

THE NEW EURASIAN

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JANUARY – MARCH 2011

Christmas cheer

A traditional Eurasian Yuletide



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ON THE COVER

THE NEW EURASIAN

The quarterly magazine of The Eurasian Association, Singapore

The *New Eurasian* is published quarterly and read by more than 17,000 Eurasians in Singapore. It is also circulated to senior government offices, various ministries, statutory boards, community organisations and self-help groups.

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Deadline

Copy must be submitted two weeks before publication date.



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President's message



The Eurasian Association has survived for more than 90 years, with inevitable ups and downs throughout the decades, but it is now in a stronger position than ever to uphold the three main pillars of our existence: supporting the education of Eurasians so they can achieve the highest potential in their chosen fields; welfare to help our most needy members; and community development, to ensure that our small community continues to make its unique and valuable contribution to Singapore society.

During the last 15 years, we have moved from a small 'shed' in the People's Association premises to our Mountbatten Road premises and finally to our prestigious home at the ECH. And in that time we have made huge strides in working for the Eurasian community.

In 1995, we launched our ECF (Eurasian Community Fund) awards, which have since expanded significantly. This year, we reached out to hundreds of Eurasian youngsters with our education advancement programmes and to some 120

members of the community with our FSS (Family Support Services) assistance programmes. In addition, our various community development activities have served to strengthen the bonds within our community and with Singapore as a whole.

To continue our work, the management committee is looking into the critical resources needed to support this, both in terms of people and capital. We are grateful for the dedicated staff and large number of volunteers and donors who generously donate their time and money to run our various programmes; nevertheless, there is never enough money for all that we would like to do and we constantly need to ensure that we have robust funds to continue our work.

The management committee is therefore considering various measures to strengthen the EA's financial position, including increasing the rate of ECF contributions, which have not been raised since their inception more than 15 years ago. We shall therefore be studying this initiative in the new year, seeking feedback from the community and discussing it with the relevant government agencies before finalising this proposal.

The years leading up to our centenary in 2019 are a good time to think not just of our fellow Eurasians in Singapore, but those further afield. We already have good ties with our friends in Malaysia, but our community is now spread throughout the world.

In September, I attended an Anglo-Indian World Reunion in Perth, where I met Genevieve De Souza, President of the Australian Eurasian Association of Western Australia, and former presidents. In November, fellow management committee member Vincent Schoon and I were invited to Selangor EA's 90th anniversary. It was a great opportunity to bring people together and help build a solid network of Eurasians, and we met Herman Anthony, President of The Selangor and Federal Territory Eurasian Association, and Michael Singho, President of the Malacca Portuguese-Eurasian Association.

I have long cherished the hope that the wider Eurasian community, with our shared history and ancestry, should one day reunite. And what better than to hold a major reunion for the Eurasians in Singapore, Malaysia, and Perth – and maybe even further afield – in the year that we in Singapore celebrate our EA's centenary? The management committee should discuss how to give shape to these plans.

I hope you have had a good year and that 2011 is even better. I wish you all a peaceful, successful and Happy New Year.

William (Bill) Jansen, President

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Minister George Yeo visits the EA

EA trustees, management committee members and volunteers enjoyed the opportunity to chat with Minister George Yeo, who represents the Eurasians in Parliament, when he made his annual visit to the ECH on 15 October to enjoy a dinner provided by Quentin's Restaurant.

EA president Bill Jansen and the minister both made short speeches, and in addition to discussing EA activities the party enjoyed entertainment by musical duo Trevor Nerva and Peter Dias.

During the evening, Mr Yeo took pictures of guests at each table with his phone and uploaded them immediately on to his Facebook page. A keen user of technology, he often records the events he attends – so become a Facebook fan and find out what the minister is doing for you!



Guests at Minister George Yeo's visit



The Minister and EA President Bill Jansen deep in conversation



Mr Yeo shows Dorothy Tessensohn what's on his iPhone

The spirit of volunteering

Singapore is to host a landmark conference, which will launch 2011 as the United Nations-designated International Year of Volunteers as well as celebrate the 40th anniversary of the International Association for Volunteer Effort

Singapore is holding its first international volunteering conference and members of the four self-help groups are invited to attend.

The National Volunteer and Philanthropy Centre is organising the World Volunteer Conference at Resorts World, Sentosa from



Dr Noeleen Heyzer

24-27 January 2011, which will be held in conjunction with the international Youth Volunteer Conference.

The conference will report on the latest happenings on the global voluntary landscape and will help community organisations that recruit and manage volunteers.

Past conferences have been held in Panama,

New Delhi, Barcelona, Seoul, Amsterdam and Alberta.

Superstars Jet Li and Michelle Yeoh will add glitter to the occasion and explain how they use their influence to send messages to the world. And Singapore Eurasian and United Nations diplomat Dr Noeleen Heyzer will be among the speakers.

The deadline for registration is 13 January. For further information and prices, visit www.iave2011.org or to speak to a representative, contact Alloysius Teng at 6550 9383, alloysusteng@nvpc.org.sg or Glenda Quah at 6550 9573, glendaquah@nvpc.org.sg

News in brief

Tax-deductible donations

As of 1 January 2011, all individuals and businesses making donations to the Institute of Public Character (IPC), which includes donations to the EA, are required to provide their tax reference numbers (e.g. NRIC/FIN/UEN) to the IPCs in order to be given tax deductions. IRAS will no longer accept claims for tax deduction based on donation receipts. For further information, contact IRAS, tel: 1800 356 8015 or e-mail: ipclink@iras.gov.sg

A welcome delivery

United Parcel Services (UPS) Foundation has donated \$5,000 to the Eurasian Association's Family Support Services. A cheque was presented to the FSS at the Eurasian Community House on 21 October.



