

THE NEW EURASIAN

www.eurasians.org.sg

APRIL – JUNE 2010

*Where do we go
from here?*



COMMUNITY
DIALOGUE
REMEMBERING
BAHAU
THE JOYS OF
VOLUNTEERING



MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

President
Edward D'Silva

Vice President
(Vacant)

Hon Secretary
(Vacant)

Hon Treasurer
Lynn Desker

Asst Hon Secretary
(Vacant)

Committee Members
Geoffrey da Silva
Humphrey de Conceicao
Carla J Barker
Christian Eber
Zafran Coelho (co-opted)
Burton Westerhout (co-opted)

EA SECRETARIAT

Director of Operations
Lester Low

Team Secretary
Cecilia Sim

Education/Heritage Executive
Jacqueline Anne Peeris

Corporate Communications Executive
Rachel Chen

Events/Operations Executive
Patch Tan

FSS Executives
Florence Adriano
J Ramakrishnan

Volunteer/Membership Executive
(Vacant)

Accountant
Peter Teo

Front Desk Assistant/Security
Walter Pinto

EDITORIAL TEAM

Edward D'Silva (advisor)
Christian Eber (chair)
Rebecca Morris (editor)
John de Souza
Judith Holmberg
Lester Low
Peter Rodrigues
Rachel Chen

CONTRIBUTORS

Zahed Ahmad, Zaf Coelho,
Joe Conceicao, Humphrey de
Conceicao, Adrienne de Souza,
Fiona Hodgkins, Maurice Lin,
Yvonne Pereira, Sybil Rocha and
Theresa Thompson.

COVER STORY



Cover photographs, from left to right, top to bottom: Benjamin Sheares (1907 – 1981), second president of Singapore and Singapore's first Eurasian president; EW Barker (1920 – 2001), Minister of Law from 1964 to 1988; Vernon Palmer (1925 – 2009), known as the 'Godfather' of radio and TV broadcasting in Singapore; George Oehlers (1908 – 1968), first Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Singapore; Sylvia McCully (1949 – present), internationally renowned ballet dancer and founder of the Sylvia McCully School of Dancing; Bernard Harrison (1951 – present), CEO of Singapore Zoological Gardens from 1983 to 2002, and founder of Singapore Night Safari; Tommy Campbell (1924 – 1989), Singapore's first Brigadier-General; Noeleen Heyzer (1949 to present), first female Executive Secretary of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) of the United Nations since 2007.

- 03 AT THE HELM
President's message
- 04 NEWS
Our generous donors
- 05 A warm welcome for new members
A tribute to illustrious past Eurasians
- 06 NEWS/YOUTH
Inter-community networking
Movable feasts
Get the Olympian spirit
Toastmasters' competition

THE MINISTER

Representing the Eurasians
in Cabinet
Mr George Yeo
Patron
Herman R Hochstadt
Trustees
Oscar Oliveira
Barry Desker
Timothy de Souza
Joseph F Conceicao
Gerald Minjoot
Gerry de Silva

AUDIT COMMITTEE

Po'ad Mattar (chair)
Chad Olsen
Daryl Pereira
Kevin Scully

FUND RAISING
COMMITTEE

Francis Remedios (chair)
Gerard Peacock
Dr Ralph Stanley

FINANCE ADVISORY
PANEL

Colin Meyer (chair)
Jean Pereira
Burton Westerhout

COMMUNITY
BONDING ADVISORY
PANEL

Terence Shepherdson (chair)
Caroline de Guzman
Lionel de Souza
Carol Pereira
Vincent Schoon

CONTENTS

- 07 COVER STORY
The way forward for the Eurasian community
An elder statesman and young professional give their views on being Eurasian
- 12 EDUCATION
Gaining confidence through drama
Top Eurasian student
Educational scholarship
- 13 The joys of reading
Educational programmes for students
- 14 VOLUNTEERS
Clifford LeCaine
Pamela Menon
Kimberly Gordon
- 15 Fiona Hodgkins
Elizabeth Schurmann
- 16 PEOPLE
Living during our darker past
- 17 Learning from Bahau
- 18 COMMUNITY
Regional games tournament
Beauty queen's serious profile
- 19 The Eurasian songstress
Fun with a theme
- 20 Chingay



(Established July 1919)
139 Ceylon Road, Singapore 429744
Tel: 6447 1578 Fax: 6447 3189 Email: members@eurasians.org

President's message

In this issue we report on a debate that goes right to the very heart of our existence both as an association and as an ethnic community in Singapore: where do we, as a dwindling group of traditional Eurasians, go from here?

We claim a proud, rich history and the renowned Eurasians illustrated on our front cover are proof that through the years our people have reached the pinnacle of achievement in a variety of positions from the Presidency down.

But while our numbers have stabilised in recent years, our Community Dialogue session last month raised a number of questions about our current place in society. Do we hold on to the culture we forged centuries ago when as Chinese and Indians we intermarried with Europeans, mainly from Portugal, Holland and the UK, and evolved a unique, inter-racial culture, with its own Kristang language and unique fusion food?

Do we embrace the 'new' Eurasians from modern mixed marriages as sharing with us the birthright that gives us an innate ability to see the world from more than one perspective?

Or do we blend seamlessly into a modern Singaporean culture that puts aside past cultural difference for a future based on joint national values?

I believe that if the different cultures that make up Singapore let go of our heritage, we are the poorer for it. Eurasians have a rich history, as can be seen from an increasing interest in our Heritage Centre and in our dance performances in recent Chingay events, to our darker moments, as our interview with two survivors of Bahau demonstrates.

Eurasians have long learned to live equably with different cultures side by side at home, just as modern Singaporeans happily have two identities: those of their traditional cultural background and the joint one they share with all Singaporeans to move us jointly as a nation into a successful future. I am optimistic that Eurasians have a valuable part to play in that future. In the last few years, we have taken great strides to restore our community to the level in society it once enjoyed.

- We have set up bursaries to help our most talented students get the best education so they can use their skills to achieve the highest level possible in their chosen profession.
- We have set up a Performing Arts Chapter that explores the heritage of our traditional Portuguese dance and brings it up to date with modern interpretations.

- We do our willing duty to Eurasian members of the community who now need a helping hand, so they have a chance to enjoy more of the benefits that Singapore has to offer.
- And we have the Eurasian Community House that our community can think of as 'home' – a place where we can work, debate or simply have fun with fellow Eurasians and other guests who regularly join us in our social get-togethers.

Equally importantly, we have worked hard as a group to lay the foundations to ensure that the Eurasian Association will have sound administration and governance in place to take us forward into the future.

All the systems are now there for the older generation to pass on the baton to a new generation of Eurasians.

We can act as mentors, offering a guiding hand, then let them bring their own version of 'Eurasian-ness' to the association and the community. They will have different views and different ways from previous generations; that is natural and healthy.

