

THE neweurasian

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PLUS

Festive Spirit

A round-up of the year-end parties

EW Barker Remembered

A new biography commemorates the illustrious politician

Wheel Commitment

Gerard Pereira's career at the Singapore Safety Driving Centre

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President's Message

We ended 2016 with a flurry of events that showcased some of the best of the Eurasian community as well as providing an opportunity for us to come together to strengthen our bonds and friendships.

One of the highlights of the last quarter was the launch of the biography of one of our most famous pioneer leaders, E W Barker: The People's Minister (page 16). Mr Barker was not only an outstanding statesman, but also an all-rounder who excelled both academically and in numerous sports. Although he is best known for his role as our first (post-independence) and longest serving Minister for Law and for drafting the separation agreement for Singapore's independence, he also helmed various other ministries including National Development, Environment, Science and Technology, and Labour. Mr Barker certainly made a very big impact on Singapore and we are very pleased to put his valuable life's work on record. I would like to thank the steering committee for this project: Carla and Deborah Barker, Edward D'Silva and Gerard de Silva as well as author Susan Sim. We are also very appreciative of the support given by the late Mr S R Nathan, Ngee Ann Development, the National Heritage Board and Singapore Press Holdings that made this book possible.

Another highlight of the previous months was the event to honour Joseph Schooling and to confer on him the special award of Visitor to the Eurasian Community House (page 6). It was a treat for all of us to meet and congratulate Joseph in person during his short visit back to Singapore. Joseph's achievement in winning the Olympic Gold was certainly outstanding. More importantly, it demonstrated to our youth (and frankly all of us) that nothing is impossible if we aim high and work really, really hard, as Joseph did. The event was also a great opportunity for us to meet with Colin and May Schooling. Apart from the good genes they gave Joseph (both of them were top sportspeople), it was their strong support and belief in Joseph's potential and the many sacrifices they made to support his training that made him the top athlete and fine young gentleman he is today. Certainly, fantastic role models for many of us as parents.

We closed the year with numerous events to mark the festive season – among them the Social Circle's Christmas Dinner and

Dance, Children's Christmas Treat and our highlight, the New Year's Eve Dinner and Dance, which was held at the Marina Mandarin Hotel. One of our annual and very heart-warming events was the FSS Christmas party (page 13). It was great to see the students from the International School Singapore (ISS) and our EA volunteers entertain and bring Christmas cheer to our FSS beneficiaries. Many thanks to Edmund Rodrigues, Paul Rodrigues and the FSS team for organising this wonderful event, which showcased the true spirit of Christmas.

Our cover story for this issue is about technology and how it has and will continue to impact our lives. Recently, Google's office in Singapore launched the 'Code in the Community' programme (page 9), which will provide computational thinking and coding skills to students from the four self-help groups. With technology being an indispensable part of our future capability, this programme will provide access to one of the leading global technology firms for our students to upgrade their skills. The story shares with our readers the views of technological experts about Smart Singapore and the young people who are embarking on tech careers to innovate our future.

As we look forward to the future, I would also like to highlight the efforts of Kevin Martens Wong and his Kodrah Kristang team to revive Kristang, the heritage language of the Portuguese-Eurasian community (page 17). This initiative is starting to get a strong following and the team will be organising a Kristang Fiesta in May. Please stay tuned for details of this event.

It has been a very busy last few months of 2016 and I would like to thank our Management Committee, our Secretariat, the Board of Trustees and our numerous volunteers and donors for all their hard work and support through the year. We have many meaningful events coming your way as we start the New Year. On behalf of the Management Committee, I wish all of you a joyous and successful 2017.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Kevin Martens Wong', written in a cursive style.

Competing for the Cup

Members of the Eurasian Association and Singapore Recreation Club gathered for some friendly indoor and outdoor rivalry on 13 November when they revived the Crystal Cup challenge after a period of eight years.

The contest is held from a choice of games, the two picked this year being balut and football.

The afternoon began with balut, when 16 players from the EA formed groups of four to play against equivalent teams from the SRC. After three rounds, the EA team was in the lead but after a further three rounds of intense play, SRC emerged as the champions with a score of 9,090. The EA proved worthy challengers, coming a close second with 8,924 points.



From left: Ronnie Chua, chairman of SRC's Games Control Board, Timothy de Souza, Dr Sarbjit Singh and Benett Theseira with the Crystal Cup



The two football teams, backed by their fans, pose for a pre-match photo



EA and SRC committee members



Balut members from the EA and SRC

When the clock struck 5pm, it was time for footballers and their enthusiastic, cheering fans to head to the soccer pitch. The SRC scored in the first half, and despite gallant efforts by the EA to equalise they remained unrewarded. Two more goals for the SRC in the second half sealed the 3-0 score.

A post-match downpour could have added to the Eurasians' woes, but their despondency was soon dispelled when the two teams were welcomed at the SRC's Lounge 1883 by both SRC President Dr Sarbjit Singh and EA President Benett Theseira. Rivalry forgotten, everybody looked forward to an entertaining evening that including tucking into a dinner buffet and listening to an address by EA trustee and guest of honour, Timothy de Souza.

The Crystal Cup was lifted by SRC, but the EA is eager for next year's battle and, with hard work and luck, a different result!

In Remembrance

Remembrance Sunday was held on 13 November at Kranji War Cemetery to pay tribute to those whose lives were sacrificed in the two world wars and subsequent conflicts.

The ceremony was organised by the British High Commission of Singapore in partnership with the Singapore Armed Forces Veterans' League. EA Management Committee member Francesca Eber represented the EA and laid a wreath to pay respects.



Guests at the Remembrance Day Ceremony

Light Entertainment



Representatives from MENDAKI, OPSG, SE CDC & EA Management Committee members

The Christmas festivities hit a high at the Eurasian Community House on 3 December as guests gathered in front of a sparkling Christmas tree for the annual light-up. EA President Benett Theseira ceremonially flicked on the switch before Stephen Gomez led the crowd in a festive rendition of Christmas carols. The event was also attended by representatives from MENDAKI, OnePeople.sg and the South East Community Development Council.

