

CASINO ESPAÑOL

Casino Español de Manila, the oldest club in the Philippines, was established in 1888 by Spaniards living in the Philippines as their exclusive venue for recreational and social activities. It later opened its doors to Filipino members to foster Spanish-Filipino ties in the country. It is one of the three Casino Español clubhouses in the country, the others being in Cebu (built in 1920 and still operating) and Iloilo (built in 1926 and left in ruins after World War II destruction).



Earlier records show that Governor General Narciso Clavería y Zaldúa formalised the foundation of the casino in Manila on October 31, 1844, the date which is celebrated by the casino as the year of its founding. The first building of the Casino Español de Manila was built in 1913 but formally opened in 1917. It was designed by the architect Juan Arellano, incorporating influences of neo-renaissance style.

The structure used to occupy the whole block from Taft Avenue to San Marcelino Street and housed the offices of the Spanish Chamber of Commerce and the Consulate General of Spain. As the official clubhouse and social venue of the Spanish community, the building's reception and banquet halls hosted parties, celebrations and balls. Among the noted events in this venue in the 1930s was the extravagant party held to celebrate the birthday of the King of Spain. Apart from attending parties in its halls, guests could also view the garden from the terrace while members could play tennis and pelota games in its courts.

In 1945, the structure was destroyed in World War II during the Liberation of Manila. The club was temporarily moved to a two-story house along Apacible Street (formerly Oregon) and Perez Street in Paco, Manila. In 1951, Casino Español de Manila was rebuilt on its original site through the help of Ignacio Planas. Parts of the property were sold and the new structure was built facing San Luis Street (now Kalaw Avenue). The new clubhouse was designed by the architect José María Zaragoza using the prevalent post-World War II "Filipino-California-Spanish style". The structure has arched verandas surrounding an inner courtyard.



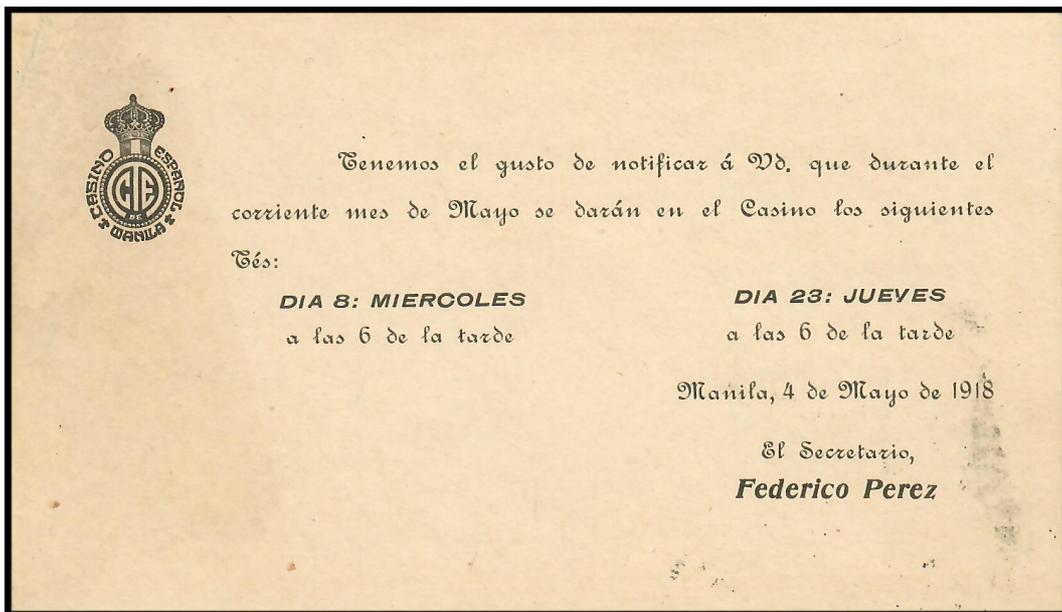
The new clubhouse was inaugurated on November 3, 1951, with President Elpidio Quirino and Vice-president Fernando López in attendance. In 1962, it played host to the Infante Juan Carlos of Spain (later King Juan Carlos I) and Princess Sofía of Greece and Denmark (later Queen Sofía). Queen Sofía visited the club once again in 2000 during an official visit to the Philippines.