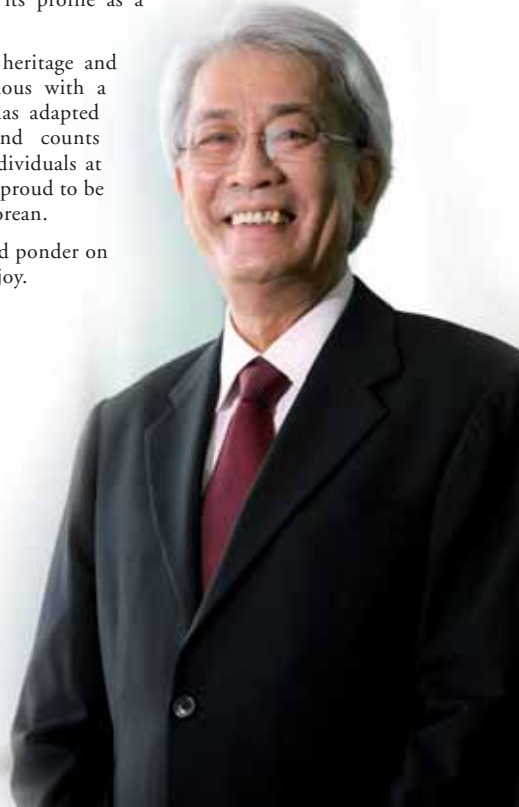
As an ethnic group, we are far less obviously distinguishable than our fellow Chinese, Malay and Indian Singaporeans. But we are not invisible. And it is up to a new generation of well-educated, talented young Eurasians to inject enthusiasm into the association and raise its profile as a self-help group.

Then we can regain our heritage and make 'Eurasian' synonymous with a rich proud culture that has adapted to modern Singapore and counts talented and dedicated individuals at the highest levels, who are proud to be both Eurasian and Singaporean.

There is much to enjoy and ponder on in the following pages. Enjoy.



Edward D'Silva
President,
The Eurasian Association
22 April 2010



The spirit of giving

Looking after those less well off is a major part of the EA's work. But it wouldn't be possible without the support of numerous generous benefactors. Here, we pay tribute to the major donors

Last year, the Eurasian Association sent out letters to various foundations and high-net-worth donors in Singapore in a \$1 million appeal for donations for proposed education and welfare programmes over the next two years. The association will allocate 70 per cent of the donations for education and training and 30 per cent for the EA's Family Support Services. As of December 2009, \$258,200 had been raised.

Judith Prakash and Simon Tensing de Cruz

A memorial fund, set up by two siblings in honour of their mother, will help to give a better future to young children in need.

The Coral de Cruz Memorial Fund is an initiative set up through the EA by Justice Judith Prakash and her brother, Simon Tensing de Cruz, to support the education of under-privileged primary schoolchildren.

Dedicated to the memory of their mother Coral de Cruz, the fund will provide a bursary to help pay for the youngsters' school fees and other education-related expenses up to a maximum of \$2,000 a year per child.

Justice Prakash and Mr de Cruz will each donate a sum of \$4,000 a year to the EA for five years, providing a total of \$40,000. They have asked the EA's board of trustees to administer the fund and it will have full discretion over the selection of the pupils, as well as the bursary amount awarded each year.

The memorial fund has been set up in Coral de Cruz's name because her son and daughter want to honour her memory in a way that she would have appreciated.

Coral Alma de Cruz (née Phipps) was born in 1923 in Penang. She worked in Kuala Lumpur and in Singapore before marrying Gerald Evelyn de Cruz in Karachi in 1949, and lived there until 1956. After the family returned to Singapore, she worked as David Marshall's secretary until her death in 1965.



Coral de Cruz

SM Jaleel

SM Jaleel, CEO of Mini Environmental Service, has donated \$50,000 to the EA. A cheque was presented at a ceremony held on 19 February at Ang Mo Kio Grassroots Club, with President SR Nathan as the guest of honour.

The presentation was held in conjunction with the launch of the first volume of a Tamil language book, which details the achievements of key members within the Indian community, a project also supported by Mr Jaleel. The philanthropist has also donated to five other key charities in addition to the EA.

Pay roll call

These individuals and foundations gave the following donations to the EA's Education and Family Support Services in 2009.

Foundations

Chew How Teck Foundation	\$20,000
Kuok (Singapore) Ltd	\$5,000
Lee Foundation	\$5,000
Ngee Ann Kongsi	\$100,000
The Shaw Foundation	\$10,000
Singapore Hokkien Huay Kuan	\$3,000
Singapore Press Holdings	\$5,000
Foundation	\$5,000
Sub-total:	\$148,000

Individuals and private companies

Advisors Incorporated Pte Ltd	\$5,000
Mr Lawrence Stephen Basapa	\$500
Mr Choo Chiau Beng	\$20,000
Mr Goh Yew Lin	\$2,000
Mr Hsieh Fu Hua	\$20,000
Interlocal Exim Pte Ltd	\$30,000
Dr Lee Suan Yew	\$2,000
Nic & Wes Builders Pte Ltd	\$1,000
Mr Peter Deric William Scully	\$5,000
Dr Joseph HH Sheares	\$1,000
Stanley ENT & Sinus Centre	\$500
Prof Tan Chorh Chuan	\$200
Prof Tan Eng Chye	\$500
Mr Benett Maximillian Theseira	\$1,000
Mr Wee Sin Tho	\$20,000
Mr David Wong Chin Huat	\$1,000
Ms Yeo Ai Lay	\$500
Sub-total:	\$110,200

Grand Total: **\$258,200**



EA stalwarts welcome new members to the association

Getting to know you

Recruits to the EA enjoyed an informative and hospitable evening when they attended a new members' introduction night to learn both how they could benefit from the association – and what they could contribute.

The management committee, secretariat and volunteers were there to greet them in the ECH Platinum Lounge and EA representatives gave a rundown of the services and events that the association manages.

On the more serious side, members learned of the rations deliveries to members in need and weekly counselling services run by the Family Support Services, plus the health screenings run by the Women's Wing, which include mammograms, cervical checks, blood tests and other checks.

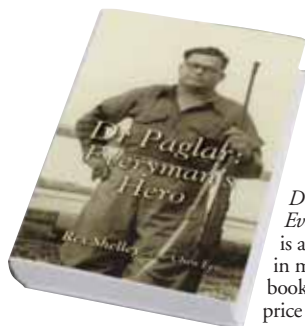
For young people, there was information on the Mentoring Young Leaders Network, which

offers mentoring for young professionals by their peers and an outreach to polytechnics and universities (most recently Republic Polytechnic and NUS) to alert more Eurasian students to the benefits of joining the association.

The Toastmasters events provide a dual purpose of fun and confidence building.

And on the entertainment side, the EA provides numerous occasions for community bonding, from the Performing Arts Circle, which conducts Portuguese dance classes and performs at Chingay, a balut (dice game) tournament, and regular dinner dances from the casual to the formal.

Yvonne Pereira, chairperson of Community Bonding, said: "It was an evening well spent as the new members left instilled with a sense of belonging. They were each presented with a Jinkli Pop CD as a token of welcome."



Dr Paglar: Everyman's Hero is available in major bookstores, price \$30.

A double tribute

Of no less importance was author Rex Shelley, author of four novels which did much to raise the profile of the culture and heritage of the Eurasian people – *The Shrimp People*, *People of the Pear Tree*, *Island in the Centre* and *A River of Roses*.

One aspect he shared in common with the subject of his book was his wry sense of humour.