After the carolling session, Benett and MC Charlene Lee invited guests to indulge in the Eurasian Christmas buffet

prepared by Quentin's restaurant while The Music Men entertained them with old-school favourites.

Games were organised for guests which included acapella singers belting out the lyrics of *Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer* and dressing up in

The event continued with dancing, a prize presentation, lucky card draw and more carols.

Yvonne adds: "The Social Circle committee members would like to express their sincere appreciation to the EA management committee and secretariat for their support and Quentin and Kristine Pereira and The Music Men for ensuring that the Christmas Dinner and Dance went with a big bang."



Waiting for a game to start

Christmas decorations provided to them. Yvonne Pereira, who chairs the EA's Social Circle explains: "All dressed up, they had to do a cat walk and we voted on who received the best dressed award. Being in a wheelchair did not deter Auntie Pearlyn Velge from participating!"



Lighting up the Christmas Tree

Christmas Play Day

The Eurasian Community House was transformed into a children's paradise on 11 December for the 80 youngsters, with their parents in tow, who attended the EA's annual Children's Christmas Treat.



Attempting to feed Olaf the snowman

Many of the kids were jumping up and down in excitement at the sight of the range of activities available. Some headed for the game stalls, such as the pyramid where children tried to knock down a pyramid foundation with rubber balls; 'Oscar', where children attempted to throw hoops onto the necks of figures; or 'Feed Olaf' where children had to toss 'snowflakes' into Olaf's mouth.

Others chose to exercise their creativity by making their own keychains or folding and flying their handmade paper aeroplanes. And there was no shortage of takers for the ever-popular balloon sculptures, painstakingly created by Russell Oliveiro into each child's favourite cartoon character.

After tucking into a Kentucky Fried Chicken snack box, ToyBox performers went through their dance and music numbers to keep the children active on the floor. In one team game, they had to dress up one of their members and transform him or her into a Christmas tree. The EA Secretariat decided on the



Everybody enjoys the entertainment by the ToyBox performers

best 'Christmas tree', cheered on by the children and their families.

Finally, Santa and Santarina arrived and the children were invited on stage to pose for a photograph and receive a gift from them.



A happy child receives her present from Santa while Santarina looks on

EA's Community Development Chairperson Yvonne Pereira says: "Our gratitude goes to Christian, Josephine and Rowena Eber, volunteers from the St Francis Xavier Church and Chingay group, Focus Network Agencies for sponsoring soft toys, Quentin's restaurant, MCCY, the EA Secretariat and the Social Circle and the Social Circle Sub-Committee for contributing to the success of the EA's multiracial Children's Christmas Treat.

Twenty-one-year-old Joseph Schooling Gets the Key to the Door

Golden boy Joseph Schooling added to his clutch of honours when he received a symbolic key in recognition of his status as an official visitor to the Eurasian Community House, a distinction awarded to revered individuals.



Joseph receives his key from Benett



Joseph thanks the EA for his visitorship and the scholarship set up in his name

The Olympic gold medal swimmer attended a special ceremony organised by the EA at the ECH with his parents Colin and May, to which more than 70 guests were invited.

EA President Benett Theseira told the gathering: "We are pleased to confer on Joseph the Visitorship to the Eurasian Community House as he has proven himself as an elite athlete who has inspired Singaporeans with his perseverance and



Joseph and his parents with the EA Management Committee



Two fans clutch their book on the local hero

outstanding achievements. This award from the Eurasian Association is a special honour to recognise his exceptional character and contribution to Singapore."

Benett also announced that the EA would be launching a Joseph Schooling Sports Scholarship and that more details of this would be announced in the coming months. The scholarship aims to propel more Eurasians to excel in sport and achieve success internationally.

The evening included a Eurasian dinner by Quentin's restaurant with entertainment by Peter Diaz, Talisha and Tiffany Griesbach.

Special needs student Shawn Siew passed Joseph a hand-drawn card which he read immediately before giving a fist bump to the overwhelmed youngster.

The highlight of the evening was when Joseph was presented with his symbolic key by Benett before unveiling a plaque indicating his special title as visitor. He quipped: "I have never received a key before. I am wondering which door this will open!" He added on a serious note: "Thank you for the scholarship. I do a lot of charity work and to have this scholarship named after me means a lot to me, it really hits home."



Joseph (centre) with restaurateur Quentin Pereira (in white shirt) and his crew

Guys – Kick Off the New Year with Fun and Fitness

The Eurasian Association is recruiting football enthusiasts to join the EA Men's Senior Soccer team. We're looking for players for all positions and you need to be aged 18 and above. If one of your New Year's resolutions is to build up your fitness or make new friends, you've come to the right place. If you are passionate about the game, please contact Seow Ting Zhou at seow@eurasians.org or 6447 1578 (ext 204).



EA Education Schemes 2017

The EA supports students throughout their academic journey, offering numerous awards, bursaries and scholarships for Primary, Secondary and Tertiary levels. Below is a table of EA Education Schemes 2017, criteria and application period.

