul in South Australia, served as commencement speaker during PNU's 98th graduation rites.

July 2006 - Social Science Department and History Graduate Department vacated Room 304 of Orata Building and they transferred to Main Building Room 209-A due to verticalization system.

January 2007 - Additional electrical wirings were installed at the Main Building to meet the demands of airconditioning and computers in the classrooms and offices.

- Investiture of Atty. Lutgardo B. Barbo (from PNC Batch 1966) as the new PNU president

- PNU hosted SCUAA-NCR.

- Major renovations were made and big air conditioning units were installed at the Main Auditorium.

March 28, 2007 - Hon. Antonio Eduardo Nachura, Associate Justice of the Supreme Court, served as speaker during the PNU's 99th commencement exercises.

March 27, 2008 - Dr. Rosita Gallega-Galang from PNC Class 1964 (summa cum laude) served as commencement speaker during PNU 100th graduation rites.

August 22, 2008 - Main Building's electric transformer and circuit breaker broke down due to electrical overload.

March 21, 2009- Sen. Manuel "Mar" A. Roxas II served as guest speaker during the 101st commencement exercises.

June 30, 2009 - Republic Act No. 9647, PNU Modernization Act of 2009, was signed into law making the Philippine Normal University the National Center for Teacher Education (NCTE).

September 26, 2009 - Typhoon "Ondoy" flooded the Main Building's grounds.

January 2010 - PNU Main Building's Centennial

July 2010 - PNU-Geografika, a department-based organization of the Social Sciences Department, celebrated the centennial of Geronima T. Pecson Hall or PNU Main Building.

3. Structural Challenges and Problems Experienced by the Main Building in the Past 10 Decades

The Main Building is a robust structure since it is a reinforced concrete. Based on the documents gathered from the Records Management Office, it was the Bureau of Public Works (now the Department of Public Works and Highways) that did the regular repairs through the years. Major works were scheduled during long Christmas vacations so as not to disturb classes. The major structural problems include:

3.1 Destruction Caused by World War II

Based on the Torchlight 1952, Philippine Normal School was closed from 1941 to 1945 due to war. The Main Building was utilized as a garrison of the Japanese forces in 1944. In February 1945, during the War of Liberation, the three PNS buildings were severely damaged. According to Mr. Jose A. Magsino, much of

the documents were burned during the air raids. This explains why the researchers noticed that most documents on repairs before the war until late 1950s were missing. The US-Philippine War Damage Commission subsequently undertook the buildings' reconstruction. Bombs left behind by the Japanese forces were removed from the grounds of the Main Building and Normal Hall. Classes reopened in 1946 but the campus was not available for Physical Education because the U.S. Army's War Crimes Commission setup its quarter and held its trials of war criminals in Main Building Room 316.

3.2 Earthquakes

The Main Building was structurally/physically challenged by a series of earthquakes in 1970. The earthquakes broke the steps of the Main Gate and loosened the roof bricks which caused flooding of the auditorium and mezzanine of Filipiniana Library during heavy rains. The quake in July 1990 with a magnitude of 7.7 caused minor cracks on the flooring of Dr. Juliet Gregorio's office (Main Building Room 211). The December 11, 1999's 6.8-magnitude earthquake caused minor cracks on the Main Building.

3.3 Conforming to City Ordinance

Based on the record dated May 7, 1973, an ordinance from the Office of the City of Manila ordered PNC to conform to the city's directive to replan the Main Building to ensure the safety of students in during fire. The Philippine Normal College responded to the ordinance by sending a letter of assurance to the Office of the City Mayor.

3.4 Typhoons

The Philippines has a tropical climate with seasonal monsoons and typhoons. On the average, 20 typhoons visit the country in a year. So far, according to a document dated

November 21, 1970, only typhoon “Yoling” made the strongest impact by heavily damaging and disarranging the tile roofing of the Main Building and PNC Laboratory School. Classes were relocated because classrooms dripped. Recent strong typhoons like “Milenyo” and “Reming” (2006) left the Main Building unscathed. The most recent typhoon that flooded the grounds of the Main Building was “Ondoy” (2009).

3.5 Major Reroofing

A major reproofing of the Main Building that lasted for three (3) months (Phase 1 – PhP 512,919.94) was done by Felipe C. Hernandez Construction Company. This is based on a document from the Records Division dated April – May 1980 (Phase 1). Classes on the third floor were transferred due to inconveniences caused by the noise and reroofing.

3.6 Electrical Overload

Perhaps the most recent problem experienced by the Main Building took place on August 22, 2008 when the big transformer and circuit breaker broke down due to electrical overload. It has been a year now (as of this writing) that the Main Building has no electrical power of its own. Only the offices were allowed to use the air conditioning units since the power tapped from other buildings was limited. When asked regarding the update of this matter, Mr. Raymundo C. Javier, PNU electrician, assured the researchers that the administration had already acquired new transformers and circuit breakers for replacement. As of the moment, PNU is still waiting for the permit from Meralco, the agency that will also install the said equipment.