The book launch, on 18 January, was a simple yet moving affair. Attended by relatives of both men, it marked a family reunion of sorts.

Guests included Datin Emily Paglar, Dr Paglar's fourth wife, who had flown in from Australia especially for the occasion, Mr Michael Shelley, Rex Shelley's only son, and former ambassador Joe Conceicao. Journalists from *The Straits Times* and *CNA* were on hand to cover the event.

After a tribute by Datin Emily to her late husband, the book was formally presented to President SR Nathan. Guests then mingled over a buffet high tea.

The launch at the ECH of *Dr Paglar: Everyman's Hero*, written by lauded Eurasian author Rex Shelley was a joint tribute to two illustrious gentlemen.

The biography narrating the life of the charismatic Dr Charles Joseph Pemberton Paglar was completed shortly before the author's death in 2009.

Dr Paglar, medical doctor, politician and humanitarian, was at once revered by the people for his philanthropic works and vilified by some who mistakenly believed that he was a collaborator with the Japanese.

News in brief

Have your say!

This year's annual general meeting will be held on 30 April at 7.30pm in the Eurasian Community House. Members are encouraged to attend.

The EA president will deliver his address and among the items to be discussed are the following:

- Increasing the number of vice-presidents from one to two
- Introducing five-year terms for trustees. Currently, appointments are life long
- Having more than one patron
- Simplifying the definition of the word 'Eurasian', which is currently defined as a person "who has a dual European and Asian ancestry or whose family has been accepted as such by the community"
- Introducing a new category of Honorary Members

3 MC members step down

EA vice-president Dr Barry Pereira, honorary secretary Mr Harry Pereira and assistant honorary secretary Mrs Christine Clunies-Ross have stepped down from their positions. The committee thanks them for their contributions to the association and the Eurasian community and wishes them all the best in their future endeavours.

Get IT savvy

If you are aged over 40 and want to learn Microsoft Word, Excel and PowerPoint, or simply want to improve your skills, you can take classes at RSVP's Infocomm Centre. The centre offers classes from beginner to advanced levels.

RSVP Singapore is a non-profit organisation with charity status that provides community-based services in areas such as education, health, IT and intergeneration integration.

For enquiries and registration, call RSVP at 6259 0802 or email general@rsvp.org.sg

Making language fun

Are you finding it difficult to get your children interested in their mother tongue? The EA Hands-on Alternate Language Learning Programme breaks down barriers to make Chinese and Malay more approachable for children aged five to 12 years old.

Join our Facebook page for information and updates! Search for EA HALLP on Facebook.

Date : Every Sunday starting 2 May 2010

Time : 1pm to 2pm

Venue : Eurasian Community House

Fees : Free of charge

For enquiries and registration, contact Zaf Coelho at coelhoz@gmail.com by 27 April 2010.

Apology

Some members will have received erroneous salutations on the envelopes containing their Annual Report. This was due to a technical glitch and the EA secretariat apologises for any inconvenience or embarrassment caused.



Teaming up

Networking is the key to successful relationships, whether they're business or social.

In January, committee members of the EA Mentoring Young Leaders' Network mixed business and pleasure when they hosted an informal get-together at the ECH for fellow young professionals in the other self-help groups.

MYLN member Sybil Rocha said: "It was a very fruitful session where we shared invaluable experience in engaging young people.

"Through these meet-ups, young leaders can get to know one another better and work together for the benefit of all four communities."



Young professionals in the four self-help groups share the same goal of involving more young people

A rich concoction

A new TV series delves into the world of Eurasian culture through its cuisine



Quentin (right) cooks up Eurasian fare for Don Richmond

A TV series showcasing the delights of Eurasian cuisine is to be aired on MediaCorp Okto from 22 July.

The Skinny Chef is an introduction to this special style of food that is a melting pot of influences from regions as far apart as Portugal, India and Malaysia.

The 'Skinny Chef' is renowned Eurasian chef, Quentin Pereira, whose restaurant is housed in the ECH.

In every episode, Quentin will enter the kitchen of a local Eurasian celebrity, where viewers will learn about the diverse Eurasian culture through the food and personal stories.

The programme has been made by Eurasian Kimberly Gordon and Michelle Tan, of 4titude Productions. For more information and updates, join The Skinny Chef facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/pages/The-Skinny-Chef/103371503038359?v=info&ref=ts>



Be a mini Olympian!

Primary school students are invited to enjoy a fun-filled day learning about the history of the Olympics and playing an array of sports including soccer and hockey.

Kids Olympia, organised by the EA with Learning Horizon and the Singapore Hockey Federation, will be held at the ECH on 24 June from 9am to 4.30pm. To register, call Jacqueline Peeris at 6447 1578.

Smooth talking

Talk off the cuff for two minutes on the subject 'If you have it, flaunt it': that was one of the tasks for contestants in the Eurasian Association Toastmasters Club contest on 13 March at the ECH.

Charlene Lee was judged to have had it and flaunted it best in the spontaneous tables topics contest while Zaf Coelho's

prepared speech on 'tales of a volunteer' won him first place for the international speech.

The pair will go on to represent the EA at the next stage of the competition. For further information on the Toastmasters Club, visit <http://eatoastmasters.blogspot.com/>



Eurasians in Singapore

What is our future?

In March, the EA held an open meeting of Eurasians to discuss their role in Singapore society



Eurasians are natural born mixers. It's in our blood. We cross borders and transcend cultures naturally. We can plug and play in almost any setting, anywhere in the world, with ease, good humour and charm. This is a huge advantage to members of our community.

But there is also a downside: the community can be more disparate and divided than others which are more clearly defined by common cultures, languages or religion. And when a new wave of immigrants means more people of mixed marriages coming into the country, even existing Eurasians might fear being swamped by new additions to the community.

What then is the future of Eurasians and the Eurasian community in the years to come?



Eurasians in Singapore What is

continued

Recent government moves allow people of mixed parentage to proclaim themselves Eurasians. Equally, they can also opt to adopt the race of either of their parents, thereby threatening a potential depletion of the number of Eurasians in Singapore.

So is the new ruling a boon or bane, a challenge or an opportunity?

These were some of the questions taken up during a recent Community Dialogue held on 6 March 2010 at the Eurasian Community House.

A panel of six Eurasians, comprising Warren Fernandez (chairperson), Terence Shepherdson, who chairs the EA's Community Bonding Advisory Panel, Sybil Rocha, Vincent Schoon, Jean de Souza and Benett Theseira, took part in the discussion, which was attended by some 60 members of the community.

The dialogue session opened with an introduction by Terence Shepherdson, who spoke of the dwindling numbers of Eurasians in Singapore from 60,000 to

17,000 over the past 40 years.

Would these numbers continue to fall in the years ahead if the community remained focused on the past, he asked, rather than taking steps to keep relevant to existing members of the community and enticing new members – including those of mixed parentage who can now choose freely to associate themselves with the community?

During the discussion, popular talking points included the notion of inclusiveness, Eurasian identity, engaging the Eurasian

What being Eurasian means to me

Two Eurasian Association members discuss how they feel about being Eurasian. Joe Conceicao is a former ambassador, MP and EA president. Adrienne de Souza, a teacher in her early 20s, is a member of the EA's Mentoring Young Leaders Network.