S/N	Education Scheme	Level	Description	Quantum	Income Criteria	Application Period
1	Eurasian Community Fund [ECF] Education Awards	Primary, Secondary, Tertiary	A one-time monetary reward to students to encourage them to continue working hard.	\$100 - \$300	GHI \$3,000, or PCI \$800 *Income criteria are only for Bursary Awards. Merit, Excellence and Distinction Awards do not have income criteria.	Apply by 30 June 2017
2	Project Ray Of Hope	Primary, Secondary, Tertiary	Disbursement of Popular and Bata vouchers to purchase educational items to prepare for the next academic year.	\$250 - \$350	GHI \$3,000, or PCI \$800	Apply by 30 June 2017
3	Irene Joseph Memorial Fund & P.K.P Nair Memorial Fund	Primary	A one-time monetary reward to students to encourage them to continue working hard.	\$200	PCI range: \$626 – \$1,000 *For students <u>not</u> under MOE FAS	Apply by 30 June 2017
4	Coral De Cruz Memorial Fund	Secondary	Covering school fees, books, uniforms and transport for one academic year, to encourage Secondary students to study hard.	\$1,200 For one academic year	GHI \$3,000, or PCI \$800	Apply by 30 June 2017
5	Merit Bursary Award	ITE and Polytechnic <i>(NP, NYP, RP, SP, TP)</i>	Covering the full cost of tuition and book stipend for the full duration of the course, to defray the high cost of tertiary education.	Cap: ITE : \$3,500/yr for a 2-yr course Poly : \$5,500/yr for a 3-yr course	GHI \$3,000, or PCI \$800	Apply by 30 April 2017
6	EA University Scholarship	University <i>(NUS, NTU, SMU, UniSIM, SIT, SUTD)</i>	Covering the full cost of tuition and book stipend for a 3-year course, to defray the high cost of university education.	Cap: \$10,000 per year for a 3-year course	GHI \$3,000, or PCI \$800	Apply by 30 April 2017
7	Oscar George da Silva University Scholarship	University <i>(NUS, NTU, SMU, UniSIM, SIT, SUTD)</i>	Covering the full cost of tuition and book stipend for a 3-year course, to defray the high cost of university education.	Cap: \$10,000 per academic year for a 3-year course	GHI \$3,000, or PCI \$800	Apply by 30 April 2017
8	Minnie Leicester-D'Rozario Award (for Literature in English at O-levels)	Secondary 4 O-level student	A one-time award for a Eurasian student(s) who attained A1 for Literature in English at the Secondary 4 O-level examination.	\$1,000 *If there is more than one candidate, the quantum per student will be decided by the Education Committee	Nil	Apply by 30 April 2017
9	Joseph Schooling Sports Scholarship	ITE, Polytechnic & University <i>(NP, NYP, RP, SP, TP, NUS, NTU, SMU, UniSIM, SIT, SUTD)</i>	Covering the full cost of tuition and book stipend for the full duration of the course, to defray the high cost of tertiary education.	Cap: ITE : \$3,500/yr for a 2-yr course Poly : \$5,500/yr for a 3-yr course Uni : \$10,000 per academic year for a 3-year course	Nil	Apply by 30 April 2017
10	Rudolph Mosbergen Sports Award	ITE, Polytechnic & University <i>(NP, NYP, RP, SP, TP, NUS, NTU, SMU, UniSIM, SIT, SUTD)</i>	A one-time award for a Eurasian student(s) who shows potential in sport and is pursuing a sports course at the Singapore Sports School or Polytechnic.	\$2,500 *If there is more than one candidate, the quantum per student will be decided by the Education Committee	GHI \$3,000, or PCI \$800	Apply by 30 April 2017

Project Offers Hope to Students

ITE student Elray Cook has overcome challenges to reach for the skies

Nearly 100 Eurasian students from primary, secondary and tertiary levels were recipients of the annual Project Ray of Hope ceremony, which was held recently at the Eurasian Community House. The students were welcomed by MC Marcel Scully and Dr Graham Ong-Webb who chairs the EA's Education Committee, before being presented with

and technology and decided to pursue a career in this field.

Elray believes that the Project Ray of Hope ceremony is especially useful to him as it enables students to get their basic needs such as stationery and notebooks. However he also uses them to purchase school books for his brother, Elmes. Elray

challenging times. "She showcases perseverance and has also raised us to her best even if we face financial difficulties," he says, adding that that her favourite advice to them is 'Think before you act'."

When Elray was in primary school and his parents were divorcing, he discovered



Project Ray of Hope secondary school recipients



Brothers Elray (right) and Elmes with mum, Ellis

Popular and Bata vouchers funded by the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth to help disadvantaged students with their educational costs.

We speak with recipient Elray Cook, who comes from a single-parent family.

Elray, 17, is currently studying Aerospace Technology at ITE College Central and aims to become an aerospace engineer. His mother told him that since he was young he has had a knack for dismantling and fixing things. In secondary school, he discovered his passion for design

is also grateful for the support the EA has given him in the shape of bursary awards which, he saved and used for a school study trip to Hong Kong. He says: "I really wanted to go on the trip to learn more and my mum couldn't afford to pay for it alone. We also receive monthly cash vouchers from the EA, which help me to get a small school allowance. And we receive food rations and NTUC vouchers, which are tremendously helpful."

His biggest inspiration is his mother, Ellis binte Sapari, who has been a pillar of strength to both her children even during

he had dyslexia. He was told that he might even need to resit the PSLE examinations. However, not wanting to disappoint his mother, "I started ignoring all of the negative comments and did my best to qualify for the Normal Technical stream in secondary school." He not only did that, but was the top student in his school for the N-level examinations and also attained the position of Assistant Company Sergeant Major in the National Cadet Corps co-curricular activity. He encourages other students always to act graciously to others – and always to strive to great heights.

When Studying is Fun

The republic's 10 Student Care Centres, which were established to provide students with safe and conducive after-school care, are to be expanded to 15 venues this year, with the aim of reaching 30 by 2020.

The SCCs, run by the four self-help groups, complement the Ministry of Education in giving educational and developmental support to students and also reaching out to those from less advantaged backgrounds to provide family-centred assistance.

We speak to nine-year-old Shirleen Pestana, who joined an SCC in September 2016. She discovered that not only do they have plenty of fun activities, but "I also get to make a lot of new friends!"

