

# THE NEW EURASIAN

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JANUARY – MARCH 2012



## Eurasians Home and Away

The diaspora across  
the world

### PLUS

#### 500 YEARS ON...

Celebrating the Portuguese settlement in Malacca

#### DEFINING MOMENTS

Top civil servant Stanley Stewart played a key role in Singapore's and Malaysia's history

#### A CUT ABOVE

Get fit – and learn about mediaeval history – with swordsmanship

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## THE NEWEURASIAN

The magazine of The Eurasian Association, Singapore

*The NewEurasian* 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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# President's *Message*



In this issue of *The NewEurasian*, we conclude a series in which we focus on the legacy of colonisation 500 years after the Portuguese first landed in Malacca. We started out in the July-September 2011 issue with story on the events and conditions leading up to the Portuguese settlement in Malacca and South-east Asia in 1511.

In the October-December 2011 issue, we focused on what it means to have a Eurasian identity in the 20th century. This issue brings us to the Eurasian diaspora – the dispersion and migration patterns of Eurasians in Singapore after World War II. We look at why Eurasians have spread themselves out all over the globe, and what this means for the future of Singapore Eurasians.

In November, we held a hugely enjoyable charity golfing tournament and were honoured that, once again, Emeritus Senior Minister Goh Chok Tong agreed to grace the event. We are greatly indebted to him for giving up his time to support us. In addition, I would also like to thank our many generous sponsors, the organising committee led by Vincent Schoon, and everybody who helped to make it a great day. Most importantly, the tournament raised a substantial sum that will contribute greatly to the EA's valuable work (see page 5).

We're looking forward to an exciting and momentous event in March – the Eurasian

Reunion 2012, which the Singapore EA is organising, which will bring Eurasians from all over the region to Singapore.

The event will take place on the 23 and 24 March and include a conference, the opening of the Eurasian Heritage Centre at the Eurasian Community House, tours of significant cultural and heritage sites in Singapore, and a gala dinner. For more details, please see page 6.

We are all very enthusiastic and excited about doing a reunion of this scale for the first time, and hope that new bonds will be forged, and a good time will be had by all.

Lastly, I would like to extend my thanks and gratitude to the hardworking members of the Management Committee, the EA Secretariat, and EA volunteers, for their tireless efforts and hard work that they have contributed during the year 2011. We look forward to even greater achievements in the coming year.

Best wishes,

**William (Bill) Jansen,**  
*President*

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# Swing into Action

The Eurasian community's golfers must surely have been getting in some secret extra practice at the driving range before putting their swing to the test in the presence of Emeritus Senior Minister Goh Chok Tong in November. Mr Goh was guest of honour at the The Eurasian Association Charity Golf at Warren Golf and Country Club – the third occasion he has graced the event.

A hundred EA golfers and their friends took part in the tournament, helping to raise more than \$150,000 for the EA – which will support

EA's programmes, the general running of the administration and the maintenance of the Eurasian Community House.

Corporate and individual sponsors, volunteers from the EA's Social Circle and the entire secretariat plus Vincent, Jennifer and Richard Schoon generously contributed to the memorable day.

Gerard Danker and MSG provided the music for the post-tournament festivities at the '19th hole'.



Emeritus Senior Minister Goh Chok Tong with his team



Tan Soo Nan, CEO of Singapore Pools, and his team



Emeritus Senior Minister Goh in action



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## Singapore to Host Eurasian Conference and Reunion

The EA is to host a reunion on Friday 23 and Saturday 24 March for Eurasians from all over the region. A highlight of the event will be the grand opening on the Friday of the new Eurasian Heritage Centre, which promises to be the foremost centre for Eurasian history in the region.

The programme of events will begin with a reception at the Singapore Recreation Club followed by a welcome address and buffet lunch. Guests will be given a tour of the Asian Civilisations Museum followed by a coach trip to the Eurasian Community House, where they will tour the newly opened Heritage Centre. A dinner and cultural performance will be held in the evening.

The following day will feature a conference comprising separate sessions and a panel discussion. Topics will include *Eurasians in the 21st Century*, which will discuss the future of the Eurasian community. A gala dinner, with musical performances, will be held in the evening at the Singapore Recreation Club.

*For further information about the conference, please contact Daniel Chong, tel 6447 1578 or daniel@eurasians.org.*

## News in brief

### Visit the Eurasian Association's Portuguese Exhibit

A special Portuguese exhibit, a collaboration between the National Heritage Board and the EA, has just opened at the Eurasian Community House.

The event will run for two months before being converted to the expanded Roots of Our Community Gallery.

Members, their family and friends are welcome to visit. Opening hours are between 9am and 6pm, seven days a week, including public holidays.

### Brush up your Mandarin!

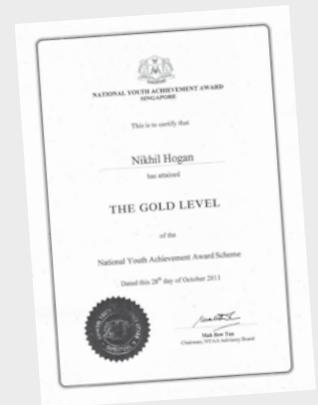
The EA is offering a 10-week intermediate course in Mandarin on Saturdays between 3.30pm and 5pm at the Eurasian Community House. The course fee will be \$350. Classes will begin only when there is a minimum class size, but is expected to start on 11 February.

*For enquiries and registration, contact Jacqueline Peeris at 6447 1578 or jacqueline@eurasians.org*

### Musician's Youth Achievement Award

Singapore Eurasian Nik Hogan received the Gold Award in the National Youth Achievement Awards in October, the equivalent of the Duke of Edinburgh Awards.