Joe Conceicao

Forty to fifty years ago people knew what a Eurasian was. George Bogaars, EW Barker and Maurice Baker were Eurasians who, through their significant contributions in government, Parliament and diplomatic service, outlined a Eurasian identity.

Of course there were many others who gave clarity to this image: Benjamin Sheares, Jeremy Monteiro, Stanley Stewart, Charles Paglar, George Oehlers, EJR Tessensohn, Herman Hochstadt and a host of other personalities.

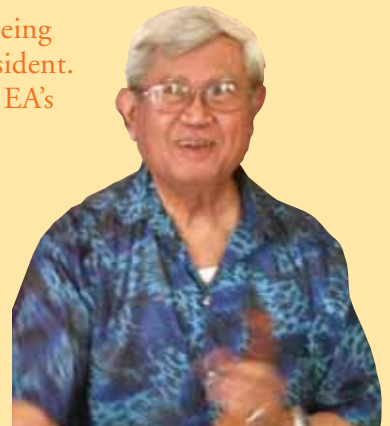
Today the landscape is blurred. It is not certain what is emerging. The public service and 'national' scene sees few names that can give a shape to the Eurasian community.

One reason is that the standard of education of Eurasians as a whole has dropped. Also, many Eurasians who do well have wafled from the ambit of the Eurasian Association.

We have been interested in the wrong things. We want to study Portuguese instead of Chinese. It is sad that we are not even interested in Kristang, which is one cultural feature of many of us.

We justifiably make a lot of fuss about our participation in the Chingay festival. We are proud of the success of the *Eurasiana* presentation.

But it is interesting to note that the People's Association provided the essential support to both celebrations. Dick Lee, a Singapore icon,



his father, well-known, revered Peranakan leader, Lee Kip Lee, and many Peranakan followers gave their support to *Eurasiana*.

This brings me to a thought and suggestion. Why does the Eurasian Association not make efforts to seek a fellowship with the Peranakan Association and the Chetty Melaka Association?

our future?

community, especially young people, internal strife within the community, and even learning Mandarin.

For Warren Fernandez, inclusiveness is inextricable from being Eurasian.

Inclusiveness, he said, is about creating space and welcoming new people. The new government on Eurasians ruling offers “both a challenge and an opportunity for the Eurasian community, and whether it turns out to be a challenge or an opportunity is really up to us”.

An earlier generation of Eurasians had taken

After all we are all ‘Straits-born’. In fact a close relationship did at one time exist culturally.

Together we, the Straits-born, would realise a shared history and a common culture. And together we could make the journey of becoming common Singaporeans.

Regard: there are no (to speak of) Eurasians, or ‘Indos’ in Indonesia. (In fact the Indo-European or Indies people did not even know what a Eurasian was.) All have become Indonesians.

There are no Eurasians or classified Burghers in Sri Lanka. They are Sri Lankans including General Fonseka, although some of us might show interest in his Portuguese-sounding name.

There are no Eurasians in Thailand. There are no Eurasians in Myanmar.

Of course many would be conscious of and known for their mixed ethnic heritage. But all have gone the way of nationalisation.

We must recognise the signal to help each other take this one-way route.

the community forward by coming together as Eurasians, rather than choosing to adopt the race of one parent or the other.

They chose to embrace the diversity in their parentage, and banded together with others like them, to give rise to today’s Eurasians.

Today’s Eurasians would do well to build on this, drawing in new members of mixed Asian and European parentage and making them part of the community, celebrating their diversity and being inclusive, to help take the community forward, he suggested.

Benett Theseira pointed out that while on the one hand, inclusiveness was a valuable end objective, many internal issues within the Eurasian community had to be resolved first.

The Eurasian community had to find ways to retain existing Eurasians before it could attract ‘new Eurasians’.

This meant, Mr Theseira added, that it had to appeal to and be relevant to young Eurasians.

Sybil Rocha, an EA youth sub-committee volunteer who chairs the Mentoring Young Leaders Network (MYLN), stressed the importance of bringing the EA to Eurasian youth instead of waiting for them to come to the association.

“We should not sit back and wait for them to come, because that is really not going to happen.”

She said that figuring out what Eurasian young people aspired to and what they wanted to be involved in was a “continual process”.

Jean de Souza said the association was also having problems attracting middle-aged Eurasians, who had not been drawn to become part of the association.

She said the benefit of having more middle-aged Eurasians would be tremendous for guiding and mentoring young Eurasians.

Many Eurasians “don’t know each other” and at the moment did not network enough, she added.



continued next page

“The future of the Eurasian Association is, whether you like it or not, inextricably tied up with China.”

Edmund Rodrigues



Eurasians in Singapore What is

“The Eurasian community must find ways to retain existing Eurasians before it can attract ‘new Eurasians’. It must appeal to and be relevant to young Eurasians, so that they remain part of the Eurasian community and the Eurasian Association.”

Benett Theseira



The importance of our heritage

Adrienne de Souza

There are a number of practical and historical reasons why we should promote the Eurasian culture. Yet, my instinctive response is based entirely on personal reasons.

As a Eurasian, I am rather embarrassed to admit that I didn't understand much about my own culture until after I began getting more involved in the EA.

Understanding the history of Eurasians gives me a greater sense of where I came from. It's something intangible, something that I can't quite put my finger on.

And I can't help thinking that perhaps there are other Eurasians out there who

were just like me – Eurasians who don't understand their culture, but who would appreciate the value of this knowledge only after they received it.

Does it matter whether other cultures in Singapore know who the Eurasians are?

From the perspective of promoting the culture to non-Eurasians, I think the concept applies to any culture that is recognised in society – the idea of knowing our neighbours and, as a society, having some basic understanding of the various cultures in society.

Is inter-marriage between Eurasians to

be encouraged?

If it happens, it happens. If not, actively encouraging marriage within the Eurasian community, to me, sounds rather like social engineering – and the thought of being encouraged (whether subtly or overtly) to marry someone of a certain race is something that I find a tiny bit disturbing.



“One in three marriages in Singapore is a mixed marriage. In a sense, we are pioneers of that trend that we’re seeing unfolding before our eyes.”

Warren Fernandez

our future?



continued from page 9

Ms de Souza would like to see the association build up a network of older Eurasians – role models, who can provide career guidance to younger Eurasians.

“Nothing really breeds success like success,” agreed Mr Fernandez. “If people see that you’ve got prominent lawyers, civil servants, businessmen who are doing great things...it inspires them and it inspires our younger people.”

MP Michael Palmer pointed out that in his experience as an MP engaging young people was difficult because they had a myriad of opportunities and choices.

He suggested that a series of smaller, satellite events instead of ‘big bang’ events would be more effective in engaging them.

For Vincent Schoon, the challenge was largely to help younger Eurasians not just to get by in school but to excel. He called on educationists in the community to throw up ideas to help young Eurasians make the most of their talents.

Taking up this theme, Edmund Rodrigues from the floor brought up the subject of China. He said: “The future of the Eurasian Association is, whether you like it or not, inextricably tied up with China.”

He suggested that the association promote the use of the Chinese language, so that the Eurasian community, especially children, could benefit from China’s business opportunities.