She says the students' daily routine begins in the afternoon with lunch and the completion of all of their school homework. During this time, tutors offer assistance where needed. Afterwards, the students get half an hour of playtime in which they can play with Lego, blocks and puzzles. This is followed by tea break. Next is Shirleen's favourite time – when the students participate in special activities that the tutors have planned for them. She says: "The teacher gives us fun activities and we get to draw, write and learn new things."

Shirleen's guardian, Stella Pestana says: "The SCCs have been a great support for us as we don't have to worry about after-school care. We know that Shirleen is being provided with the best support



Shirleen Pestana, who thoroughly enjoys the sessions at her local Student Care Centre

there is and she also performs well at school. Most importantly, she enjoys her time there."

To find out how you can enrol your child in an SCC, contact: Keith Kuah at 6447 1578 (ext 205) or email keith@eurasians.org



GETTING SMART

Following a government initiative in 2014, Singapore aims to be in the forefront of the new global world of technology

Developed countries spend billions of dollars on research and development into new technologies to keep up with – and preferably lead – the innovations that are hitting our streets, offices and homes with seemingly breathtaking speed.

In 2014, Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong announced the launch of a smart nation initiative. Since then, there have been numerous projects to ensure that we keep up with technological trends. In 2014, for example, Labs on Wheels was launched, a first roving bus to present primary school students with an experiential and fun way to learn about technology. In 2015, HealthHub, a one-stop online portal and app was created for Singaporeans to access their family's health records and also learn how to keep

healthy. More recently, SGInnovate, a new agency, was formed to support Singapore's start-up ecosystem. Singapore is indeed steadily transforming into a Smart Nation.

As the economic paradigm shifts, digital connectivity is becoming a basic right. Here, we speak to people in different high-tech roles, from those in tertiary education, just preparing to start on their careers, to those who have already made their mark. Employees in illustrious companies such as Google, IBM and Boston Consulting Group tell us about digital disruptions and how can they impact a country and its people – and the skills we will need in order to cope with the technological world of the future.

SGINNOVATE, A NEW AGENCY, WAS FORMED TO SUPPORT SINGAPORE'S START-UP ECO-SYSTEM. SINGAPORE IS INDEED STEADILY TRANSFORMING INTO A SMART NATION

JACQUELINE ANGUS



Jacqueline Angus hopes her diploma in Multimedia and Infocomm Technology will lead to a job as a graphic designer

is currently pursuing a diploma in Multimedia and Infocomm Technology at Nanyang Polytechnic and is planning to work as a graphic designer and eventually set up her own business. As Singapore gears up to be a Smart Nation, infocomm and media will be a major part of that world. Jacqueline's favourite areas are digital media and network connectivity. "With digitalisation, the work can be overwhelming at times but the outcome is worth every minute of hardship!" she says.

Jacqueline, 18, has always been intrigued by technology and believes that it is going to play an ever bigger role in the lives of Singaporeans and that they should be prepared for the changes. "I think we all have to adapt quickly and stay abreast of technological trends. With an ageing population, it's crucial that the senior population don't lose touch with technology. We have to start early and develop an open mindset towards the opportunities that the digital world can bring," she says.

RYAN CONCEICAO



Teenager Ryan Conceicao is already setting up an e-commerce business

is currently pursuing Information Technology at Nanyang Polytechnic. He has been playing computer games since a young age and one of his personal favourites was Minecraft, a game that puts you into a world that you modify yourself. While playing the game, he needed to think deeply about how to automate certain processes and started slowly by writing simple scripts that automated some functions. He says: "These simple scripts slowly evolved as I learnt more about coding and ultimately ended up in full automation."

The 18-year-old is also setting up a new e-commerce retail business with two of his classmates and is currently photographing the products and building the website. "I want to invent things that will benefit people and make a positive impact on society," he says.

"IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN CREATING APPLICATIONS, JUST DO IT! THERE ARE MANY FREE ONLINE GUIDES THAT ARE AVAILABLE TO TEACH YOU FROM SCRATCH"

He is also excited about geospatial (tools that help with geographic mapping and positioning) and mobile (applications that can be used on phones) development, which are integral aspects of his diploma. "When both areas are combined, we get

"WITH AN AGEING POPULATION, IT'S CRUCIAL THAT THE SENIOR POPULATION DON'T LOSE TOUCH WITH TECHNOLOGY"

useful things such as Google maps," he explains. Ryan strongly believes that mobile will be the most important platform in the future. As nearly everyone owns a phone, it provides developers with an opportunity to develop applications that can help people in their day-to-day life without needing to be seated in front of a computer.

He is also interested in Artificial Intelligence. "It is an exciting field that has seen many advances recently and has the potential to reshape our world. Within the next 10 years, we will see more jobs being replaced with AIs, such as self-driving cars, which we are already seeing now."

With Singapore's ageing population, Ryan feels that it's the responsibility of the young to teach older people in their family how to use technology in order to keep up with modern times. He also says that stepping out of one's comfort zone is a must in order to keep up with the technological trends.

And he concludes: "If you are interested in creating applications, just do it now! It does not cost money to create an application. There are many free online guides that are available to teach you from scratch. The main hurdle isn't the lack of resources, it's people themselves."

MICHELLE GOMEZ

has been working at Google's Benefits team for six years. The team works to ensure that 'Googlers' are happy and healthy. The team believes in internal mobility and also in providing employees with an opportunity to explore different roles. As a Singaporean, she is proud to be working in a company that is inspired to tackle the world's biggest challenges through technology.

"OVER THE NEXT THREE YEARS, WE WANT TO HELP 3,000 YOUNG SINGAPOREANS FROM LESS WELL-TO-DO BACKGROUNDS TO DEVELOP COMPUTATIONAL SKILLS"

Recently, Google collaborated with the republic's self-help groups to launch Code in the Community, a multi-year, multi-level computer science and computational thinking course to get more Singaporean children excited about the potential of technology. Weekend classes will be held for children aged from eight to 15, with an equal mix of boys and girls. The programme will start in early 2017 and will be run by 21C Girls and Saturday Kids at community centres around the island.