Bill Jansen receives a cheque from UPS Foundation staff

EA trustee wins public service award

EA trustee and former president Gerald Minjoot was one of 15 recipients of the Friends of MCYS Award 2010 for his contribution to public service. The ministry cited his work in developing the EA's education and welfare services in addition to his involvement with the Christian Brothers Schools Board, St Patrick's School, Singapore Cancer Society, Rotary International and other organisations. The awards are presented to individual volunteers or organisations whose service comes under the remit of the MCYS.

Singaporean Eurasian wins top hotel award



Cora de Conceicao-Stuart, general manager of Media One Hotel Dubai, picked up the coveted General Manager of the Year award at the Hotelier Middle East Awards on 15 October. Cora beat six men to win the award – a significant achievement for a woman working in a male-dominated industry and environment.

EA Multi-Purpose Hall for rental



The EA's multi-purpose hall can be used for conference, parties, functions and celebrations, as well as for classes and dinners. It is also used for the Eurasian Experience, an interactive tour of the Eurasian Community House for school children and adults to learn more about Eurasian heritage and culture.

For enquiries and bookings, contact Patch Tan at patch@eurasians.org or tel: 6447 1578

Solid steps on the career ladder

A good education goes a long way towards ensuring a future generation qualified to become leaders not only in their chosen field, but also in the Eurasian community and the wider society. We talk to Geoffrey da Silva on the role the EA plays to give the next generation a helping hand on their way up



Geoffrey da Silva

Education plays a major role in the EA's work, being one of the three pillars – along with welfare assistance and community bonding – on which the association was founded. The EA is always looking for new ways of raising the level of educational standards among Eurasians, from informal classes to a structured set of grants and bursaries.

The EA's mission is quite simple, says Geoffrey da Silva, who chairs the association's Education Committee: "We aim to support and implement relevant educational programmes that will help Eurasian students to further their progress in schools, colleges and institutions of higher learning."

The EA does this with a variety of funding schemes. Geoffrey points out this can range from small grants that help students to pay for extra schooling costs, such as learning aids or extra tuition classes, to funding their participation in enrichment programmes organised by their schools and colleges.

"The nature of the support ranges from study grants all the way to our merit bursary awards that enable the successful candidate to complete a full course of study at a local polytechnic or ITE," he explains.

"We want to see improvements across the board at all levels," he adds. "More importantly, the support is intended to give a lift to those in less privileged families to ensure they are able to receive supplementary assistance (both in services and in kind) to help level the playing field."

"We need to ensure that more and more Eurasian students do not prematurely end their studies after secondary school and to have the benchmark set at the ITE and polytechnic levels to ensure that they have the minimum requisite skills to be employable. Those who are more capable and can show merit in their studies can even be supported beyond the polytechnic into one of the three universities via our new scholarship scheme."

Such support will not only help students to realise their individual potential, but also to play their part as well-educated leaders of the future. "It is our intention to help to nurture future potential youth leaders, and these are already being identified through our various

"It is our intention to help to nurture future potential youth leaders, and these are already being identified through our various merit bursary and university scholarship schemes"

merit bursary and university scholarship schemes. The successful candidates will be expected to make a contribution by way of volunteering in the various social and educational programmes offered by the EA in their capacity as young leaders and also to help mentor younger Eurasian students.

"The EA will seek to source additional grants to help expand the number of merit bursaries and university scholarships in the coming years," he says.



A path to learning

While helping others to get a better education, the EA's education executive Jacqueline Peeris is learning much of interest along the way

Jacqueline Peeris wears two hats at the EA – as education executive and also heritage executive. We talk to her about what her work entails, including the rewards and the challenges of her job.

What is your job scope?

In my education role, I have the task of administering bursaries and financial assistance to students from low-income families.

For heritage, my job is to share the Eurasian history and culture with the rest of the community in Singapore. From manning exhibition booths and selling books on Eurasian history, to answering queries on genealogy and family trees, I must say it is most interesting learning more about the Eurasian culture, being part Eurasian myself.

Describe a day in the life of an education/heritage executive

When I check my e-mails, there might be one from a student asking for financial assistance and another from a senior Eurasian looking to buy the latest Eurasian cookbook, or someone enquiring about their family genealogy.

When there are education awards to be administered, usually three or four times a year, I go through the process of collating the students' data and short-listing the recipients (using various criteria including household per capita income and academic achievement) for the Education Committee's approval. Then, of course, there is the planning and coordination of the disbursement ceremony.

How did you get your job here?

I saw the ad for an education executive in the newspaper and decided to apply; my mom is a life member of the EA and my brothers and I are also members and attended several



Jacqueline Peeris

"It is very rewarding knowing that I have helped a student to progress in their education and that they are able to move on to greater heights with the encouragement and support of the EA"

events when we were younger. And I have always identified myself as Eurasian/Indian.

I worked in the Salvation Army for two years and at a private school as administrator, and I felt that the cumulative experience gained there would contribute to this post.

What are the upsides of your job?

There is some flexibility in terms of working hours – the job calls for a degree of independence but team work is also needed for important large-scale events. And the network support from colleagues makes it more enjoyable.

I also get to meet people and work with executives from other organisations, including the other self-help groups, volunteer welfare organisations and government ministries. It is very rewarding knowing that I have helped a student to progress in their education and

that they are able to move on to greater heights with the encouragement and support of the EA.

What are some challenges you face in your job?

Outreach is the greatest challenge; as the Eurasian community in Singapore is small, it is essential for the community to know about the EA, as we can render support and assistance where needed. Our aim is to reach out to more students, especially those who are most in need.