His parents collected the certificate from President Tony Tan on his behalf as Nik is still in Boston, USA, where he completed a music degree.



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Photo: Courtesy of The Straits Times

## A Man of Many Words

Singapore Eurasian Warren Fernandez has been appointed to the country's most influential job in newspaper journalism: editor of *The Straits Times*. Here, he talks to the Eurasian Association about his career and why good journalism is important

Since he was a school boy, Warren Fernandez has been fascinated about what is happening around the world – and how we get to hear about it. At the age of 15, he was reading *The Straits Times* and *The Economist*, captivated by the insights they gave – and in language that was crisp and clear. He recalls: “I wanted to write like that too.”

He edited the in-house newspaper at both St Joseph's Institution and Hwa Chong Junior College and when he left college in the mid 1980s, he took up a tutor's suggestion that he approach *The Straits Times* to ask them to sponsor his university education. He did so, suggesting the paper set up a scholarship programme as part of its efforts to attract talent and groom them for journalism.

“I needed help as my family could not afford to pay for me to go abroad for my university education. I had taken the Oxbridge entrance programme and won a place at Trinity College, Oxford. So I needed to get the funds to take this up,” he says.

“A good journalist has a natural curiosity about the world and cares about what's happening around him”

*The Straits Times* interviewed him. It also eventually agreed to his bold suggestion and made him the first Singapore Press Holdings Undergraduate scholarship recipient.

When he returned from his studies in the UK, he asked to join the Foreign Desk. “The HR department decided otherwise, and sent me to the Political Desk. Ten years later,

I would finally join the Foreign Desk, as foreign editor, overseeing the paper's network of correspondents. That was one job I had aspired to all along,” he says.

Journalism is anything but a nine-to-five job. Working on the 1997 general elections required long hours and near-impossible deadlines: “It was an exciting and demanding job; you had to figure out what the story was, structure and write it – all in less than an hour,” he recalls.

His work has taken him to much of the world he has written about. “I used to go on many overseas assignments, which were always interesting and fun – in the 1990s, I travelled with Mr Lee Kuan Yew (then Senior Minister) when he made his annual visits to the Suzhou industrial park project, to see how it was progressing. I recall one briefing by a Chinese official to Mr Lee. We were all standing on the Bund, and the official was pointing to the reclaimed land across the river and describing the plans to build a new downtown there. Ten years later, when I visited Shanghai, I was stunned to see gleaming skyscrapers across the river, where the barren reclaimed land once was. Other trips took me to the Great Hall in Beijing, the United Nations in New York for its 50th anniversary celebrations, and the World Economic Forum conferences in Davos, Switzerland.

Warren has also authored several books – *Lee Kuan Yew: the Man and His Ideas*; *Without Fear or Favour: 50 years of the Public Service Commission*; *Thinking Allowed? Politics, Fear and Change in Singapore*; and *Men for Others*, about St Joseph's Institution's illustrious alumni. And he was part of the team that

“Lee Kuan Yew had the clear purpose of recounting the Singapore story as he saw it to a younger generation”

worked on Mr Lee's two-part memoirs, *The Singapore Story* and *From Third World to First*.

“Our role was to advise him how to make his draft more readable and interesting for the layman. Mr Lee was very open to suggestions on his draft. I was initially surprised how readily he took in our comments and how promptly he came back with a revised version. That made clear to me how determined he was that the book would appeal to readers and actually be read. It was not just an academic exercise. He was doing it for the clear purpose of recounting the Singapore story as he saw it to a younger generation. His actions encouraged us to be frank, because he wanted the effort to be successful. In the end, this paid off, as the book became a bestseller, here and abroad.”

So what makes a good journalist? “Someone who has a natural curiosity about the world and cares about what's happening around him. Of course, being able to write well helps but it's not enough. You must also get along well with people, make them comfortable so they are willing to talk to you, and be a good listener.”

Not surprisingly, he offers the following advice: “Anyone who wants to be a good journalist might start by reading *The Straits Times* closely, reflecting on the developments in the paper, and developing his ability to help readers make sense of them.”

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## Charlyn's Festive School Project

A school project turned into a festive occasion when Charlyn Pereira, a current Merit Bursary Award (ITE) recipient got together with friends in December to organise the Temasek Cares Education

Bursary Christmas Party as part of her events management course. At the event, held at the ECH, some 30 primary school TCEB recipients took part in educational games with parents and siblings.



## Bridge to Success

Nearly 80 students took part in the recent annual Bridging Programme for youngsters from the self-help groups who needed extra tuition to prepare them for primary school. One teacher per four children made for easy-to-teach class sizes, and some 70 student volunteers, comprising the pre-school education course students at ITE and students from Nanyang Junior College, assisted the teachers. As part of the course, iPods and iPads were used in interactive lessons.

## Opportunity Fund Presentation

Pupils from primary to tertiary levels received Popular and BATA store vouchers, ranging from \$50-300, to purchase school books, stationery and other educational resources for the new school term starting in 2012. The vouchers, part of the Opportunity Fund, were presented to nearly 90 youngsters at a ceremony held at the ECH in November.



This picture and above: EA President Bill Jansen meets participants in the Bridging Programme



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# *A World of* **Eurasians**

Today, Singapore-born Eurasians are to be found throughout the world. *Rachel Chen* asks what this means for the community who stayed at home, and how the emigrants have adapted to their new lives abroad



Throughout the years, Singapore Eurasians have spread far from their homeland, most of them having left during the 1960s and 1970s. They have settled overseas and have, in turn, raised a new generation of Eurasians in their adopted countries.