Michelle says: "Over the next three years, we want to help 3,000 young Singaporeans from less well-to-do backgrounds to develop computational skills and inspire them and their parents

SIMONE CONSIGLIERE

is the head of Brand and Communications at IBM Singapore. Like more than 80 per cent of people who own a smart device, one of the first things she does after waking up is to check the phone or tablet, glance at the latest news headlines, scan through emails and keep tabs on what friends are up to on social media. She points out: "The reason I say this is to illustrate how technology – including mobile, social big data, analytics and cloud – is transforming the way people engage, work, learn and do business. We are in the era of instant everything."

to pursue a future career in technology." Each batch of participants and their parents also start off with a visit to Google's new office in Singapore and hear from Googlers how they started their careers and what a technical job has to offer.

She explains that computer science entails studying information and how to best represent, store and process that information using computers. "However, computational thinking refers to a way of thinking, problem-solving and is essential to developing computer applications. It can be used to support problem-solving across many disciplines, including the humanities, maths and science."

She also says that digital analytics and digital marketing are key skills that are in demand: "We've heard feedback from the industry that it can be tough to find people who are able to think strategically about digital marketing and advertising technology." In response to this skill gap, Google has launched a suite of programmes in Singapore such as Squared Online, Squared Data Analytics and DIGITIZE. In these programmes, it partners with organisations such as IDA or EDB to provide Singaporeans with opportunities to receive on-the-job training to increase their knowledge about advertising technology and the digital media industry.

Michelle explains the reason that Google chose to locate its Asia Pacific Headquarters in Singapore: "It's a place for innovation, always working hard to be better, and openly embracing the new. Singapore is central to our future success and we look forward to growing here while at the same time helping to bridge the digital divide through programmes like Code in the Community, and ensuring that a diverse range of people share the benefits of the web."

With technology democratising information, a disruption is also happening at an unprecedented pace as industries are transforming. She cites the example of Alibaba, which has become the largest payment company in the world, transferring more money through 'Alipay' than any other bank.

How do companies stay competitive in a technological era? According to IBM's 2016 Global C-Suite Study, *The Chief Marketing Officer Perspective*, 63 per cent of the CMOs surveyed regard developing better customer experiences as their top priority. Simone says: "This makes perfect sense in an era where reputations and brand loyalty can be made or broken at the speed of a tweet.



A low-tech holiday in Australia for Michelle Gomez with her youngest son, Ryan

Simone Consigliere says that technology impacts on every part of our lives



Great customer experience will go a long way in differentiating an organisation in the market." She adds that insight informs experience and that no matter how small or large a business is it will

"ASEAN AS A WHOLE IS DIGITALLY AHEAD AND THERE IS A TREMENDOUS OPPORTUNITY FOR EVEN MORE DEVELOPMENT"

need to harness data in order to help it make smarter, faster and more informed decisions which lead to creating transformative experiences for customers.

And technology can help people make life-saving decisions. A leading healthcare group in Singapore has started testing cognitive technology in the intensive care unit. The technology absorbs data from the machines in the ICU, patient records, notes

DR MICHAEL MEYER

joined the Boston Consulting Group in 2002 and is currently managing director and a partner. A few years ago, digital technology was mostly a topic for companies in the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) sector. Now it matters for almost every sector, from banking, healthcare and energy. "Digital disruption represents both a threat to and a source of new opportunities," he says. "Incumbents can fall behind, sustain their position in the market or even leverage disruptions to become leaders in their industries, depending on their responses."

BCG set up a Digital Ventures team in January 2014 to help companies build new businesses in a digital environment. It also created a Technology Advantage Practice to help clients rewire their international technological operations. Another creation was BCG Gamma, which brings together data scientists and consultants who specialise in advanced analytics.



Dr Michael Meyer encourages people to take advantage of government schemes to improve their technological skills

"TECHNOLOGICAL CHALLENGES MORE SPECIFIC TO SINGAPORE ARE THE LIMITATIONS OF A RELATIVELY SMALL HOME MARKET, THE HIGH SHARES OF SMES IN THE ECONOMY AND, IN SOME BUSINESSES, A SHORTAGE OF TALENT"

Michael says that organisations in Singapore are facing similar challenges to those abroad, in terms of being aware of new technologies, keeping abreast with changes, selecting the right technologies and implementing them effectively. "Challenges more specific to Singapore are the limitations of a relatively small home market, the high shares of SMEs in the economy and, in some businesses, a shortage of talent."

The disruptive potential of digital technology on Singapore's economy in particular has also

from doctors, nurses and other medical literature. She says: "This technology alerts healthcare professionals of possible upcoming critical solutions so that actions can be taken before a situation becomes fatal."

Singapore is a forward-thinking and digitally savvy nation, says Simone: "In fact, it aims to be the world's first Smart Nation and is well poised to achieve its ambition. Asean as a whole is digitally ahead and there is a tremendous opportunity for even more development." Simone feels that now is the best time for anyone with an idea to translate their aspirations into reality. She also says that lifelong learning is more than a slogan and it is imperative to stay relevant.

been highlighted by the Committee on the Future Economy (CFE). Earlier this year, CFE deputy chairman Chan Chun Sing described data as a new resource – one that can create new competitive advantages, businesses and jobs for Singaporeans. As part of the CFE Deep Dive on Disruptive Technologies, Michael has been part of that ongoing discussion on how Singapore can leverage its strengths to seize opportunities in an increasingly digitised economy.

He strongly believes that Singapore's response to rapid technology and a data-driven world is a key factor for our success and that it gives the nation comparative advantages that position well to leverage on the global digital economy. "We must work with businesses to harness the potential of data, while safeguarding the privacy and security of our people," he says.