How many Eurasians are on some education-related scheme, scholarship or bursary?

Each year at the Eurasian Community Fund (ECF) Education Awards, some 200 students receive bursaries; in total, there are about 400 students who are involved in the EA Education Programme.

Temple offers help to the needy

Five Eurasian children recently benefited from the Sree Ramar Temple's Bursary Award Scheme that assists primary school children from low-income families with their school expenses.

The temple, a staunch advocator of racial and religious harmony, launched its award scheme in 2008 and last year offered help to 300 needy families, of which 40 per cent were non-Hindus. The temple partners with all the self-help groups to disburse the bursaries.

The total sum awarded will be about \$45,000 and 300 students will be expected to benefit from this disbursement in the year 2011.

The SRT Bursary Awards Ceremony was held on 5 December at the Grassroots Club and Abdullah Tarmugi, Speaker of Parliament, was the guest of honour.



First university scholarship award

As part of its mission to encourage more Eurasians into higher education, the EA has set up a new scholarship to help provide a university place for deserving students. The first scholarship has been awarded to Christopher Andrade, who is a first-year student of Mechanical Engineering at the National University of Singapore.



Bargain bytes

Low-cost computers are available for families in need



Students and people with disabilities from low-income families can have the chance to own a computer, thanks to the NEU PC Plus programme, run by the IDA, which distributes the computers via agents such as the EA.

The programme provides a new computer bundled with software and a free three-year broadband subscription at affordable prices. Applications are welcome from students on the MOE FAS [Financial Assistance Scheme], who can choose from three desktops and five laptops, from entry level to mid range, at prices ranging from \$176 to \$347. Between January and November 2010, the EA received four applications.

To qualify, you must meet the following criteria:

- you must be a Singapore citizen or Permanent Resident;
- you must be a full-time student at a government/government-aided school, junior college, centralised institute, independent school, Institute of Technical Education, polytechnic or MOE-funded special education school;
- your household should not have a working computer;
- each eligible household can apply for one computer only;
- for households with students receiving assistance under MOE FAS, the gross monthly household income must not exceed \$1,800, or the per capita monthly income must not exceed \$500;
- for other households, the gross monthly household income must not exceed \$2,500, or the per capita monthly income must not exceed \$625 (or \$875 if there is a disabled family member);
- if you have previously obtained a new PC under the NEU PC or NEU PC Plus Programme, it must be at least four years ago.

For more information and to apply, contact Jacqueline Peeris at 6447 1578 or jacqueline@eurasians.org

The joys of Christmas

Christmas may be widely celebrated in Singapore as a secular trend, but it holds a special meaning for the mostly Christian Eurasian community. Rachel Chen looks back at the traditions of the Eurasian Christmas





For Eurasians of all generations Christmas is the most important celebration of the year. As Christians (mostly Catholics), Eurasians share the spiritual significance of the birth of Christ.

Inevitably, increasing prosperity has meant that treats once reserved for festive occasions are now affordable around the year. But a few generations ago, the religious rituals of Christmas were accompanied by once-a-year treats.

In even the most humble homes, a Christmas tree was present and Eurasian children wrote letters to Santa Claus and hung up stockings for him to fill.

According to Evelyn Leicester-Rodrigues in *Singapore Eurasians - Memories and Hopes*, preparations for Christmas began as early as November, which was when schools closed.

In the same book, Francesca Eber recalls kitchen preparations beginning even earlier - in October - when the scent of curry powders for mulligatawny and feng in Eurasian households was an early sign of the approaching festive season. Just a few generations ago, most foods were prepared from scratch.

As clothing was not mass produced and readily available off the rack, as it is now and mothers and daughters would pore over fashion magazines in search of dress patterns that they would then take to Indian tailors.

Leicester-Rodrigues writes of a salesman named Mr Lim who rode a scooter taking fabric and material to all Eurasian family homes. He knew every Eurasian family and what they would be wearing for Christmas. Using shrewd salesmanship to increase competition between Eurasian women and encourage his sales, he would point out certain fabrics that "sold like hotcakes".

Like the Chinese obsession surrounding cleanliness and newness for Chinese New Year, Christmas for Eurasians was a time to ensure that everything in the house was sparkling. This meant freshly painted walls and new cushions and curtains.

Leicester-Rodrigues writes that it was common for women keeping their windows closed during the week leading up to Christmas - for fear of other women copying their new furnishings.

In less well-off families, where not everything could be brand new, clothes were often hand-me-downs. However, some small new items

would still be purchased, such as belts, socks, pyjamas or handkerchiefs. These new items brought tremendous joy to their recipients.

As most Eurasians are Catholic, the traditional Midnight Mass held on Christmas Eve was a big event for many. Parishioners had to fast for six hours before receiving Holy Communion at the Mass.

While parents attended Mass, their children stayed at home with strict instructions - like children throughout the Santa-believing world - to go to sleep early or risk Santa Claus not arriving with his presents.

Leicester-Rodrigues commented in *Memories and Hopes* that "in my family, the Santa myth was so strong that children often left a plate of biscuits and a glass of water near the bed 'in case he got hungry'".

Mass concluded at about 2am, with parishioners wishing the priest *Bong Natal* (Merry Christmas) and kissing his hands, a custom that is no longer practised.

At home, supper awaited the whole family, usually consisting of mulligatawny soup (a colonial Indian dish and Eurasian classic), teem soup (containing snow pear and often pork), chicken pies, hams and wine.

"When I was a child, Christmas celebrations at our house were pretty standard. I was always too tired to stay up 'til 2am for presents, and we never got to see Santa Claus. As for presents, I didn't always get what I wanted! I wanted guns and train sets, but there would be this uncle who got me books year after year. I was a voracious reader and had a strong interest in books, and this uncle would always get me books that were just slightly above my reading level to encourage me to read. It has paid off, as I am very fond of reading!"