The issue of uniting the Eurasian community was also brought up by a few speakers from the floor.

Former EA President Timothy de Souza noted that Eurasians were very fortunate in being well represented in all walks of life,

from politics to the professions. The success and efforts of an earlier generation had earned the community recognition nationally.

They would continue to do so if they stayed relevant to the wider community, and continued to be relevant and attractive to Eurasians, new and old, he said.

The way forward, he believed, was through helping less well-off Eurasians to keep abreast of the rest of the society, through various education and welfare efforts.

Emilie Oehlers, a youth member of the EA, said: “We have to recognise and remove an existing aversion many members of the community have to coming together. I think we are aware that sometimes in a minority group, there’s a lot of in-fighting.”

She suggested the formation of a panel or committee to “promote goodwill”, preferably comprised of “people who are maybe trained in psychology, social work, and non-violent communication.”

A member of the audience, Adrian, said he did not always feel welcome at the EA given that he and his family had been abroad for a long time and no longer knew the local community.

Warren Fernandez responded: “I can’t speak for the whole community, but I’m glad you joined us today.

“The more we are inclusive and the more we are inviting and welcoming of people like you, I think the stronger we will be.”

The dialogue session ended on this note, with the panel noting that the session should be the start of a process of engagement with the community on the way forward.

Does it matter in the future, if non-Eurasians are confused between ‘traditional’/‘old’ Eurasians, and those who are Eurasian through modern intermarriage?

As a ‘traditional’/‘old’ Eurasian, yes, to me it does.

I am neither a cynic, nor am I a pessimist. However, I can’t honestly say I’ll be surprised if the Eurasian culture in Singapore becomes extinct.

We are limited by number, yes. But this could be offset if we have enough resources to preserve the memories of the culture – and unfortunately, this doesn’t seem to be the case.

Donations, anyone?



Deborah's courses are all about better self-expression – on and off the stage

Taking

Learning about the dramatic arts can have far-reaching benefits beyond the world of make-believe

Courses in drama can enhance your confidence and give you better presentation skills whatever your age, believes Deborah de Souza, founder of Arts in Motion Pte Ltd.

“Drama has always been a wonderful and insightful platform to communicate and address social concerns,” she says, on the benefits of learning drama. “It is also an instinctive method for self-expression and a source of motivation for open debate and argument through performance.”

Top of the class

Aaron Theseira, last year's top Eurasian 'A' level student, talks to the *New Eurasian* about school life and his plans for the future.

Are you happy with your results? Why?

I would have to say that I am, as I believe I've done my best. No matter what result, as long as I know that, I'd be happy.

What are your plans after this? Do you plan to go to university?

After serving my NS in the air force, I intend to pursue a degree in engineering at NUS, then later perhaps further studies overseas.

What is your favourite subject at school?

Definitely this would have to be physics, as I find it more conceptual and less based on memorising than the other subjects.

What extra-curricular activities do you take part in?

I was in both my secondary school and my junior college band. At the moment I am an executive committee member in the alumni band of my school.

What are your hobbies?

Playing the saxophone is a major interest of mine, especially in symphonic bands. Also, I have a very keen interest in aviation.

Tell us about your family

I am the elder of two children. My mother works for a bank in Singapore while my father works in the Philippines.

“I think students are thinking more creatively, and that schools are encouraging this”

Do you think that students are ‘thinking’ more creatively these days?

I think it can be said that students are thinking more creatively, and that schools are encouraging this. However, I find that some students are still too results-oriented, and may lose out on other gains, e.g. CCAs (co-curricula activities) or other areas which can benefit them.

Aaron Theseira receives his award as top Eurasian student in 2009



Cash help for students

The Asia Pacific Breweries Foundation Scholarship was launched in 2008 to help outstandingly academic students with visual, hearing or other physical disabilities to pursue a university education.

This year, the foundation will award three scholarships to students to help them take a degree at one of the following universities: NUS; NTU; SMU or UniSIM. Each student will receive \$11,000 per year for a maximum of four years.

The closing date for this scholarship is 7 May 2010. For enquiries, contact NCSS at ong_ai_hui@ncss.gov.sg or pamela_biswas@ncss.gov.sg



centre stage

She set up her venture 10 years ago to offer enhancement programmes in the areas of acting and theatre, communicative and presentation skills, vocal expression in conversation, reading and movement in music. Students range from kindergarten level to adults wanting to upgrade their qualifications.

A speech and drama teacher and advocate for 17 years, she holds a Speech and Drama Certificate from the UK's prestigious Guildhall School of Music & Drama, two licentiates in Teaching and Performance with the London College of Music, and a fellowship with the Trinity College, London.

She has scripted, directed and produced plays on national levels at the Drama Centre

“Drama has always been a wonderful and insightful platform to communicate and address social concerns”

and Singapore EXPO, and directed road shows in Singapore stores.

In addition to teaching the syllabuses of the various Speech and Drama external examination boards accepted in Singapore, she has written syllabuses for different age levels ranging from children to adults.

So what do students gain? “All courses lead to developing good interactive and presentation skills.

Activities that are creative, tasteful and skilful promote an arts education for the community,” she says.

“This cultivates dynamism and vitality in the performing arts in Singapore. Through public performances, a high standard of communication and confidence develops.

Students consequentially think more acutely and vocal delivery becomes more effective and efficient.”

To contact Arts in Motion, call 6744 2470 or visit www.artsinmotion.com



Artful plans for learning

The self-help groups, the Chinese Development Assistance Council (CDAC), Singapore Indian Development Association (SINDA), Yayasan Mendaki (YM) and the EA are collaborating to organise an Arts Enrichment Holiday Programme.

This programme is catered for Primary 3 and 4 students during the 2010 school holidays in June.

The programme is mainly to reach out to primary students from lower-income families and to instil in them an interest in reading.

As they read more, children gain more knowledge and become less inhibited, and reading also helps them with their essay writing and spelling.

The programme aims to encourage students to communicate verbally

with each other using proper English sentences, rather than communicating via text messages on their handphone, often in Singlish.

Students will learn to express themselves and communicate effectively with others.

The Creative Reading and Story-Telling workshop will be held over three sessions on 3, 4 and 5 June at OnePeople.sg, centrally located next to Braddell MRT.

Students will get a chance to perform what they have learned for their parents during a Talentime on 5 June.

The guest of honour will be Mayor Zainudin Nordin, Mayor of Central Community Development Council.

An informal lunch reception will follow.

Extending a helping hand

Since becoming a self-help group in 1994, the EA has had an increasing number of educational programmes and Family Support Services (FSS) to offer to Eurasian students.

These provide guidance, encouragement and, where needed, financial aid to students, especially those from low-income families.

The EA is currently targeting schools with a high percentage of Eurasian students, such as St Patrick's School and CHIJ Katong Convent.

It is hoped that this will start a ripple effect, where more families will come to know about the EA and the programmes it has for the benefit of Eurasians.



A sense of

The EA presented Certifications of Appreciation to 35 volunteers at its annual

Volunteering for victory

Clifford LeCaine was determined to reverse the fortunes of the EA's dragon boat team and bring pride to the association

Establishing a Eurasian dragon boat team to compete in the Chinese-dominated sport would raise the community's sporting profile, believed former EA president Gerry de Silva. And four years ago, the EA Dragons first dipped their paddles into the water.