What skills will be indispensable in the future? Michael encourages people to develop some 'hard' skills such as writing a code, mastering new devices or even using software to analyse data. More importantly, he asks people to hop onto the various programmes that the government has in place to nurture a strong pipeline of talent and equip Singaporeans with the right skills. He says: "Join the Smart Nation Fellowship or Code for Fun enrichment classes. Also tap into SkillsFuture, which provides you with the opportunity to develop to your fullest potential throughout life."

Getting in Early with the Christmas Spirit

FSS recipients launched into the seasonal festivities at the beginning of December at their annual EA Christmas Lunch

More than 100 FSS recipients gathered at the Eurasian Community House to enjoy their annual Christmas Lunch and an afternoon of music, games and quizzes.

Students from the International School Singapore opened the entertainment with a skit before everybody tucked into Eurasian Christmas buffet by Quentin's restaurant that included a seasonal turkey.

Guests then took part in a Christmas trivia session before singing and dancing along to the tunes of the Music Men band. MC Paul Rodrigues was even dressed up as an elf to entertain the crowd.

For a lucky few there were fabulous prizes in the draw. The top two prizes – 32-inch Philip televisions – went to the Cubinar family and 'Aunty' Helen Joseph.

Mrs SR Nathan, who attended the event with her daughter, Juthika, donated a copy of Mr SR Nathan's book, *50 Stories from My Life*, to all the teenagers present.



Volunteers from the ISS put on a performance



Beneti Theseira welcomes guests to the lunch

Listening Carefully

The EA's latest Tea With Neighbours event focused on how to cope with hearing loss and deafness

Hearing loss is a common condition affecting people of all ages, but increases as we age. The Eurasian Association's Family Support Services (FSS) organised a Tea With Neighbours session on 13 November in collaboration with the Singapore Association for the Deaf and South-West Community Development Council to explain to senior citizens what causes hearing loss and deafness and how it affects individuals.

Audiological manager and speaker Lai Siu Fai taught guests simple sign language, how to address people who are deaf and how to care for their own ears.

The over-60s present at the talk also learned that they could be eligible to register for a special individual hearing screening session, free of charge.



Guests raising their hands to a question posed by the speaker



Speaker Mr Lai Siu Fai

Packed Full of Goodness

It's the Christmas spirit at its best. Each year, the Eurasian Association organises a festive box of Christmas goodies for members of the Eurasian community who are struggling to make ends meet. Five FSS volunteers and a few staff from the EA-Secretariat gathered at the Eurasian Community House on 14 December to pack 84 boxes of identical items.

The cheerful workers enjoyed putting together the treats, which included

biscuits, candies, chocolates, jam, cereals and a special jar of salt fish pickle from Quentin's restaurant. Each hamper contained more than 20 items and it took volunteers more than two days to deliver them throughout the island.

Funds for the hampers are raised yearly from the community, well-wishers and donors. The FSS committee expresses its sincere appreciation to the Silent Foundation for its generous contribution.



Eurasian Youths Raise Funds for Heritage Centre

The EA's youth proved that they're passionate about their heritage and culture when they organised a fund-raising Sunday lunch

Young Eurasians worked to support their cultural heritage recently when they organised their first social gathering to raise funds for the Eurasian Heritage Centre's upgrading work.

The Sunday lunch, organised by the EA Youth Sub-Committee and held at the Eurasian Community House on 30 October, attracted close to 50 guests.

Besides the official entertainment provided by The Music Clinic school's performing group, who belted out contemporary hits, teenage siblings Talisha and Tiffany Griesbach gave an impromptu rendition of *La Paloma* and *25*. The crowd lapped it all up.

IPPIN Café Bar, a Japanese eatery in Mohamed Sultan Road sponsored the Japanese Waku Waku beers for the event. Event executive Kris Ho says: "It was our pleasure to contribute to the success of the event and to help raise funds for the Eurasian Heritage Centre."

Siblings Talisha and Tiffany Griesbach gave an impromptu rendition of La Paloma and 25.



Uniform enjoyment at the Sunday Lunch

Committee and we were glad to see a good turnout of Eurasians from all ages, including a number of youths. We're grateful for the support of our sponsors and generous contributions from our fellow Eurasians towards the fund-raising for the Heritage Centre and glad that everyone enjoyed the event and that we were able to uncover some young musical talents within our midst."



Guests all smiles at the Sunday Lunch



EA Youth Sub-Committee, MC and EA Secretariat at the OktoberFest Lunch

Quentin's restaurant owner, Quentin Pereira, also sponsored delicious sugee cakes, which were sold to raise funds. Cash was also raised via the sale of EA polo shirts and mugs.

Christopher Gordon, who chairs the EA's Youth Sub-committee, says: "This is the first social event organised by the EA Youth



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In Pursuit of Power

Fitness fanatic Jordan Gomez is working towards helping others achieve their physical potential

Jordan Gomez' parents don't have to worry whether their teenage son is eating properly and getting enough exercise. The 18-year-old student is a health and fitness fanatic, who has just begun a Diploma in Sports and Exercise Sciences at Republic Polytechnic with the goal of becoming a physiotherapist and a professional bodyweight trainer.

Unlike many youngsters, Jordan started to take an interest in his health at an early age and was always active. But he didn't understand much about physical training until he was in Secondary Two and decided to learn more. He started to research how to improve his fitness and has not stopped since.

He recalls that one of his earliest goals was to increase his pull-up count. He says: "I had no clear knowledge of optimal training methods. I consistently trained and progressed. As I achieved my goal,

of leaders who engage in several physical fitness aspects, such as strength, power, muscular endurance, cardiovascular endurance, flexibility, mobility and more. All of these are organised so that the

"As I achieved my goal, I became more intrigued at what else I could achieve"

student members are able to sustain their energy throughout the session.