— Burton Westerhout



It was also the time the children woke up and opened their presents from Santa - after what had seemed an eternity of waiting.

Later in the day, on Christmas itself, families enjoyed a traditional Christmas lunch of Western dishes, such as roast turkey, duck, goose, ham, mince pies, trifles and puddings, along with Eurasian favourites such as curry devil, feng, suggee cake and pineapple tarts.

According to Leicester-Rodrigues, there was another important ritual. Along with other Commonwealth countries, "a special time was set aside to listen to the King's Christmas message on the BBC".

After Christmas, it was time to start economising again. According to Francesca Eber in *Memories and Hopes*, curry devil was also eaten on Boxing Day. The dish was made from all leftovers from the roasted meat dishes consumed the day before and ham bone was also used to make dhal curry.

WARM words



While traditional Christmas cards show cosy scenes of Yuletide spent round a cosy log fire with picturesque snow scenes outside the window, the reality for many people in Christendom's colder climes is central heating radiators on full blast against the cold, while grey, dull rain or slushy snow makes the outside an inhospitable place to be.

Eurasian singer Trevor Nerva believes you can't beat Yuletide here and has penned his take on the delights of Christmas in the sun:

The Tropical Christmas Song (No Snow? It Doesn't Bother Me)

No snow? It doesn't bother me
I'd rather sit beneath the coconut tree
And dream about the fun and food and my friends
That make up our tropical Christmas

No holly? It doesn't bother me
We'll pick a branch to make our Christmas tree
And sing along to carols on the stereo
Let's get ready for a tropical Christmas

No need to bundle up in winter clothes
The sun will be shining all day
And you might see Santa make a real big splash
As he water skis right out in the bay

No mistletoe? It doesn't bother me
I still get kisses from friends and family
As we give thanks for the love we share
And celebrate our tropical Christmas

No turkey? It doesn't bother me
Mrs Cardoza made us some mulligatawny
And Nan's in the kitchen cooking up a storm
To add to our tropical Christmas

The taste of curry devil and some real good feng
Are enough to blow my mind
A piece of suggee cake with a glass of wine
Is all we need for a jolly good time

No snow? It doesn't bother me
We'll still be partying at a quarter past three
'Cos we love to be together at this time of the year
There's nothing like a tropical Christmas!

— Lyrics & Music by
Trevor Nerva and Julie Sim

"The Christmas memory that stands out for me the most is when I served as an altar boy for Midnight Mass for the very first time. I was one of 16 altar boys at the Cathedral of the Good Shepherd. At almost nine years old, I was the youngest altar boy. My father was a chief warden of the church, and being his son, I was pushed to the forefront to take on this role. I was the altar boy for another good five years or so. I'll never forget the first time I wore a red cassock and white surplice"

— Lionel de Souza

Light hearted

The EA and SRC renew their historic ties at Christmas

The EA and the Singapore Recreation Club (SRC) got into the Christmas spirit early when they held their first joint Christmas tree light-up at the club's Padang premises on 12 November.

Representing the EA, Vice President Benett Theseira lit the tree in the lobby. SRC President Dr Johnny Goh then hung a red bauble and Benett a gold bauble below a blue ribbon on the tree, representing unity (the SRC colours being red, gold and blue and the EA's blue and gold).

Benett and EA member Terence Shepherdson, who also chairs the SRC Games Control Board, gave speeches that reflected on the ties between the two organisations.

The ceremony was followed by a Christmas-themed buffet dinner plus carols with Trevor Nerva and Emilie Oehlers, SRC stalwarts Lynn & the Lovebirds (the SRC's resident band), and a dance performance by teenage sisters Germaine and Jaslyn Gan from Gaylin Music & Dance Studio.

The close links between the EA and the SRC date back to 1883, when 30 Eurasians founded it as the first Eurasian club (for men only). In 1963, it opened its membership to non-Eurasians. Many Eurasian athletes honed their sporting talents there, including seven SRC hockey players who represented at the 1956 Melbourne Olympics. Today, the SRC is one of the EA's key external partners.



All in the mind

Student David Monkman is intrigued by how our minds work and is currently studying psychology. Here, he tells *The New Eurasian* how a stint as an intern with the EA's Family Support Services showed him how academic theory can translate into practice



CDCs and the various schemes available such as financial and work support programmes.

I also attended a workshop organised by MCYS on low-income households. This is a research project to expand understanding of such households in Singapore, and examines self-reliance in the lowest income group.

What made you choose to study psychology?

Many things in my life have influenced me to study psychology. I keep in contact with friends from England and noticed that my peers' upbringing differed drastically to my own. Some of my friends dropped out of school, some had problems with drugs, some with teenage pregnancy. I realised I didn't know how to help them and that made me feel somewhat helpless.

I'm particularly interested in sport psychology, due to my football background. I'm really interested in how players mentally prepare themselves for a game using visualisation. Criminal psychology also intrigues me. I'm interested in why people are motivated to commit crimes. Temasek Polytechnic started offering psychology studies for the first time in 2008, and I decided to major in it.

What career plans do you have after you graduate from Temasek Polytechnic?

After National Service, I would like to further my studies with a degree in either counselling or child psychology in the UK.

For half a day I was also attached to the Southeast CDC. I attended a half-day orientation that explained the process and set-up of the

The task ahead



The EA's FSS volunteers gathered at the ECH in November to learn about the work ahead in 2011. Many brought a friend in the hope of recruiting another member to the team.

EA member Christian Eber opened the meeting with a speech on volunteering, backed by examples of his own experiences during the year, and the guests were motivated by quotes on the empowerment that volunteering brings.