The following year sports enthusiast Clifford LeCaine (pictured in the foreground), an EA member since the 1990s who had canoeing experience, responded to a call in the *New Eurasian* for dragon boat volunteers.

The annual Singapore River Regatta was just weeks away. "We trained hard, but didn't do too well," he admitted. The team came in second last.

Determined to improve, they formed a regular team and practise on Kallang River every Sunday.

Since then, the team has won medals in all their competitions. At the North East CDC Dragon Boat Competition 2009, they missed out on Gold by just one second. Finally, in the Singapore River Regatta later that year, they took home the prized Gold medal.

"We were overjoyed. Ecstatic. We finally got the Gold!" says Clifford.

He recalls: "When we berthed the boat, we had to be helped out as our muscles had all tensed up from the strenuous rowing. We did not even have the strength to walk straight – but it was worth it."

The team is now training for the 2010 regatta, and Clifford fully intends to score another victory. "Winning the Gold is one thing; keeping it is another," he says.

"Winning the Gold is one thing; keeping it is another"



The smiles that say: "Victory!"

Making waves

Opportunities present themselves at unlikely times and places, discovered Pamela Menon



Pamela Menon and husband

It took a boat trip to Batam for Pamela Menon to do what she'd been promising herself for years: sign up for EA membership.

She was on a trip organised by the women's wing of the Singapore Recreation Club when she bumped into EA member Yvonne Pereira. Pamela mentioned to her that she'd been wanting to join – and in a trice Yvonne had whipped out a membership form.

That was more than three years ago. "Since then, I have had the most enjoyable time in the EA. I have made many friends and learnt a lot more about Eurasian culture," says Pamela.

As a retiree, she joined the Silver Circle and now serves as its secretary. Its events include the Red and White Luncheon for National Day, and the year-end Christmas dinner and dance. The Balik Kampong night of 2009 was Pamela's favourite: "Out of a little idea came a roaring success of a party!"

She also helps to distribute food to underprivileged Eurasians in her area.

Pamela has forged close bonds with the community she serves: "I have come to know and love them, and look forward each month to spending time with them. And that surely must be one of the greatest perks of being an EA volunteer."

Calling the shots

Entrepreneur Kimberly Gordon volunteers to help other young people climb the career ladder

When young Eurasian entrepreneur Kimberly Gordon isn't busy working as a video producer, she spends time as a regular volunteer with the EA's youth and women's sections.

She helps out with the Mentoring Young Leaders Network, a group of young Eurasian professionals who link up with their Eurasian peers and also provide career guidance to aspiring young Eurasians.

Kimberly has her own independent production company, 4titude Productions. The company works on projects such as corporate videos, television commercials, documentaries and short films.

belonging

Volunteers Appreciation Tea on 13 March. Now, we speak to five of its volunteers



An eye on the past

Fiona Hodgkins' fascination with Eurasian history will provide useful lessons for future generations



Fiona at Bahau camp

A volunteer with the EA's Heritage Committee for nearly two years, Fiona Hodgkins has some interesting heritage of her own. Born in Japan to a British father and a Malaysian mother, she has lived and worked in Singapore, Malaysia, Japan, Britain, Zimbabwe, the United Arab Emirates, Trinidad and Venezuela. A history graduate, she is a teacher by profession.

When her husband's job brought them to Singapore, her aunt took her to the ECH to view the Bahau exhibition. In time, she met

Barry Pereira and Geoff Thompson, who shared her interest in heritage and she decided to join the Heritage Committee.

Her fascination with Bahau, which plays a significant part in Eurasian modern history, has led to an annual expedition in the last two years. The agricultural settlement, in the Malaysian state of Negri Sembilan, was set up during the Japanese Occupation for Eurasians and Chinese Roman Catholics under a self-sufficiency scheme to ease the food shortage in Singapore.

Last August, Fiona organised a trip to Malacca where the committee celebrated the 500th anniversary of the arrival of the first Portuguese with the Malacca Portuguese EA.

Fiona cites "friends, interesting people and opportunities" as the pluses of being a Heritage Committee member. "Being a member of the committee has also enabled me to find out more about my own Eurasian roots," she says. "And it's good to know that I am doing something lasting by documenting aspects of Eurasian heritage for other Eurasians."



Entrepreneur Kimberly mentors young Eurasians

A proposed Eurasian-themed infotainment programme has been shortlisted by MediaCorp and she also has two show concepts shortlisted by Mark Burnett Productions Asia (of reality TV shows *Survivor* and *The Apprentice* fame).

One of the main perks of being an EA volunteer, says Kimberly, is "the opportunity to meet people from all walks of life, of all ages, and form new, unique friendships. Also, occasionally you might discover new family ties." However, she adds: "Within the EA we have very few core volunteers. So, please come forward!"

Friends and family

Elizabeth Schurmann helps out in numerous ways at the EA and hopes she'll soon be sharing the volunteering spirit with her son



Elizabeth meets President SR Nathan

Elizabeth Schurmann, who is married to a Dane and is "Eurasian to my toenails", has been a volunteer with the EA's Performing Arts Chapter for the past four years.

Previously a Family Support Services volunteer, she is a prominent face at community events organised by private and governmental agencies.

Her favourite event was *Eurasiana* in 2009: "It was very large scale. Lots of blood, sweat and tears and, oh, very little sleep!"

By being a volunteer, she says, "I get to be

part of events that most people don't have the opportunity to be part of. You get closer to the community, make friends and maintain relationships."

For this family-oriented volunteer, the PAC is also a great way to bond with one of her sons, who has expressed a desire to join the choir. "It would be fun on Saturday afternoons singing with my son!" she says.

Learning the hard

A recent TV programme told a new generation of the horrors that occurred at Bahau during World War II, when Eurasians were sent to the town across the Malaysian border in order to ease the food shortage in Singapore. Zahed Ahmad and Maurice Lin talk to two survivors, Joe Conceicao and Adrian Fernandez, about their experiences there

It is nearly 70 years since Japan swarmed in and occupied Singapore, but Adrian Fernandez can still remember the national anthem of Nippon, Kimigayo, as if he had just recited it that morning.

He is even game enough to sing the first few lines of the song for the three of us who have come to interview him and Joe Conceicao, 85, another survivor from the Japanese Occupation.

Now at 83, Adrian's gnarled hands, which bore years of brute hard work, grip his walking stick. Together with his wife Hellen, we all sit drinking coffee in the safe, comfortable ambience of Quentin's Restaurant.

But we need no sounds, sights or smells of the 1940s to understand the horror of World War II

"The sight that greeted us was appalling. Malaria was widespread and a drop of water on a leaf was enough to generate mosquitoes"

as the two men relive their experience of being despatched to the infamous Bahau – the place which translates literally as Horse's Mouth.

Recollections of their pre-war youth bring light-hearted banter between the two. Joe and Adrian speak spiritedly of their younger days, occasionally poking fun at each other.

"We used to live a few streets away in Singapore; him at Burnfoot Terrace and myself, at Lothian Terrace," Adrian says. "Joe Conceicao was in his prime element back then. Young, virile and handsome. And always seen hanging around the convent," he jokes amid a string of chuckles.