While the Casino Español traditionally services its members, guests and visitors have been welcomed to its compound. The 50-seat Comedor Cervantes serves a traditional range of Spanish, Filipino and international cuisine. Huge antique decorative plates adorn the high walls, individually crafted and hand-painted bearing the coat-of-arms of each of the provincial districts of Spain. The adjoining Bar el Quixote is a well-stocked chamber of select Spanish wines and other spirits. At the back, it has a Fronton that is used for jai alai and pelota games. Beside the Casino is the space formerly occupied by the Instituto Cervantes de Manila where Spanish classes were held, that promoted the Spanish heritage of the Philippines. Towards the club's Fronton, is the austere Biblioteca Academia de la Lengua Española, a library housing a choice collection of artefacts and journals about Spain. In 1993, the National Historical Commission of the Philippines erected a marker at the entrance of the Casino, declaring its premises as a Level-II heritage structure.



CASINO ESPAÑOL

PRIVATELY PRINTED LOGO



5 May 1918 – Manila Circulating Postal Card

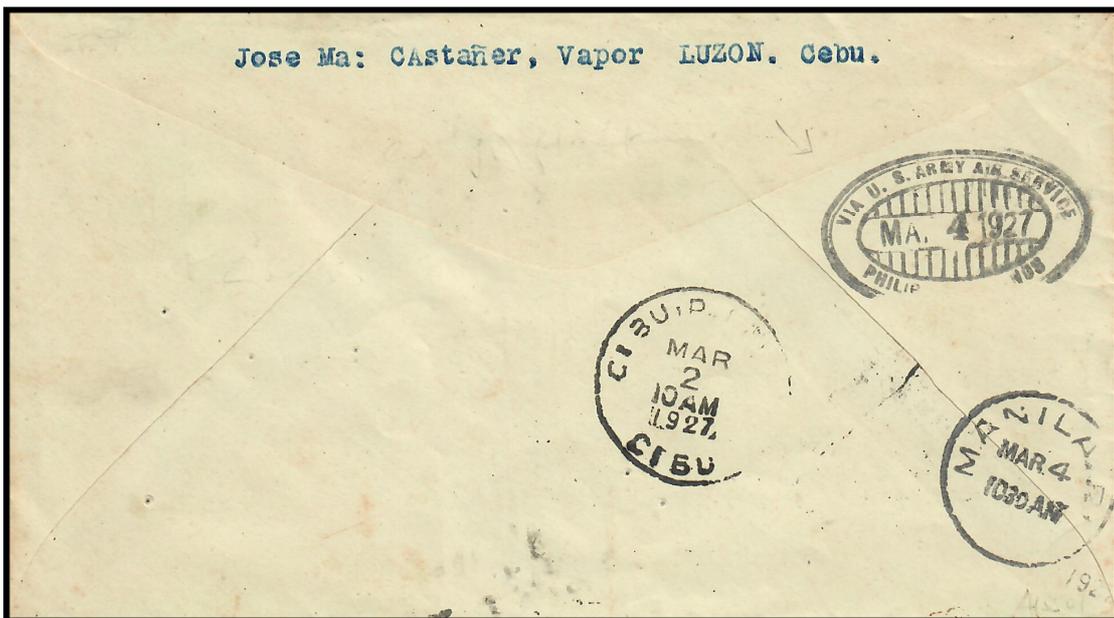
Manila (5 May 1918) Duplex Departure Cancellation

Redirected to Manila Railroad Company, additional Manila (6 May 1918) Duplex Cancellation

Pre-printed reverse with Casino Español Logo on top left corner

CASINO ESPAÑOL

PRIVATELY PRINTED LOGO



2 March 1927 – Cebu to Manila First Flight Cover

Stamp tied with Aeroplane Flight Cancellation and Cebu Duplex Cancellation on front
US Army Air Service Special Cancel and Manila (4 March 1927) Receiving CDS
First Flight Cover (AAMC-17r) with 6 letters reported to have been carried