Francesca Eber, who chairs the FSS, introduced the new FSS committee, and outlined the contributions made by the department this year, using statistics to explain the unemployment and health problems that FSS clients faced. She then explained how the EA's money was allocated to financial assistance and food rations for clients.

After tea, Nazli Anwar gave a talk on the benefits of healthy eating. The meeting ended with everybody singing Josh Groban's motivational hit song, *You Raise Me Up*.

Happy campers

Eurasian student, 15-year-old Ida de Vierno, recently took part in a three-day camp to help build racial harmony. The annual event – Campteen: Youth Racial Harmony Ambassadors Programme – is organised by OnePeople.sg.

Held at MOE Labrador Adventure Centre from 27 to 30 November, Campteen enabled budding ambassadors to learn through hands-on experience; they visited heritage sites, took part in brainstorming sessions and embarked on community project plans, collaborating to present their findings. The event also gave students the chance to socialise with fellow students who shared similar passion and interests.

Ida, a pupil at Singapore Sports School, received the Meritorious Eurasian Sports Student 2009 award at the EA's Education Awards earlier this year.

She says: "Campteen was definitely an unforgettable experience. Even though I was the only

one from my school there and did not know anyone, I did not feel left out. Everyone there was very friendly.

"One of the most enjoyable experiences was the 'campfire' – although there was no fire as it was raining and it had to be held indoors, it was still fun. Each group had to present a performance; and the most exciting part was when music was played and everyone started dancing.

"Even a week after the camp, everyone was still chatting on Facebook and the group that I was in has even made plans to meet every month."



EA MYLN New Year's Dinner Party

Calling all young aspiring Eurasian professionals, pre-tertiary and tertiary students out there!

The EA Mentoring Young Leaders Network (MYLN) will be hosting its annual New Year's Dinner Party on 29 January 2011 from 7pm.

Usher in the new year with the group and you'll meet fellow like-minded Eurasians with a passion for all things new and exciting!

The party will be held at the Platinum Lounge at the ECH and food and entertainment will be provided.

Get your 2011 diary off to a good start by giving your RSVP to ea.myln@gmail.com as early as possible to confirm your seat at the dinner table.

Early seasonal cheer



The hampers were sponsored by DHL



Helen Joseph and Moe Alkaff



EA Trustee Timothy de Souza joins in the table games



Santa's little helpers served the turkeys

Clients of the EA's Family Support Services enjoyed an extra gift at Christmas – a slap-up Christmas lunch and party to launch the festive season.

Nearly 100 FSS clients, who represent members of the Eurasian community currently receiving aid from the EA, joined some 45 friends of the FSS, including students from the International Singapore School, to feast on roast turkey, ham, achar, vegetables, and a cheesecake dessert. The host of each table carved the turkey.

MC Moe Alkaff led the entertainment, which included Cedric Sahethapy, Don Richmond, John Molina and the choir and piano quintet from St Nicholas Girls School.

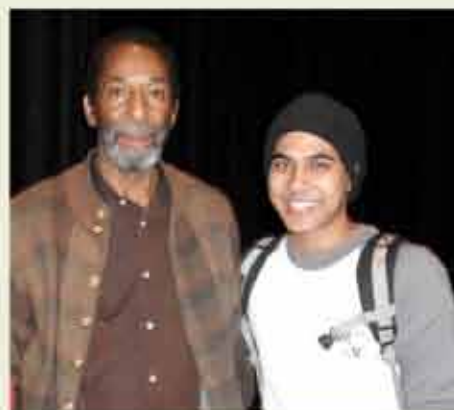
There's further good news for FSS clients. Under the GST Payout Package (which exists to help with the increase in GST), more than 200 FSS clients, including some care-givers, will receive a one-time financial payment. Another 140 households will also receive hampers in December. The GST Payout Package is in its third year of the five-year project. Delivery service DHL has kindly sponsored 130 cartons for the 130 households receiving the hampers.



The final sing-along

Sound ambitions

Eurasian guitarist Nikhil Hogan is on a mission not just to entertain, but to use music to help people with physical and psychological difficulties to overcome their problems



Nikhil Hogan meets celebrated bass guitarist Ron Carter

Twenty-five year old Nikhil Hogan is studying at the Berklee College of Music in Boston, known worldwide for its contemporary and jazz teaching. You may remember his stunning guitar performance at the EA's *Eurasiana: A Musical Tribute* gala held at the Esplanade in 2009.

Nikhil started his musical career at the age of nine, taking lessons as a classical guitarist and laying a solid foundation for his craft. During National Service, he discovered the music of renowned Australian guitarist Tommy Emmanuel (whom he was later to meet many times and receive informal, personal tutoring) – and also a passion for jazz. He took lessons with Singapore's most noted jazz guitarist Tony Danker and renowned musician Alex Abisheganaden, practising for at least five hours a day.

He decided he wanted to make a career of his passion and enrolled at the International College of Music (ICOM) in Kuala Lumpur, an institution twinned with the US's Berklee. Nikhil's parents supported his ambitions, but insisted he studied for a degree. They funded his studies for two years at ICOM, making financial sacrifices along the way, in order to pay part of his education. In addition, Nikhil received support from the Eurasian Association, and generous friends and the Lee Foundation topped up his fees.

And while we will undoubtedly hear a lot more of Nikhil and his music, his plans are not only to be a performer but to use his talents to be a music therapist, an occupation that is

still largely unknown in Singapore. This uses music to reach out to people who have certain physical, mental or psychological problems.

Nikhil says he chose Berklee because, "it is the best contemporary music school in the world and their music therapy department is probably the best in the United States as well".