Jordan sees physiotherapy as the way that he can restore – and even improve – people's mobility after they sustain an injury. "I want them to return to the things that they love to do!" he says. He also hopes to become a professional bodyweight trainer in order to both improve himself and also pass on his knowledge to inspire future generations.

His favourite, exercise, he says, is the 'muscle-up', which was one of the first things that he learnt when he began bodyweight training and which he rates as a great example of power, strength and muscular endurance. "The muscle-up is essentially a pull-up followed by a dip. It is used to take yourself from below a set of rings or bar to above a set of rings or bar. To me, basics are what will build for us skills that we can utilise for other movements. That's why I love basic exercises the most."

Jordan used to suffer from asthma when he was younger. "I had to use the inhaler almost every day. After exercising, I have a better breathing capacity and



Muscling in on a healthy lifestyle

somewhere in late 2012, I found out from the doctor that I no longer needed the inhaler!"

A healthy lifestyle means a healthy diet, too. Jordan's comprises mostly natural foods such as whole-grain bread, pasta, oats, fruits, vegetables, meat and poultry. He also tries to consume high protein. He advises that it is important to eat in moderation to have a variety of food so the diet doesn't become boring. For those who are keen to lose weight, he recommends high-intensity interval training (HIIT) workouts which help to burn fat, boost metabolism rates and also build more lean muscle.



Jordan (at the back, hands aloft) at a street workout calisthenics event in Queenstown

I became more intrigued at what else I could achieve. I became a better person, not only physically but also mentally as I was able to study well and not be as playful as before."

Last year, when Jordan was pursuing his NITEC in Fitness Training at ITE College Central, he began training with friends who knew each other from the calisthenics community. There were others who trained at the same fitness corner and they eventually became friends. "Once, one of our physical education lecturers joined us to train and he suggested that this could be an interest group," he says. "From there, we have grown so much and formed our own independent co-curricular activity, Fitness Club Calisthenics."

The club now consists of 256 students and training sessions are conducted by a team



Jordan shows his strength at St James Power Station (in blue, doing the splits below the bar)

A Life in Service of the People

A new biography by Susan Sim celebrates the life of one of Singapore's most famous founding fathers



From left: Susan Sim, Edward D'Silva, Carla Barker, Minister K Shanmugam, Gloria Barker, Deborah Barker, Benett Theseira and Gerard de Silva

"Mr Barker embodied traits of the Eurasian community: passion, a steely resolve to make the idea of Singapore work, courageous humour in the face of adversity and a will to overcome despite one's size"

A biography of one of Singapore's most influential pioneers, *E W Barker: The People's Minister*, was launched at The Pod at the National Library on 7 December 2016. The guest of honour was Mr K Shanmugam, Minister for Law and Home Affairs, and the event was attended by the late Mr Barker's wife, Gloria, and more than 100 guests including former politicians, family and friends.

The book details the life of Singapore's first post-independence law minister. Besides offering insights into Edmund Barker's early years, when he was educated at Raffles Institution and the University of Cambridge, it also chronicles his role in drafting the separation papers from Malaysia that led to the formation of a sovereign Singapore and his numerous achievements while helming various ministries in a 25-year political career.

EA President Benett Theseira welcomed guests and also thanked Straits Times Press, the book's publishing arm, author Susan Sim and the book's steering committee consisting of Mr Barker's daughters, Carla and Deborah Barker, and EA trustees Edward D'Silva and Gerard de Silva. He also expressed his gratitude to Ngee Ann Development and the National Heritage Board for their generous funding.

In his speech, Mr Shanmugam said: "Mr Barker embodied traits of the



Daughters Carla and Deborah Barker and granddaughter Megan Barker perform a musical tribute

Eurasian community: passion, a steely resolve to make the idea of Singapore work, courageous humour in the face of adversity and a will to overcome despite one's size."

The evening included book readings by Susan Sim, Carla and Deborah Barker. There was also a special photo montage

that was played while Carla and Deborah and granddaughter Megan sang some of Mr Barker's favourite tunes, including the Everly Brothers' *Walk Right Back* and Louis Armstrong's *When You're Smiling*.

The book is available for sale at leading bookstores and the Eurasian Community House, priced \$45.90.



Guests at the book launch

His Grandmother's Tongue

Retired primary school teacher Bernard Mesenas has found a new lease of life helping to teach Kristang to a new generation of Singaporeans



Bernard Mesenas at the Eurasian Community House during a Kodrah Kristang class, helping to bring his beloved Kristang language back to life

Kristang, the Portuguese-Eurasians' own language – a hybrid of Portuguese and Malay borne out of the intermarriage between Portuguese colonisers who settled in Malacca and local Malay women – is fast disappearing as today's generation of Portuguese-Eurasians are no longer hearing it spoken at home.

But thanks to enterprising NUS linguistics under-graduate Kevin Martens Wong, who is on a mission to revive the language in Singapore, Kristang lessons are now being held to eager classes of Eurasians and non-Eurasians alike.

Kevin is not a native speaker of the language, and so he turned to 78-year-old Kristang speaker Bernard Mesenas to be his Kristang language consultant for the class.

Bernard started learning Kristang when he was eight years old from his grandmother, Magdalene Nonis, a Portuguese-Eurasian who patiently passed on the language to her grandson. They shared a close relationship because of the language, and these are memories that he holds close to his heart.

Bernard says: "When the Portuguese came looking for spices, they encountered rough seas and decided to go through the Straits of Malacca looking for a safe harbour. The rest is history."