The scattered community of Eurasians worldwide raises interesting questions for the Singapore-Eurasian community. What are the implications for the already small and decreasing population of original Eurasians left in Singapore? How can they preserve their Eurasian culture and heritage? And how do Eurasian emigrants, now settled and brought up outside Singapore, identify themselves?

Independent researcher and Singapore-born Eurasian John Byrne was part of this mass exodus and lives in New Zealand. In a recently launched book, to which he contributed, he focuses on the domestic and diasporic identities of Luso-Asians (the academic definition of Eurasians of Portuguese descent) in this region.

### Mass emigration

Byrne identifies two basic moments in history – which he calls the “two dispersions” – when Eurasians migrated en masse. The first occurred in the 19th century during British colonisation of the region. Portuguese Eurasians during that period served an integral intermediary role between the British overlords

and the colonised local population. In India, Goans migrated out of Goa into cities in British India and to East Africa; Eurasians left Malacca for Penang when the British took control of the island; after Singapore was founded in 1819, many Eurasians migrated here; when Hong Kong became a British colony in 1842, the Macanese left Macao for Hong Kong and Shanghai.

Identities during this period also underwent a shift, and became more malleable. Most Portuguese Eurasians became British subjects during this period, and became English-speaking. Byrne refers to this as the “Anglicisation of Luso-Asian identities”. In India, Luso-Indian identity was increasingly swapped wholesale for Anglo-Indian and Eurasian identities, to the point that Eurasian Indians of Portuguese descent are rarely identifiable as such.

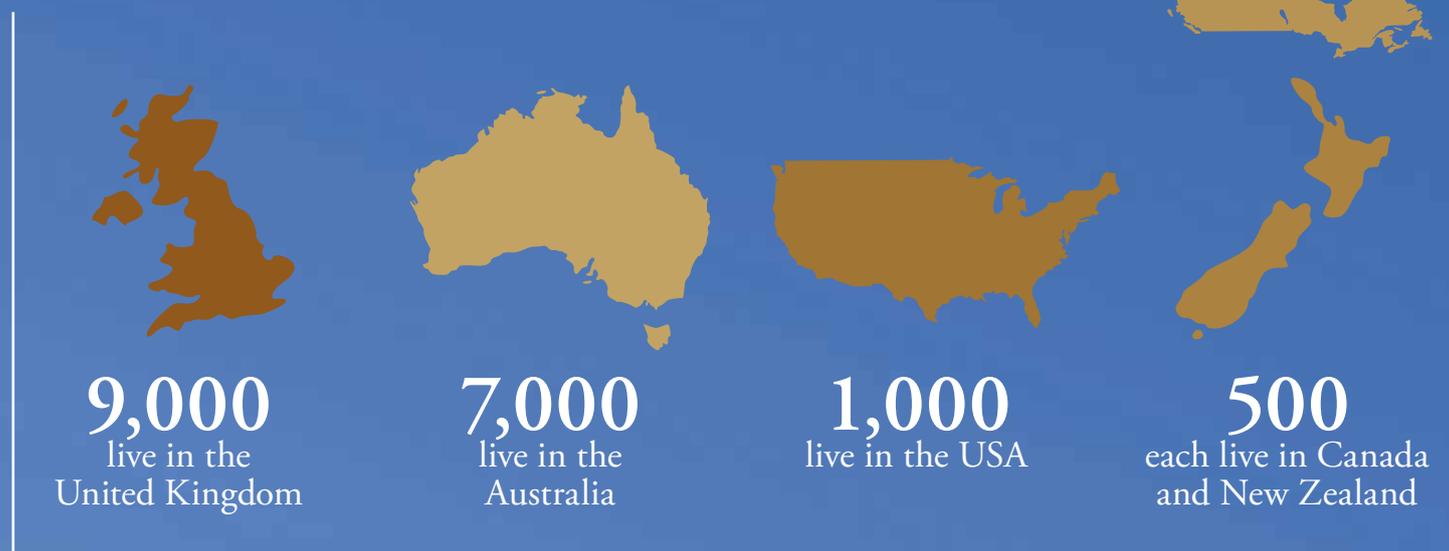
Under the British Empire, Anglicisation in the colonies came with benefits such as better jobs and education. British pastimes and recreational activities such as cricket, hockey, netball and music lessons were adopted by

the Luso-Asians and other Eurasians during this period.

The 1950s and '60s saw a second mass exodus of Eurasians opting to leave for Western countries along with white Europeans who returned home when various Asian nations gained independence. Byrne cites allegiance and language as the two major factors that played a part in these migration patterns. English-speaking Eurasians left for the Anglophone nations while Luso-Asians settled in Portugal, Africa and other Portuguese-speaking territories.

The majority of Eurasians migrated to the UK, Australia, and other Commonwealth countries. Byrne suggests that the mass exodus would have been more concentrated if not for certain immigration policies such as the White Australia policy restricting the flow of Eurasians heading for Australia, for instance. The White Australia policy stipulated that people of mixed heritage had to be able to establish that they were 75 per cent European (although tests to confirm genealogy were not very scientific). In 1964, the rule was

**18,000**  
Singapore Eurasians  
live outside Asia



relaxed so that part-Europeans were allowed into the country. By the time the White Australia policy was abolished in 1973, the small Eurasian migration had already ended.

Currently, some 18,000 Singapore Eurasians live outside Asia: 9,000 live in the UK; 7,000 live in Australia; 1,000 in the US; about 500 each in live in Canada and New Zealand.

Based on Byrne's research and estimates, there were some 15,045 Eurasians left in Singapore as of 2000, some 10,555 of them Luso-Asians.