"The music therapy programme in Berklee is extremely comprehensive," he says. "For practical training, we have to complete five separate practicums [courses] at five separate sites, including a special education setting, geriatric facility, research module, psychiatric facility and hospital setting. In addition, there is rigorous coursework and academic reading to complete." Afterwards, students need to complete an internship of more than 1,000 hours at an approved site. Finally, there is the examination conducted by the American Music Therapy Association to pass before being certified as a music therapist.

So why choose music therapy instead of the usual routes of performing and/or teaching? "The reality is that majoring in performance will not guarantee a successful career in performance," Nikhil points out. "The trouble with a degree in music is that it is difficult to quantify a musician's artistic ability with a piece of paper. A record label isn't particularly interested in one's qualifications as musician. They are more interested in your demographic appeal, your fan size, your material, your image and so on. A degree in performance would however be useful in an academic setting."

He adds: "Music therapy is probably the most exciting field to be in right now. In a country of about five million people, I believe that

Feel the beat!

Learn to play electric guitar, bass guitar and drums with Joe Ferdinands at the EA.

Classes are held from Mondays to Fridays at the Eurasian Community House, Level 4 studio, 139 Ceylon Road.

All ages are welcome to join although ages

What is music therapy?

Music therapy is used with people of all ages and with a variety of conditions, from psychiatric disorders, medical problems, physical handicaps, sensory impairments and developmental disabilities to substance abuse, communication disorders, interpersonal problems and ageing. People undergoing therapy either listen to music, sing or play an instrument and these activities are used to improve learning, build self-esteem, reduce stress, support physical exercise and facilitate a host of other health-related activities.

Music therapists are found in nearly every area of the caring professions. Some commonly found practices include: developmental work with children with special needs (such as communication and motor skills); relaxation and processing information with the elderly; trauma treatment for combat related injuries; and rhythmic physical rehabilitation in heart disease and stroke victims.

Music therapists have traditionally worked with survivors of different types of trauma. But they are increasingly being involved in providing services to civilian and military war survivors and people traumatised by acts of violent crime and terrorism.

there are fewer than 15 music therapists in Singapore. I do believe there is a market for this, and done properly, it will help a lot of people. Once I graduate, I plan to return to Singapore and set up a private music therapy practice with the intention of popularising music therapy in the region."

What advice would he offer aspiring musicians who want to pursue a music education abroad? "As a music degree is only the start, it is important to know from the beginning how you are going to use your degree to earn money in the future," says Nikhil. "Plan out your future as early as possible, and be realistic with yourself every step of the way. While it is important to have a dream, it is equally important to know how you are going to realise it."



nine and 10 are a good time to start. Group and individual lessons are available. The level 4 studio is also available for jam sessions at \$16 per hour.

For more information on classes and/or studio booking, contact Joe Ferdinands at 9691 2891 or joe.ferdinands@gmail.com.

Eurasians in the Heartlands

The EA will be travelling throughout the island to familiarise fellow Singaporeans with Eurasian roots and culture. Spearheaded by the Heritage Sub-committee, a mobile exhibition will visit various community centres and schools to spread the word about the Eurasian community.

The heart of the exhibition is a set of seven portable panels with information derived from the Eurasian showcase exhibit at the Eurasian Community House (ECH), which was funded by the National Heritage Board, and originally used for HeritageFest 2010 in August. The roadshow will also include samples of Eurasian cuisine, handicrafts and literature.

The programme kicked off at the Marine Parade Community two-day festival in October to celebrate the 50th anniversary

of the Peoples Association; the EA was the only community group participating and so enjoyed good exposure. Guest-of-honour Senior Minister Goh Chok Tong spent some time visiting the section and sampling Eurasian cuisine.

The EA is also taking the roadshow to some schools. The first was Cedar Girls Secondary School, whose pupils enjoyed a welcome change from maths and English, when the EA visited the school on 20 October for the National Education Carnival.

For three hours in the morning, the EA took over a classroom, where Eurasian heritage panels, costumes, handicrafts were displayed. In addition to learning about the culture, delighted students were also treated to a sugge cake sampling.



Sugge cake - a Eurasian favourite



Guest of Honour Senior Minister Goh Chok Tong samples Eurasian cuisine



Learning about a culture through its food



Burton Westerhout makes a point



The EA roadshow



Cedar Girls Secondary School pupils inspect some handicrafts



EA dancers put on a show

Sharing our history

Two generous authors have donated copies of their Eurasian history books to the EA, which the association will sell to raise funds



Joan Marbeck (centre) with EA members during her visit

Mission statement

Author James Boss has donated to the EA 1,000 copies of his book, *The Portuguese Mission in Singapore (1825-1999): St. Joseph's Church*. The book traces the origins of the Portuguese Mission in Singapore and the establishment of St Joseph's Church in 1825, and discusses the role of St Joseph's Church in Catholic life in Singapore from the colonial years through to Independence. It was officially launched at the EA on 12 December with Minister George Yeo as guest of honour.

The author is a research scientist in the field of biomedical engineering. In 2007, he was knighted by Rome the Sovereign Military Hospitaller Order of St John of Jerusalem of Rhodes and Malta. The following year he was awarded the Gusi Peace Prize for his contributions to science and technology.

He is also listed in the 2010 edition of *Marquis Who's Who in the World* and is chairman of the Parish Pastoral Council of St Joseph's Church.

Sharing a language

Malaccan-Eurasian author Joan Marbeck, a passionate conservationist of the Eurasian language, visited the ECH on 26 October to present her *Kristang Phrasebook* and *Linggu Mai (Mother-Tongue) - A Kristang Keepsake*, book and CD package together with a coffee table book entitled *Digi's Amazing Heritage*, in which she was featured as an 'Amazing Malaysian' in 2007.