Their youthful exuberance was short-lived. "When it was time for us to head to Bahau, we packed guitars, and expected a paradise to greet us upon our arrival," says Adrian.

"Instead, the sight that greeted us was appalling. Malaria was widespread and a drop of water on a leaf was enough to generate mosquitoes," he said.

He recalls how his father's job brought them to the attention of their new masters during the Japanese Occupation.

"My father, who was working for Income Tax back then, was suspected of assisting the British and this brought the Kempeitai to my house to bring my father back to the headquarters for questioning.

"Fortunately, the soldiers who were questioning him were reservists made up of intellectuals like lawyers, doctors and teachers, instead of the usual ruthless ones, so this made the explanation and reassurance easier.

"During the raid, my sister Eunice hid under the wicker laundry basket, away from the eyes of the Kempeitai, who were going from home to home taking away any young women that they could find," he added.

The archbishop Adrian Devals finally gathered Eurasian families together and advised them to pack their bags and move up north to Malaysia to the town of Bahau, where it would be safer.

"We were distraught at first upon our arrival. Groups who came first were given the best plots of land and our plot was right on the fringes of malaria: the jungle," says Adrian.

"But, as they say, it was a cloud with a silver lining as certain members of Force 136 [resistance movement] came out from their hiding in the jungle and offered us food in exchange for keeping them informed about the roads and conditions leading up to the town of Bahau.



1

"If I remember correctly, we were the only family in touch with the force. It was risky because had the Japanese caught wind of our liaison, we would certainly have been captured and killed," Adrian adds, his eyes intent at the memory.

Joe continues: "It was really a trying moment in our lives. During Christmas, many of us went to mass wearing swimming costumes that were torn.

"I remembered one of the Eurasian boys, Moses, who was made to carry a board with the words 'I am a thief' around his neck for stealing food due to sheer starvation and desperation."

Adrian says: "In Bahau, water was very hard to obtain so we dug wells as a result. Certain wells were excellent but most were filled with dirty and murky water, no matter how you dug.



2

"I would remove earthworms from the urn and throw them into the bushes. Leaving the water from the well in an urn overnight, we scooped up cleaner water from the top of the urn the next morning and boiled it for drinking purposes."

Adrian once had a close call with the Malayan Peoples Anti-Japanese Army (MPAJA) resistance movement after the surrender of the Japanese. Joe explains: "We were boarding the train specifically for Bahau settlers that were bound to Singapore, and the station platform was filled with people, trying to clamber up on to the train.

"A woman trying to slip in was quickly stopped by Adrian, who was playing policeman. She tried to strike him and after still failing to persuade Adrian to let her board, she began

lessons of history



1. A tombstone at the Kuala Pilah graves
2. Filming the documentary
3. Adrian Fernandez and Joe Conceicao with (left) Maurice Lin, who played Adrian in the TV documentary, and Orry Jude Goh, who played Joe

wailing. This attracted the attention of a member of the MPAJA, who quickly bolted up the train, looking for Adrian," he says.

Adrian adds: "I was trying to seek a hiding place, and pounded on the door of a toilet. Surprisingly, a woman who was occupying it let me in."

When asked to sum up how he felt on a whole, Joe says: "Ultimately, I have no animosity about what has happened in the past. I just accepted it."

Joe and Adrian are toughness and endurance personified. And Joe's simple, honest answer – after witnessing the terrible hardship and murder during the Japanese Occupation, is in stark contrast to the vindictiveness and hatred we see in the world today.

Joe and Adrian's mischievous humour remains until today. We end the interview with Joe pretending to chide us: "Maurice, you better finish asking Adrian your questions because my lontong is waiting."



Why Bahau matters today

Bahau is now part of Singaporean history. But there are reasons why we should always remember it. Fiona Hodgkins says why she believes it is still important



Finding out about the Bahau experience has been important for me as it has enabled me to understand what was probably the most defining interlude in the lives of my mother and her family.

Their experience in Bahau undeniably shaped the rest of their

lives; perhaps the children were too young for it to overtly shape their lives directly, but certainly, their future lives were moulded in how their parents subsequently brought them up and the expectations they had for their adult lives.

From talking to many Bahau survivors over the last couple of years, I know this to be true not just for my own family.

Not everyone may openly accept the influence Bahau has had on their subsequent lives but it is clear from the way that people talk about their experiences, be it about grudges they still harbour or friendships they still cherish, that experiences of over 50 years ago still feature strongly.

Some will not talk about Bahau for fear of dragging up old memories but in reality they are only suppressing what is already there.

It is also important to appreciate that the Bahau experience affected not just those who went to Bahau but the community they left behind who suffered in a different way. Most people who did not go were involved in some

second-hand way and feel culpable at some level for family and friends who did go.

So, Bahau can truly be said to have affected the whole community of Eurasians in some way, and for this reason it is so important for Eurasians today to understand the Bahau experience.

Even if they have not had older relatives talk about it to them, it has in some way had an influence on the lives of their grandparents and parents and so in some way on themselves.

So, as the Bahau experience today grows, it is important that we nurture it and make its legacy a positive one.

It is for this reason that I and a team of others continue to research and document the true facts about Bahau so that more people can properly understand it.

If you have any comments you would like to share about your Bahau experiences or of those of family or friends, please do contact us.

The Bahau team: Fiona Hodgkins – fthodgkins@gmail.com; Geoff Morris – geonet@starhub.net.sg; Barry Pereira – dosbarry@hotmail.com; Paul Rodrigues – paul@keppelenergy.com; Therese Thompson – sgideas@singnet.com.sg



Railway tracks dividing Mukim 5 & 6

On a roll

An annual sporting competition between Selangor Eurasians and Singapore that began in 1823 and continued for 160 years has been revived – but at a more gentle pace.

Each year the Selangor Eurasian Association (now the Selangor and Federal Territory Eurasian Association – SAFTEA), would compete with the Singapore Recreation Club in a tournament of some dozen games including soccer, hockey, tennis, cricket, darts and billiards.

In the 2010 version of the contest, the Eurasian Association of Singapore joined in to make it a new Triangular Games comprising billiards, pool, darts and the newly introduced dice game, balut. A separate competition between the Eurasian Associations of Malacca, Penang and Singapore was also organised.

But the main purpose was to rekindle ties with Eurasians in Malaysia; and in the socialising that followed, there was a special

bonus for some members, who were able to trace some distant relatives through their new friends.



Therese Thompson, President of Selangor & Federal Territory Eurasian Association, Datok Richard Robless, and the EA's Yvonne Pereira

Attractive opportunities

Since representing Singapore at Miss World 2009, Pilar Arlando has been jetting round the globe – while keeping her feet firmly on the ground

Pilar Carmelita Arlando was with her mum doing a photo shoot for a makeover as a Mother's Day gift, when the idea of taking part in Miss World Singapore was presented to her.

"We met the director of the studio and it so happened that they were one of the sponsors for the Miss World Singapore pageant," she says. "They told me that I had potential and would definitely go far in the competition!"

Pilar was one of 111 contestants to visit London, Abu Dhabi and South Africa as part of the Miss World tour, which was packed with press conferences, TV shows and charity affairs, as well as cultural and recreational events.