### Reshaping cultural identity

Anglicisation continued to be a means of gaining access to a better life in first-world Commonwealth nations. Among the Singapore and Malaysia Eurasians who migrated to Australia, half declared that they had British ancestry, and only four per cent declared that they had Portuguese ancestry – this did not reflect the actual proportions of Singapore and Malaysia Eurasians with Portuguese ancestry, which was actually around 70 per cent.

Byrne suggests that this phenomenon may be due to the impact of language on identity

formation – Luso-Asians speak English and therefore identify with the British rather than the Portuguese.

The increase of intermarriages between local Asians and Westerners is reshaping Eurasian identity. The official figures may not truly represent the number of Eurasians in Singapore, owing to the way race is categorised, with children taking only their father's race in official documents. The Eurasian Association's definition of a Eurasian is someone who is of both European and Asian ancestry or whose family has been accepted as Eurasian

## Two Singapore emigrants to Australia tell of their life as Eurasians in their adopted country

**Charles Stewart emigrated in 1984 and lives in Perth. James Theseira, emigrated in 2000 and lives in Melbourne.**

As a small child, Charles Stewart didn't have much say in his family's decision to emigrate to Australia. "I was 10 yrs old and liked life in Singapore. I've heard we migrated because Mum's family was worried about me doing National Service as I might have been picked on unfairly. I also heard that they wanted a more rounded education for me, he says.

His passport identifies him as Australian, and, not least of all on the account of his accent, friends think of him more as Australian than Singaporean. However, he believes that increasingly he has been pigeon-holed by society as a Singaporean-Australian.

"I faced very few challenges in my first few years. It's only in the last 10 years that I've actually started to face more racism

as the attitude in Australia has slid towards a more Conservative and Nationalistic tone, where the country has been a tad slow in recognizing that racism is indeed an issue.

"I feel that it might finally be changing for the better in acknowledging it. In Singapore, I faced racism at school for being part-white and in Australia, it was the other way. In both settings the prevalence of bigotry was roughly the same, he says.

With an ancestry that takes in Mongolian-Hainanese, Portuguese, Dutch, French, English, Armenian Jewish, Scottish, Spanish, Thai, Peranakan and Anglo-Indian (Goan) ancestry, is it any wonder that he says simply that "I define myself first and foremost as a human who just happens to be made up of that ancestry."

And such a rich cultural heritage has its advantages: "I can mix and socialise quite well with people of any background. I view myself very much as a person of the world."

He admits, too, that Australia has probably given him opportunities that he might otherwise have missed, such as more open spaces for sports that he would not have had in Singapore, and a less rigid school life than he would have faced here.

He has, he says, been able "to discover what I am really passionate about: the environment and social issues. I might have still been able to find it in Singapore, but we'll never know. Migrating to Australia also allowed me to work in an area, hospitality, where I might not have found so rewarding had I stayed in Singapore. I have also had the pleasant experience of meeting many different people from many backgrounds and walks of life in Australia during a period of change for the country."

For James Theseira, "ease of migration and career opportunities" were the pull that drew him to Australia and where he is now a permanent resident.

His friends still regard him as Singaporean but assimilating into the Australian lifestyle has presented few challenges. "Nothing major; small ones like speaking slower for the Australians to understand what I am saying, shops closing by 5pm, lack of a local kopitiam."

And he believes that such small hardships are more than compensated for a five-day working week with better pay and opportunities for career and family development. At heart, he says he remains a Singapore Eurasian "with customs and traditions to follow".



Some 7,000 Singapore Eurasians live in Australia

by custom and tradition, whereas the official categorisation is somebody who has a Eurasian father. So recent marriages between Europeans and Asians will not produce children officially defined as Eurasians and their children will be discounted from the census as Eurasians.

To complicate things further, Byrne points out in his research that many Eurasians with one European and one Eurasian parent classify themselves as European owing to factors like language, religion, surnames, history and culture. The word 'Eurasian', to many, has a Portuguese bias – to be Eurasian in Singapore has become almost synonymous as being of Luso-Asian descent.

A recent news story in the United States has shown how first-generation Eurasians in the West are emphasising their European heritage in order to improve their educational chances. Last year, Harvard University student Lanya Olmstead, an American of Norwegian and Taiwanese descent, revealed her college application strategy: "Don't check Asian" when filling out the ethnicity boxes required for American university applicants.

Newspaper reports revealed that certain colleges, particularly Ivy League colleges, enforced an undisclosed maximum quota of Asian-Americans. Accordingly, a different set of entrance criteria applied to them and they needed to score high grades than their peers to gain the same chance of admission. Yet colleges such as the California Institute of Technology and University of Berkeley that are race-blind have a disproportionately high percentage of Asian students.

Also, Eurasians who do not have an Asian surname have an advantage when applying for university as hiding an Asian heritage during the admissions process is much easier to achieve.

In Singapore, the complications of defining one's ethnicity mean that the true figure of Singapore-born Eurasians – whether 'traditional' or 'new' Eurasians – remains unclear. With a declining official population comes a need to preserve their culture and heritage actively while attracting first-generation Eurasians to be part of the Eurasian community in Singapore.

*Under the British Empire, Anglicisation in the colonies came with benefits such as better jobs and education*

The Making of the Luso-Asian World: Intricacies of Engagement is edited by Dr Laura Pang from the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies,

Singapore Eurasian John Byrne migrated with his family in 1967, aged 14, to New Zealand, where his uncle was the then Singapore ambassador. John feels that at the time his family was apprehensive about what the future might hold for them in Singapore.