A retired music teacher, Joan's passion for preserving the Kristang language can be seen in the several Kristang language books she has written. Having travelled and researched the subject extensively, she is determined to keep the language alive and documents it with as much detail as possible.

Her first Kristang publication, *Ungua Adanza (An Inheritance)* has become a valuable addition to Portuguese studies in schools and universities throughout the world.

Joan also provides Kristang language lessons to those interested in learning this unique but diminishing creole language, which is spoken by some 5,000 speakers in Malacca and about 400 in Singapore.

The Melaka Museums Corporation has also invited her to be a board member and assist in the establishment of a Melaka Eurasian museum.

Among Joan's other contributions to the preservation of Kristang is *Seng Marianne (Without Marianne)*, a Kristang-English monodrama, which she has suggested the EA stage as part of the 2011 celebrations of the 500th anniversary of Portuguese settlement in South-east Asia.

Can you speak Kristang?

Among Joan Marbeck's book for sale is her phrase book. Would you have been able to guess the means of the following phrases?

Bong pamiang (Good morning)
Bong dia (Good morning/day)
Bang anoti (Goodnight)
Mutu mersih (Thank you)
Kantu tantu, mas bong (The more, the merrier)
Yo teng fomi (I am hungry)
Yo kereh unga kopi di cah (I would like a cup of tea)
Mia mai! (My goodness!)
Rakuah di kaminyu (Get out of my way)
Ubida grandt (Adept at listening to gossip)
Tomah pa bos (Take that, you deserve that, serves you right)



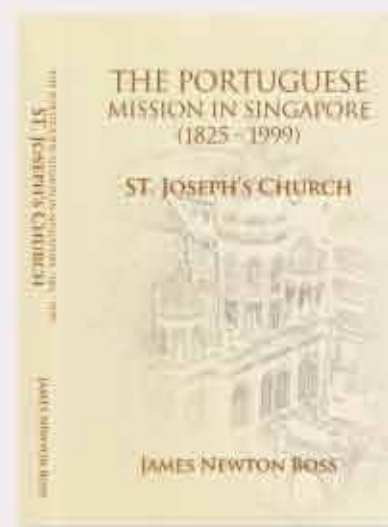
Stories from the past

The following books on regional history and culture are among a selection for sale at the EA

The Portuguese Mission in Singapore (1825-1999): St. Joseph's Church, by James Boss, special discount price of \$15.00 (This discounted price is available until 12 February 2011, after which it will cost \$20.00.)

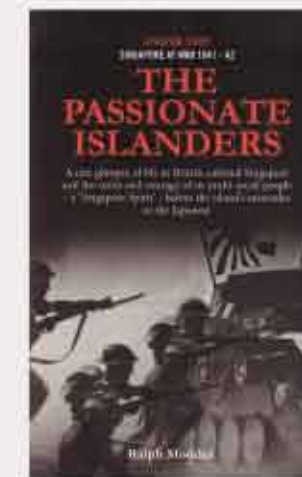
In his foreword to the book, Archbishop Nicholas Chia says: "In this book, the journey begins by tracing the origins of the presence of the Portuguese Mission in Singapore leading to the establishment of St. Joseph Church.

It delves in to precise details of the ups and downs encountered during and after the building of St. Joseph's Church, including a vivid description of the church architectural design and the statues and altars that stood in the Church. It also chronicles the names of clergymen who had served in the Church from the day it was founded till the day the governance of the Church was transferred to the Archbishop of Singapore. On the sociological front, it discusses the evolution and role of St. Joseph's Church in Catholic life in Singapore, spanning from a colonial society all the way through to post-independence Singapore."



The Passionate Islanders, by Ralph Modder \$25.00

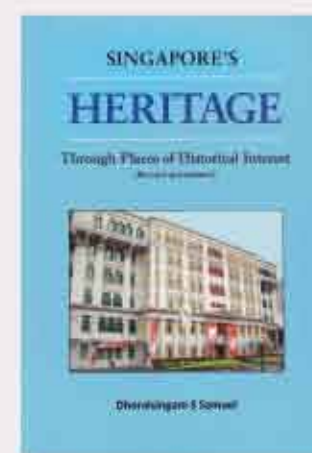
Singapore-Eurasian journalist and screenplay writer Ralph Modder's new book, *The Passionate Islanders*, is a rare glimpse of life in British colonial Singapore and the unity and courage of its people in the face of the Japanese Occupation. Ralph Modder is also the author of *The Red Cheongsam and Other Old Tales of Malaya and Singapore*, also for sale at the EA.



Singapore's Heritage Through Places of Historical Interest, by Dhoraisingam S Samuel, \$40.00

This is a collection of stories behind places of historical interest in Singapore, many of which are iconic landmarks integral to our collective history and rich culture. It includes a six-page chapter about the EA's current Eurasian Community House at 139 Ceylon Road as well as a brief history of Singapore Eurasians and the association.

Other places of interest to Eurasians mentioned in the book include the Catholic churches built by the Portuguese Mission in Singapore, the Singapore Recreation Club (SRC), St Joseph's Institution, St Patrick's School, the Kranji State Cemetery, where Dr Benjamin Sheares is buried, and the Straits Settlements Volunteer Corps' Drill Hall (where the Eurasian Volunteer Headquarters was held).