4. Development Plans of PNU Administration in Maintaining and Preserving the Century-Old Main Building

In an interview with Dr. Susan D. Declaro, she generously shared the plans of PNU Administration in maintaining and preserving the century-old Main Building. Listed below are the concrete plans of action based on the interview.

4.1 Main Building Improvement

The Main Building Improvement includes the most immediate concerns like the installation of new transformer and circuit breaker (it has been a year that the Main Building has no electricity); installation of transformer pad; setting up of new water tank behind the Maceda Building; renovation of the original façade of the building by restoring the capiz window at the back of the stage at the Main Auditorium; installation of equipment at the Alumni and Public Relations Hall like LCDs and desktop computers; and regular repainting of the Main Building.

4.2 Classrooms Improvement

During the interview, Dr. Susan D. Declaro mentioned the installation of white boards in all the classrooms; utilization of split-type air conditioning units; repair of all windows using capiz and fiber glass materials; reduction of noise coming from Ayala Boulevard and Taft Avenue by enclosing the windows and using noise proof materials; control of the termite using treatment especially in the mezzanine offices; change and uniformity of classroom chairs; and regular purchase of chemicals for the laboratory.

4.3 Security and Upkeep

The Vice President for Administration, Finance and Development toyed with the idea of having additional roving guards during class hours and at night and of extending janitorial services contracts perhaps to three (3) years to ensure the cleanliness of classrooms.

4.4 Centennial Board and/or Marker

The researchers recommended that a historical marker be requested from the National Historical Institute (NHI) in time for the celebration in 2010. The researchers likewise recommended that a bulletin board intended to showcase Main Building's Centennial History for the whole year be designated.

Table 1. The Development Plans of PNU Administration for the Main Building

Improving the Building in General	Classroom Improvement	Security and Upkeep	Centennial Board and/or Marker
-Installation of new transformer and circuit breaker -Installation of transformer pad -Setting up of new water tank -Recreating the original façade -Installation of equipment at the Alumni and Public Relations Hall -Regular repainting of the Main Building	-Installation of white boards -Installation of split-type air conditioning units. -Repair of all windows -Noise reduction -Termite control treatment -Regular purchase of chemicals and facilities at the laboratory -Uniform chairs in all classrooms	-Additional roving guards -Extend contracts of janitorial services to ensure cleanliness	-Request of Historical Marker from NHI -Designation of a bulletin board to showcase Main Building's Centennial History

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Based on the findings of this study, the following data and observations were drawn:

1. Article 16 of Act 74 was the legal basis in creating PNS and constructing its building structure. The construction cost of the Main Building was PhP 300,000.00. Though the cornerstone is missing, the actual construction of the PNS Main Building is believed to have started in 1910. The Main Building was designed by William E. Parsons who was hired by Daniel Burnham, an urban planner. The Main Building was officially inaugurated on June 10, 1912.
2. The PNU's Main Building witnessed significant events for the past 100 years. These events range from activities, milestones, repairs and renovations, natural calamities, coming of visitors and commencement speakers, project launchings, celebrations, inaugurations, investitures, conferment of honorary degrees, holding of conventions, conferences and seminars, alumni homecomings, etc.
3. Major structural challenges experienced by the Main Building were the destruction caused by World War II; series of earthquakes in 1970, 1990 and 1999; conformity to city ordinances; storms and typhoons; major reroofing; and the breakdown of transformer and circuit breaker in 2008.
4. PNU Administration's development plans for the Main Building include Main Building improvement, classrooms improvement, security and upkeep, and installation of centennial bulletin board and marker.

B. In the light of the findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. Having been built in 1910, PNU Main Building or Geronima T. Pecson Hall is now an icon in cultural landscape and in Philippine education for the past 100 years.
2. The PNU Main Building is a living proof and a witness to important events in the campus and in the country's colorful history.
3. The PNU Main Building is a robust reinforced structure which has withstood structural challenges for the past 10 decades.
4. With the development plans in tow, the Main Building will continue to be an icon in the cultural landscape which will produce more and more quality teachers as proven by its NCTE distinction. The design of the Main Building embodies a classic example in Philippine architecture.

C. In the light of the findings and conclusions, the researchers recommended the following:

1. Since it might contain the **record** of the **account** of the groundbreaking ceremony, the missing cornerstone be searched;
2. The Normal Hall will also reach its centennial in 2014. The groundwork in writing its centennial history be started by historians and other history enthusiasts;

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3. PNU alumni be involved in sprucing up and in preserving the Main Building through fund raising projects; and
 4. The PNU Main Building be endorsed by the Department of Tourism (DOT) as a destination for tourists who curiously seek samples of neoclassicist architectural designs and vestiges of American colonial heritage.

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