A graduate of the University of Auckland with a degree in Anthropology and Sociology and a financial planner by profession, he is passionate about colonial Asian history and has been doing private research over many years. He is currently writing a book on Eurasian communities.

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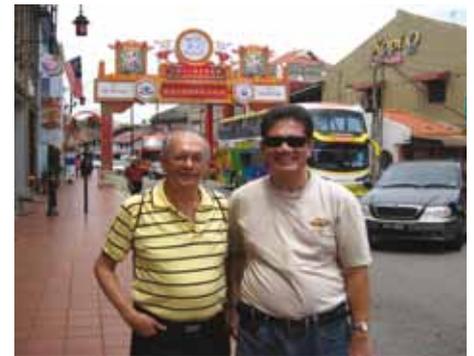
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# Malaccan Memories

Eurasians from around the world descended on Malacca in October to celebrate 500 years of Eurasian history. *Peter Rodrigues* reports on the festivities



Gerard Danker and Trevor Nerva give a taste of Singapore Eurasian music



Five hundred years ago, Portuguese Alfonso de Albuquerque brought his ships to Malacca to establish a settlement there and began the Eurasian legacy that thrives to this day. To commemorate the anniversary, descendants of the marriages between those early settlers and the local women joined together in a major celebration of their unique culture.

A contingent from Singapore left by coach for a few days of nostalgia, culture and – not least of all – partying.

The opening night festivities were held at the Portuguese settlement just outside Malacca, with music, singing and dancing dominating the festivities. The Tunas group from Portugal entertained with a repertoire of traditional Portuguese music, and Singapore's Gerard Danker and Trevor Nerva delivered popular hit songs as well as traditional songs.

A quick breakfast the next morning, and we were off to see the town. Not to be missed was the opportunity to feast on the local desserts such as ice batu kachang. Taking a

break by the scenic Malacca River also made the afternoon enjoyable.

The lure of shopping at Jonker Street proved irresistible. We made the best of this opportunity to buy jam tarts, almond biscuits, achar and belachan.

The climax of the trip took place that evening back in the Portuguese settlement. A group picture was taken with all the guests who attended the event: many Eurasians now residing in Australia, Great Britain and North America had made the long journey to join in the celebrations. Dinner – comprising curry devil and host of local delights – plus music by evergreen performers Trez Amigos, who entertained with local folk and contemporary music, made for a memorable evening.

Michael Singho, President of the Malacca-Portuguese Eurasian Association, gave a speech and also presented an award to Trez Amigos for their outstanding achievement in local folk and contemporary music. Posthumous awards were also given to Senhora

Rosalind De Costa for her contributions in culture and arts and Jimmy Boyle Costa for outstanding achievement in contemporary music – Malaysiana.

Bill Jansen, President of the Singapore Eurasian Association presented Michael Singho with a special gift in appreciation of the invitation to join in the Malaccan celebrations.

The evening also included a re-enactment of a Malacca-Portuguese wedding, with the performing cast dressed in traditional clothing, performing rational wedding rites, complete with the presence of the famous Eurasian sugee cake. It was an event for the younger generation, too: the children's cultural group enthralled the crowd with a display of traditional Eurasian dances.

The next day, morning mass was celebrated at Francis Xavier Catholic church. After that it was back to Jonker Street for some last minute shopping and coffee before our return from a short but memorable holiday.

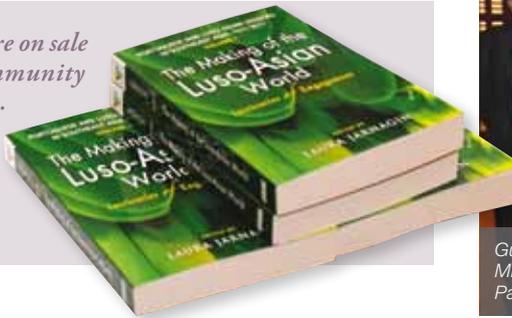
# Recording the Portuguese Legacy

The Eurasian story has attracted much academic research, and to conclude the commemoration of 500 years of Portuguese and Eurasian history in the South-east Asian region, a two-part academic study, commissioned by the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (ISEAS), is being published.

The first part of the volume, *The Making of the Luso-Asian World: Intricacies of Engagement*, edited by Dr Laura Jarnagin Pang, was launched at the ECH in November, and was attended by members of the ISEAS, the diplomatic corps and EA management committee. Michael Palmer, Speaker of Parliament officiated at the event.

The front cover of the volume is a photograph of a green parrot, which was inspired by a chapter in the book by K David Jackson – *Flying with the Papagaio Verde* (green parrot): *An Indo-Portuguese Folkloric Motif in South and Southeast Asia*.

Copies of the volume are on sale at the Eurasian Community House at \$59.90 each. Contact Jacqueline at [jacqueline@eurasians.org](mailto:jacqueline@eurasians.org) or 6447 1578 for more details.