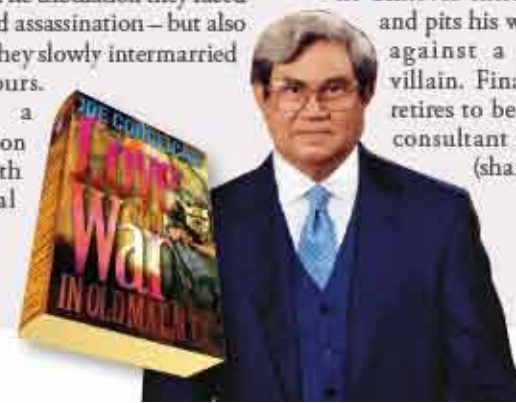


War and Love in Old Malacca, by Joe Conceicao (Price to be confirmed)

Malay and other hostile forces periodically assailed the Malacca fortress after the Portuguese occupied it in 1511. The people in Old Malacca lived amid war and violence. Slowly they befriended many of those who had been their foes. The tribulation they faced included murder and assassination – but also stirring romance. They slowly intermarried with their neighbours. And became a 'Kristang' population of mixed descent, with their own cultural attributes.

Sang Dol, by Joe Conceicao (Price to be confirmed)

Sang Dol is a Malay hero whose story begins with Parameswara, who founded Malacca at the turn over the 14th and 15th centuries. *Sang Dol's* exploits take him from Malacca to China and the Spice Islands and even near Africa. As one adventure follows another, he becomes wiser and wlier. Eventually, he achieves extraordinary spiritual powers, and pits his wits and wisdom successfully against a satanic villain. Finally, he retires to become a consultant dukun (shaman).



Bag a bargain book

The EA has a large selection of books written by Eurasians or about Eurasian life including history, culture, cookbooks and more. The association will be holding a book fair on 12 March 2011 at the ECH, when all books will be on sale at 25 per cent discount!

For more information on this and the above books, please contact Jacqueline Peeris at 6447 1578 or jacqueline@eurasians.org



Going down...



...still going down

Pints of pleasure

If Eurasians can't add a local twist to European culture, who can?

On 17 October, curry devil was upstaged for once as German-style sausages and pork knuckle were served up in addition to the usual Eurasian fare in celebration of the annual Oktoberfest. The restaurant was decked with a big German flag, Erdinger beer bunting and festive tablecloths.

To add to the occasion, there were stalls selling suggee cakes, curry puffs, pang susi and pickles as well as clothing and handicrafts.

Guest entertainer Joerge Hahn sang German and English songs while a tombola and the 'guess the number of sausages in the jar' provided a chance to get lucky. A card draw provided further prizes donated by Quentin Pereira and members of the Social Circle.

The liveliest event was the beer drinking contest where three sporting ladies downed beer as fast as they could to cheers from the crowd. Then it was the men's turn to drink a yard of ale – a tricky feat that needs careful timing if you don't want to be doused in beer. The winners from both categories were probably relieved to find the prize was not more beer – but a bottle of wine each.



Social Circle member, Gwen Ong, with a guest

Bill Hansen and a prize winner

Rolling over



Balut players at the trophy table

The last roll of the dice was made, the final scores totted up – and Pearlín Velge emerged champion of the 2010 EA balut tournament.

The final match began with dinner, after which it was every player for himself or herself to battle for the highest scores.

The top three winners for the whole year were determined by their best six months scores from eight rounds. Pearlín won with 3,649 points, followed by Yvonne Pereira with 3,633 points, and Helen Joseph in third place with 3,626. Evelyn Rodrigues presented the trophies.

Yvonne, the EA's balut section advisor, said: "We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to Evelyn Rodrigues and Quentin Pereira for their generous donations and support throughout the year, to the EA secretariat and to Therese Thompson for being such an efficient convenor. And to the baluteers for keeping the section active."

"It was a long and exciting night and many people were sad that the tournament had ended – and that they'll have to wait until 2011 to play again!"



Winners Yvonne Pereira, Pearlín Velge and Helen Joseph



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Best Western sponsors New Year's Eve Ball prizes

Guests at the EA's New Year's Eve Ball 2010 stand to win terrific prizes, thanks to sponsorship from Best Western, the largest hotel chain in the world. Through its Bangkok-based regional vice-president, Glenn de Souza, the company has generously sponsored no fewer than six holiday packages for the ball's lucky draw prizes.

Each package comprises return air fare and three-night hotel stay with American breakfast for two at: Bali (2 prizes); Phuket (2 prizes); Bangkok (2 prizes).

In addition, Best Western has also responded to the EA's donation appeal by taking up two

premium tables worth a total of \$6,000 at the event.

To guests at the party – good luck. To Best Western and Glenn de Souza – many thanks for the generous support. We wish you a Happy New Year.



Celebrating in style

What a night! Guests at the EA Social Circle's early Christmas dinner and dance on 4 December gave whole-hearted support to the event and celebrated the festive season with a bang.

Even before the meal was over, dancers were on the floor grooving to the music of band M.S.G.

The evening included carol singing and party games galore. A 12-piece fruit cake hamper, baked by Pamela Menon, went to the table whose diners correctly sang *The Twelve Days of Christmas*, while Dorothy Tessensohn's suggee cake decorated with red poinsettias went to a lucky prize draw winner.

On 11th December, The EA's annual Children's Christmas Treat came complete with Father Christmas – and even a traditional 'fireplace', through whose chimney Santa no doubt arrived earlier with the goodies he brought to present to each child.

The youngsters, who also included children from the CDAC and Mendaki self-help groups, were treated to a fun-filled afternoon with entertainment by 'Professor Popcorn', which included a magic show, balloon sculpting and a ventriloquist act, in addition to other fun activities.

Meanwhile, their parents were equally busy playing tombola, shopping at the various stalls for food and Christmas items or chilling out to the sounds of the EA's Trevor Nerva, Jude Paul and Gerard Danker at their own Family Christmas Carnival on the ground level of the ECH.