Her whirlwind year has seen her clinch a number of subsidiary awards: Miss Vitality second runner up, Miss Abry, Miss World University, Singapore and Miss Personality. "I never thought I'd clinch a subsidiary award – and I was aiming particularly for the Miss Personality Award," she says.

Was she nervous? "I was more excited than nervous to be honest. It was a huge honour for me. I mean, how many girls get to do this? To be an ambassador for their country on the world stage?"

But her life is far from being all glamour. Her main priority is to graduate soon with a major in Travel, Tourism and Hospitality Management from MDIS.

Apart from that, she has the regular duties of a Miss World Singapore such as attending venue openings, charity events, photo shoots and judging competitions.

"I feel that having attained this title has given me a platform to work from. It has raised my circle of influence"



Pilar with the other Miss World contestants in South Africa

This year, she hopes to undertake some international volunteer work at orphanages overseas, especially in Vietnam, Cambodia, and South Africa. During her visit to Johannesburg, she met some children from the Mother of Peace orphanage and wants to go back.

"I feel that having attained this title has given me a platform to work from. It has raised my circle of influence and has allowed me to extend a further reach to those in need," she says.



Idol thoughts

Participating in last year's *Singapore Idol* contest, Mae Sta Maria captured the hearts of many Singaporeans when she progressed through to the top seven out of some 4,000 entrants.

Having lived in Australia for many years, she is now back in Singapore and working with MediaCorp.

She was born to Sandra (née de Souza) and Hans Vernie in Singapore with a musical pedigree – Grandpa Dick de Souza was a guitarist and dad was a professional musician for some 40 years.

She was picked at the age of 12 to sing the soundtrack song on the video produced in 1994 to commemorate the Eurasian Association's 75th



Anniversary, shown at the gala dinner attended by the then Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong, who was the guest of honour.

In 1998, she moved with her family to Perth, Australia, where she completed her education. She never gave up her passion for music, singing at parties and occasional gigs. She married Michael Sta Maria in 2008 after a five-year courtship.

Why did she enter *Singapore Idol*: "Mike and I

were already making plans to move back to Singapore in 2010 where I still have family. I have always wanted to record and release my own music," she says.

"*Singapore Idol* represented an opportunity to test my singing at a level I had never attempted before. The timing fitted into our plans and I did not want to pass up on this opportunity."

Returning to Singapore in 2010, she has been working on completing her solo album project which had already started with five of her own songs. "I would also like to try my hand at hosting, acting and DJ-ing on radio," she says. "The world is my oyster and I will grab every opportunity that is presented to me to realise my dream."

Rhythm and foods

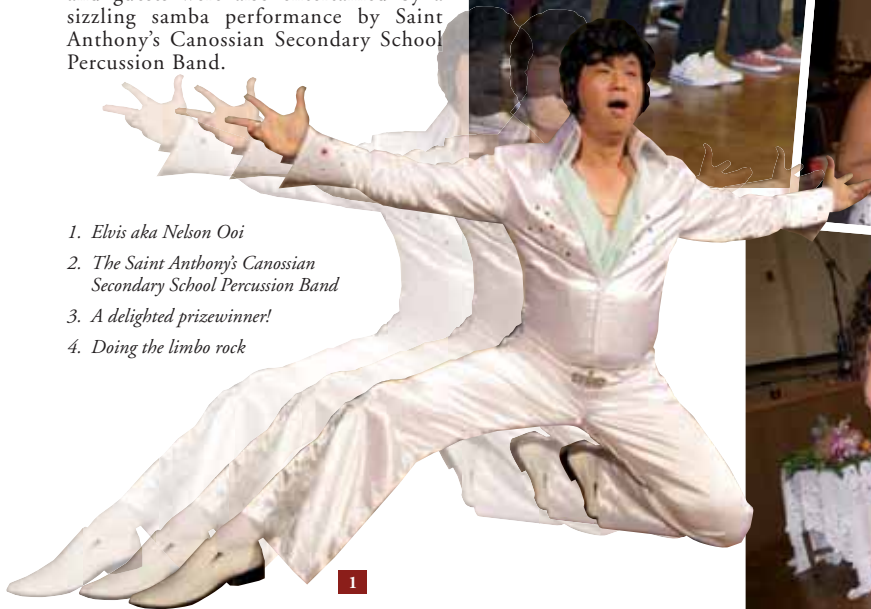
A trip back in time to the 1950s and '60s, complete with an Elvis impersonator (aka Nelson Ooi), was the theme of the January monthly lunch at the ECH.

More than 80 guests enjoyed a buffet by Quentin's Restaurant, plus performances by the band Old Spice and quizzes on icons of the era.

The following month, guests moved to the beat of the samba at the Brazilian Samba Festa at the ECH, where the cuisine was a South American barbecue prepared by Brazil Churrascaria.

The band Crossroadz provided the music and guests were also entertained by a sizzling samba performance by Saint Anthony's Canossian Secondary School Percussion Band.

1. Elvis aka Nelson Ooi
2. The Saint Anthony's Canossian Secondary School Percussion Band
3. A delighted prizewinner!
4. Doing the limbo rock



Reigning on the parade

The EA's dancers took part in their third Chingay parade this year – and sizzled to the heat of the samba beat

When the EA's Performing Arts Chapter set off down Orchard Road for Chingay last year in a float representing a 15th century Portuguese sailing boat, with 100 dancers on board, it set itself a tough act to follow.

This year it met that challenge, bringing the transport bang up to date with two 'red hot' Porsches that PAC member Elizabeth Schurmann had arranged with local dealer Stuttgart Auto. Singapore's representative to the Miss World Competition 2009, Eurasian Pilar Arlando, held court atop one of them while her lady in waiting, Melissa Conceicao, graced the other.

The People's Association had invited the group to join the samba segment. Lead members of PAC's dance group, Lanette Stuart, Vanessa Garnell, Sarah de Conceicao, and even chairman Humphrey de Conceicao, attended lessons on the finer aspects of the dance. These steps were then adapted to a more Portuguese ballet style, choreographed by Vanessa and Lanette to showcase part of the Eurasian heritage.

The troupe included youngsters from St Theresa's Convent and members of SJI International's grades 3-5, who had all previously enjoyed lessons in Portuguese folk dance from the PAC's dancers. In all, the

troupe's ages ranged from eight to 50 plus.

The glittering event worked on a tight budget with costumes adapted from the previous year. "The costumes were put together lovingly by Lanette in between teaching the dance, working out the positioning, calling everyone for practice – and hand-washing the costumes," says Humphrey. "At one stage the home looked like a laundry-cum-tailor shop."

He added: "In spite all the blood, sweat, tears, and body aches, the PAC has asked to do it all again next year. It is indeed an experience to have at least once in your lifetime, and an honour to represent our community."

- A. Flying the Eurasian flag
- B. Lanette in her colourful, handcrafted outfit
- C. Pilar Carmelita Arlando wears her sash with pride
- D. Sarah de Conceicao takes on the samba
- E. Full speed ahead in a Porsche
- F. St Theresa's Convent pupils enjoy the show



F

E

A

B

C

D