Launching the book



Guests at the event included Prof Laura Pang, EA president Bill Jansen, Head of Mission at the Embassy of Portugal Afonso Malheiro, guest of honour Michael Palmer and Prof Tommy Koh

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# Building a Community

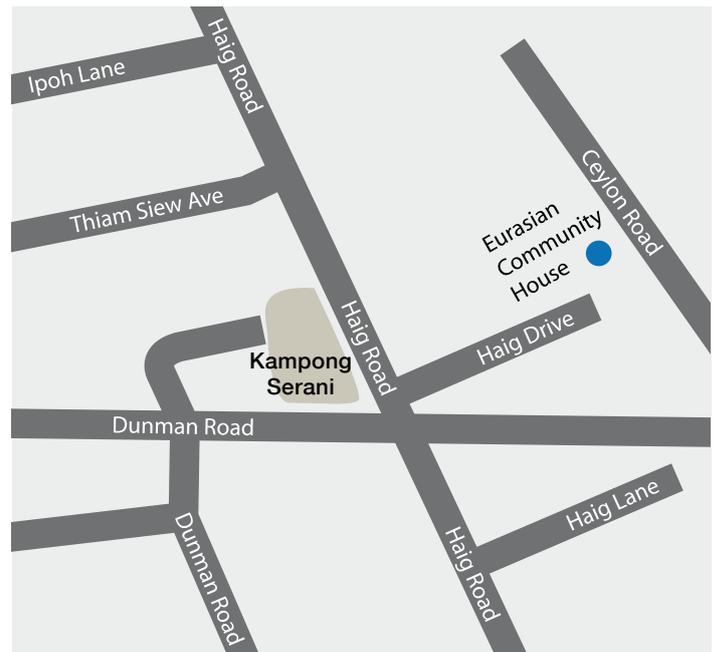
When the Dutch forces stationed in Singapore left at the end of World War II, their Dutch Queen Wilhemina and Dutch Queen Juliana Camps in Haig Road became home to a village known as Kampong Serani (meaning 'Christian' or 'Eurasian'). Yolandar Danker, who was born and raised there, remembers it as a happy, largely Eurasian, community

Few Singaporeans old enough to remember the days before comfortable HDB housing and the later swanky condos would choose to turn back the clock and live in the harder kampong days, with their lack of mod cons and the need to share restroom facilities with other villagers.

But in the post-war peace of the late 1940s onwards, they provided happy homes for many families and today are the subject of much fond nostalgia. One such early resident was Yolandar Danker, who was born there.

Her Malayan-born parents came to Singapore during the war. In 1947, her grandmother Winifred Danker signed an agreement to rent Block 110 Haig Road (in the Wilhemina Camp), and delegated the refurbishment to Yolandar's mother.

*Her mother played the Hawaiian guitar, crocheted and made numerous hats for the ladies of Katong*



Hyacinth took on the challenging job of recruiting carpenters, bricklayers and other building workers to rebuild bombed huts bordering Haig, Dunman and Tanjong Katong Roads and transform them into terraced homes for family living.

Her parents, with their three children, Jacynth, Betty and Yvonne, moved into unit 110-G and Yolandar was born there in 1949.

She recalls that her mother played the Hawaiian guitar, crocheted and made numerous hats for the ladies of Katong. She was also an excellent cook and made tarts, devil curry and Christmas pies for the Christmas gatherings.

Christmas was a community event and a party was held in the kampong.

In the book *Singapore Eurasians: Memories and Hopes*, Gerry Pereira, who grew up in Kampong Serani, recalls happy boyhood memories, not least of all the sand pit and pole vault that were erected for the youngsters for long and high jump and pole vaulting. Yolandar treasures a photograph of herself (shown here) as a six month-old baby being held by an elegant, smiling Hyacinth in front of the same pole vault.

Do you have any memorable stories and photographs from the past that you would like to share with other readers? If so, please contact Lester Low at [lester@eurasians.org](mailto:lester@eurasians.org), marking your e-mail 'For *The New Eurasian*'.

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# Cut and Thrust

The art of swordsmanship can transport participants back to the days of mediaeval chivalry

Like many youngsters, Greg Galistan grew up on Arthurian tales and the heroic sagas of Beowulf, Roland, Aragon and El Cid. Through these classics, he developed a fascination with Western chivalry and swords that has lasted to this day.

Some 10 years ago he started delving into various forms of swordsmanship – mostly Eastern systems because, he says, “I was completely unaware Western combat systems even existed.” He teamed up with fellow enthusiast, Christopher Blakey, who also lives in Singapore.

During their research the pair came across a book on mediaeval swordsmanship by author Guy Windsor that led them to consider starting a society dedicated to historical European martial arts.

They gathered together a small group and worked on the material from Windsor’s book. But in order to register their organisation, which they called the Pan Historical European Martial Arts Society (PHEMAS), they needed to have qualified instructors.



Greg says: “In what was a large leap of faith, I wrote to Mr Windsor and asked if he would allow us to attend his school in Helsinki, Finland. To our utter surprise he replied. He was so pleased by the fact that his book had reached the other side of the world and had found fans that he not only agreed to teach us but to house us for free.

“For us it was like winning the lottery. So Chris and I packed up, cleared all the leave we had and headed to Helsinki. We trained like maniacs, for the next month and it was so intense at times that it made NS look easy. After we had completed our stay we were awarded instructor certificates in Medieval Longsword.”

Since then, both he and Chris have been teaching swordsmanship in Singapore

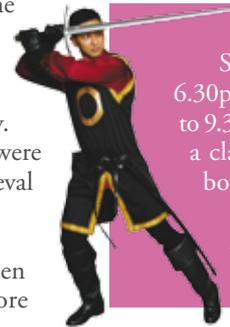
“We trained like maniacs, and it was so intense at times that it made NS look easy”

and have returned to Helsinki several times for upgrading and further training in related disciplines.

Their students have included military officers, policemen, lawyers, doctors, teachers, school students, gamers, hard core martial arts practitioners and casual weekend warriors, with ages ranging from 14 to 45.

“Our training is geared towards honing alertness, fitness, reaction speed and endurance but students are encouraged to advance at their own pace. We strive to inculcate maturity and respect in all our students for each other and the general public.

Due to the perceived danger of steel swords we place great emphasis on safety and safety gear and are rather proud of the fact that we have a lower injury rate than most other martial arts – and no serious injuries.”