CASINO ESPAÑOL

PRIVATELY PRINTED LOGO



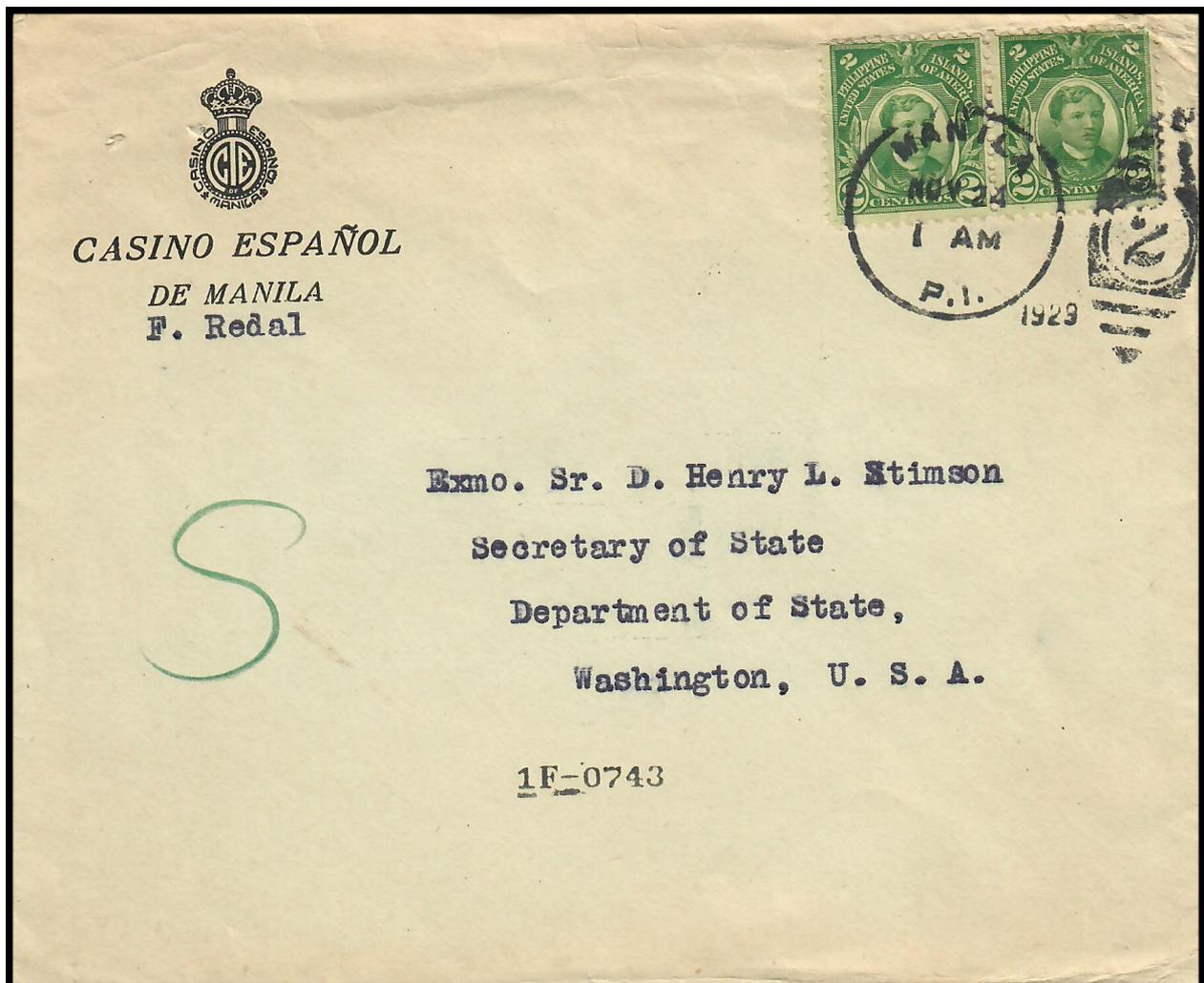
19 October 1927 – Manila Circulating Cover

Stamps tied with Manila (No. 1) Duplex Cancellations

Includes Perforated and Imperforate Pair Fondo Benefico Espanol Charity Stamps

CASINO ESPAÑOL

PRIVATELY PRINTED CORNER CARD WITH LOGO



24 November 1929 - Manila to Washington, USA
Stamps tied with Manila (No. 2) Duplex Cancellation