Classes are held on Sundays from 4.30pm to 6.30pm and Wednesdays from 8pm to 9.30pm. The cost is \$80 monthly a class, but students may attend both classes at no extra charge.

For further details, visit [www.phemas.com](http://www.phemas.com)

# Breathing Fire

The EA dragon boat team’s year finished with a flourish

The EA Dragons ended a triumphant year by notching up another trophy – at the Singapore River Regatta on 26-27 November, where they obtained Silver in the PA Corporate Race.

Over the year, the 34-strong team also competed in the PA Paddles Championship and North East CDC Championship. In each competition they ranked among the top of their categories with impressive timings over their specialised 300m races. They also finished 27th in the field of 80 in River Regatta’s Clubs, Associations and Businesses category, the most competitive of the year.

The team has recently taken on a new motto ‘Como Um’ meaning ‘As One’ which they wear proudly on their new black and gold jerseys. They have set their sights on more competitions and categories to compete in during 2012, both here and abroad.

Calvin Christian will remain the main coach. But Clifford LeCaine, who as captain has led the rowers to multiple wins over the last four years, including a Gold medal in 2009, is to train as a coach and will then join Calvin as an extra coach. The team has appointed Bianca Hoeden as its new captain.



Dragon boat racing on the Singapore River

If you are over 16, love team sports and want to do something different, join the EA Dragons. The team practices every Sunday.

For more information, drop an e-mail to [T5paddler@yahoo.com.sg](mailto:T5paddler@yahoo.com.sg) headed ‘I Wanna Dragon Boat’.

# A Public Servant of Distinction

Eurasian Stanley Toft Stewart, who was born in Penang in 1910 and died 30 years ago this February, was a top civil servant in both Malaysia and Singapore. During his illustrious career he helped to ease through the break-up of the two places he called home

When Stanley Toft Stewart embarked upon a career in public service, he could little have foreseen how tumultuous some of the events in his life would be.

Growing up in Penang, the son of a civil servant, and talented both academically and on the sports field, he started his career after college as a teacher at Kuala Kangsar's elite Malay College. There, his students included future sultans, ambassadors, civil servants, and Tun Razak – who, even as Malaysian Prime Minister, addressed his former teacher as 'Master'.

In 1934, he earned the distinction of becoming one of the first two Asians recruited to the new Straits Settlement Civil Service. A year later, he married Therese Zelig de Souza, with whom he had seven daughters. Stewart worked in the Treasury and the Land Office before becoming assistant district officer for Butterworth in 1936, and then taking on the same position in Balik Pulau, Penang, three years later. He remained in this office during the Occupation, reporting to a Japanese superior.

*When Stewart oversaw the printing of the government gazette announcing Singapore's independence, he kept the printers incommunicado until the declaration*

After the war, Stewart was the first local man promoted to the Colonial Administration and his career path moved steadily upwards. As district officer for Butterworth and an official member of Penang's legislative council, he belonged to its war executive committee during the Emergency; thankfully, Butterworth stayed largely peaceful. In 1952, he left Penang to work in Singapore's Rural Board and became its first Asian chairman. One of his jobs was to lead the relief and evacuation efforts required after serious flooding.

In 1955 he joined the Department of Local Government dealing with such difficult issues as policing, censorship, intelligence, detentions and banishment. During this time, he became the first local man to hold the colony's second-highest office and he eventually rose to the head of the civil service where he was at the heart of national affairs.

Stewart belonged to the working group which negotiated the merger with Malaya and

## Highlights in an Inspiring Life

Stanley Stewart held numerous high offices and received many honours throughout his life. They include:

**Student days:** Set the state record for the 100-yard sprint

**1946:** District Officer of Balik Pulau – the first local man promoted to the Colonial Administration Service

**1947:** District Officer Butterworth

**Late 1940s to early 1950s:** Member of Penang's legislative council

**1952-57:** Deputy Chairman, then chairman of Singapore's Rural Board, the first Asian to chair the board

**1955:** Deputy Secretary, Department of Local Government and Acting Chief Secretary (the colony's second-highest office)

**1958:** Awarded the Companion of the Order of St Michael and St George

**1959:** Permanent Secretary for Home Affairs

**1961:** Permanent Secretary to the Prime Minister (head of the civil service)

**1962:** Awarded Singapore's *Pingat Jasa Gemilang* (Meritorious Service Medal)

**1963:** Awarded the *Bakti Kepada Malaysia* (Service to Malaysia) gold medal

**1966:** High Commissioner to Australia

**1972-73:** Executive Secretary, then Chief Executive, National Stadium Corporation

**1970-87:** Member of the Presidential Council on Minority Rights from 1970 until 1987

travelled to London for talks. He was also one of the first to know about the subsequent break-up in 1965. When he oversaw the printing of the government gazette announcing Singapore's independence, he kept the printers incommunicado until the declaration on 9 August. That June he had reached the civil service retirement age but PM Lee Kuan Yew asked him to remain.



The newly independent Singapore delayed deploying a network of diplomats to overseas missions until it was confident they were sufficiently prepared. With his vast experience, Stewart became Singapore's first high commissioner to Australia, one of the first countries to recognise Singapore and an important regional power. This calm period in his career allowed him to organise weekly tennis matches at his residence and captain the annual diplomatic cricket tournament in Canberra.

Back in Singapore, it must have been enormously rewarding for the sports fanatic to oversee the completion and opening of the National Stadium in 1973. After a life of public service, during which he won many awards, he spent his later years in the private sector as a non-executive director of several companies and died of heart problems on 9 February 1992 in Singapore.



# Light-Up at the Padang

Christmas is a time for nostalgia with family and friends, and in that spirit the Singapore Recreation Club and Eurasian Association met at the SRC for its Christmas Light-Up. SRC Vice President Captain Francis Koh and EA President Bill Jansen ceremonially lit the Christmas tree, each hanging a bauble as symbol of the two organisations' longstanding ties.



Members of the SRC and EA, including Vice President of the SRC Capt Francis Koh, EA president Bill Jansen and Tim de Souza gather in front of the tree

## 101 Ways to Party

The Social Circle's Christmas Dinner & Dance at the ECH saw no fewer than 101 party-goers letting their hair down for the night. A number of guests won lucky draw prizes and Sheila Berlee and Jude de Cruz won prizes for being judged the best dressed. Liz Schurmann sponsored the festive table decorations and, thanks to volunteers and sponsors, guests enjoyed a fun-packed evening.



Terence Shepherdson and guests at the party



# SINGAPORE POOLS

## NEWS

Provides updates on the various Corporate Social Responsibility programmes and Responsible Gaming efforts by Singapore Pools.



i-SHINE, Singapore Pools' Staff Community Programme - helping the less fortunate since 2003.

*Established in 1968, Singapore Pools is the only legal lottery and sports betting operator in Singapore, and has the twin objectives of providing a legal avenue for betting in Singapore to counter illegal betting syndicates, and to channel surplus earnings to benefit the community.*

## Tote Board and Singapore Pools Do Our Part For The Environment

Tote Board and Singapore Pools are happy to support the Semakau Run 2011 and do our part for the environment. Held on 8 October 2011 at the Semakau Landfill, the event was jointly organized by the National Environment Agency and Mediacorp, and aimed to galvanise business communities to demonstrate their commitment to environment protection.

The fund-raising event raised \$280,000 for environmental and charitable groups such as the Singapore Environment Council, Nature Society (Singapore), HCA Hospice Care, ASPN Katong School and Children's Cancer Foundation.

Apart from sending representatives to participate in the Run, Singapore Pools is committed to the conservation of our environment in other ways. Since June 2005, we have been actively encouraging our staff and customers to recycle waste paper by placing paper-recycling bins at our retail outlets, and running a monthly waste paper collection programme at our corporate office. To date, nearly 500 tonnes of waste paper has been recycled.



Guest of Honour, Dr Vivian Balakrishnan, Minister for the Environment and Water Resources, flagged off the competitive 5km run.

## Singapore Pools 'Golf With A Heart' 2011 Raised Over \$500,000 For Charity



Presentation of \$250,000 to President Dr Tony Tan for President's Challenge. With President Tan are Mr Bernard Chen, Singapore Pools Chairman (left), and Mr Tan Soo Nan, Singapore Pools Chief Executive Officer (right).

Singapore Pools' staff community outreach programme, i-SHINE, raised more than \$500,000 at the company's signature fund-raiser, 'Golf With A Heart' 2011, to benefit nine worthy causes, at the Singapore Island Country Club on 16 October 2011. The Guest-of-Honour for the event was His Excellency, President Dr Tony Tan Keng Yam.

President Tan received a donation cheque for \$250,000 from Singapore Pools Chairman, Mr Bernard Chen, in aid of President's Challenge. Mr Chen also presented donation cheques to eight other community and charitable causes, as follows:

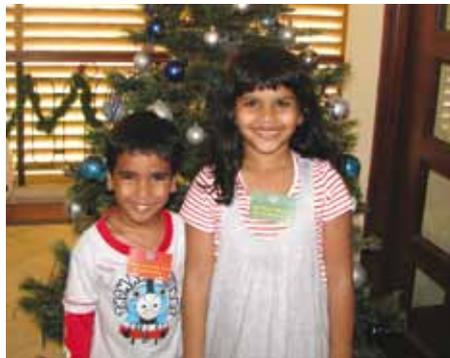
- i) The five **Community Development Councils (CDCs)** towards subsidizing specialised transportation services for wheelchair-users and people with mobility difficulties.
- ii) **National Crime Prevention Council (NCPC)** is a non-profit organization committed to promoting public awareness of and concern about crime and to propagate the concept of self-help in crime prevention.
- iii) **Rainbow Centre Singapore** is committed to enhancing the quality of life of children with special needs through education and training to enable them to achieve their fullest potential.
- iv) **Society for the Physically Disabled** works in partnership with people with physical disabilities to maximise their potential and to help them to be self-reliant and independent.

A total of 120 golfers consisting of leaders from government, business, grassroots and the unions hit the greens and through novelty games on and off the course, raised funds for charity.

# Fun for all the Family

Grown-ups and kids alike enjoyed the Family Christmas Carnival and Children's Christmas Treat at the ECH in December. While the grown-ups shopped, ate, played games and listened to the D'Highlights band, Reuben & Mark from ToyBox and magician Uncle Jimbo entertained dozens of children from the four self-help groups.

Thanks to volunteers – including Santa himself – the kids departed with smiles and a gift from Santa; and three lucky youngsters each won a bicycle in the prize draw.



# FSS Christmas Party

Nearly 150 FSS clients enjoyed a Christmas party at the EA in December. The entertainment included performances by students from the International School Singapore and the MC for the afternoon was Moe Alkaff.





# Welcome to 2012!

Eur Asians and their friends put on their finest threads on 31 December to see out the old year and welcome in the new at the Concorde Hotel ballroom.

The EA's annual New Year's Eve Dinner & Dance included a sumptuous meal, entertainment by MSG and, not least of all, a special appearance by 'Elvis Presley'. As to be expected, revellers partied into the early hours.