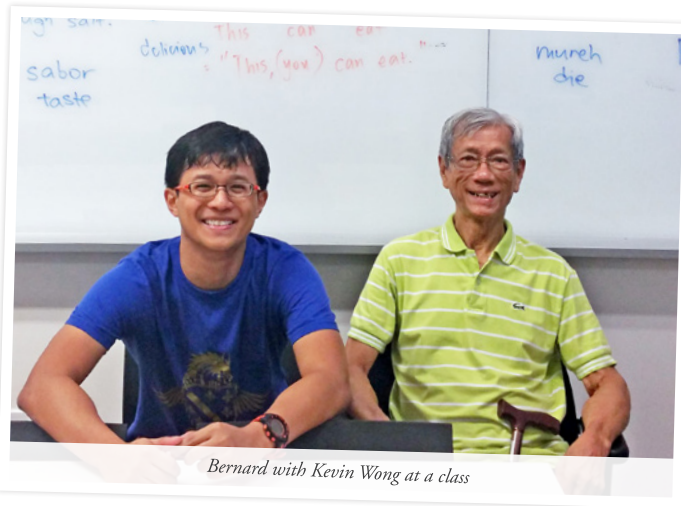
"I am not doing this for money. I am doing it for God and for the love for my grandmother"

Bernard found out about the active efforts to revive Kristang from his sister, Marie, who had read of Kevin's plans to bring the language back to life in *The NewEurasian*. Bernard was overjoyed to learn of the project, but not owning a

to pick up the language. Bernard says: "It gives me immense pleasure to see non-Eurasians wanting to learn Kristang; there's also a Bengali lady who has enrolled because of her interest in languages."

The revitalisation of an endangered language is not an easy task. However, Kevin has mapped out a 30-year master plan to ensure Kristang's future survival, and Bernard is keen to play his part. "I have attended all the classes, clarified the doubts of the Kristang tutors and would like to support Kevin to create awareness and teach Kristang language to more people around us," he says. The pair are also working to organise the first ever Kristang Language Festival in May in order to reach out to more Singaporeans.

Bernard concludes, "I am not doing this for money. I am doing it for God and for the love for my grandmother."



Bernard with Kevin Wong at a class

computer, he asked his niece to email Kevin. When the two met, they realised they could work well together to bring about a new generation of Kristang speakers.

Now, in class, Bernard helps the young tutors by clarifying doubts that they might have about the language, and observing how the students respond to the different materials being developed. He says the students in his class are enthusiastic and fast learners. The youngest is four years old; her mother is keen for her daughter

Kodrah Kristang ('Awaken, Kristang') classes began in March 2016 and have since been a huge success, attracting 192 learners in just eight months. Classes remain free and open to everyone, and the next class starts on 3 January at the National Library. If you are a Kristang speaker or are eager to learn the language, contact Kevin Martens Wong at kodrahkristang@gmail.com



Getting to grips with Kristang

Driving Force

As Singapore's roads get ever more crowded, good driving skills are paramount. Gerard Pereira has been working in the driving industry for more than 30 years to ensure we stay on the right track

Learning to drive is one of life's rites of passage for many of us, and it's also a great leveller – the humblest employee may well have far better road-craft skills than the boss.

But the early days of driving-tuition can be nerve-wracking, which is why the

He recalls: "We started SSDC with only one level in Ang Mo Kio. This new building in Woodlands is my baby. It took me three long years to plan each and every level and room and to ensure that the best space was provided to all colleagues, instructors and students." He had to immerse himself in the legalities of building requirements to ensure that the development was able to

I hope Singaporean drivers will learn is not to horn unnecessarily! It shows impatience." He says that drivers fail to realise that using the horn will simply create stress among other road users.

Secondly, he warns against using a mobile phone while driving, this is illegal and dangerous it can cause accidents and points out that even using your mobile



Gerard Pereira at the Singapore Safety Driving Centre

privately run Singapore Safety Driving Centre was set up in 1983 to improve the nation's driving skills away from the hassle of the daily traffic.

One of the centre's pioneers is Gerard Pereira, 59, who is now the centre's operation manager. He initially joined as a driving instructor when the centre was in Ang Mo Kio. Over his career, he switched to an instructional role and within five years was promoted to management level. During his instructional years, he frequently conducted overseas training courses and being bilingual (in English and Malay), which enabled him to teach in the region.

In March 2010, the centre relocated to a purpose-built, multi-story driving circuit and it was Gerard's responsibility to oversee the massive project.

"This new building in Woodlands is my baby. It took me three long years to plan each and every level"

pass through the many stages of approval.

"One of the biggest challenges that I faced was setting up the petrol kiosk, which has to serve the hundred of vehicles that we hold here," he adds. "Our structural engineers came up with a unique and, most importantly, safe idea to hold the petrol. They designed a concrete casing around the petrol tube to ensure it does not leak out fumes or petrol so it can dispense petrol 15 metres above ground; it took eight months before we received approval from the Singapore Civil Defence Force."

The 25,000 sq m site includes a three-storey driving circuit, a five-storey administration block that allows training and testing for all classes of licences and there are also rooms for lectures on driving theory plus a vehicle repair workshop and petrol pumps.

In addition to teaching basic driving skills, the centre also conducts defensive driving and riding courses and refresher driving course for qualified licence holders.

Gerard describes himself as a patient and decisive person, which he says are two of the most important qualities that a driver should possess. What are Singaporeans' worst driving habits? "One quality that

while crossing the road can result in an accident if you are not fully aware of the approaching vehicles.

Is he worried that driverless cars will eventually put him out of a job? "No," says Gerard. "There will still be jobs as an instructor because not all vehicles can be driverless. Buses, heavy vehicles, light goods vehicle and vans will still require

"One quality that I hope Singaporean drivers will learn is not to horn! It shows impatience"

a driving licence to operate. Also, not all countries will be driverless, so some countries will require a driving licence in order for you to drive in their country."

He also describes driving as an enjoyable experience and not something to be stressed about and looks forward to further technology that will assist in making driving even easier and more relaxed for the driver, such as technology that forecasts road and traffic conditions. But he adds: "You'll save yourself a lot of time and stress if you map out how you're getting to your destination before you leave."

Drumming Up Enthusiasm

Talented musician Mark De Souza is a stalwart of the Singapore Symphony Orchestra

Mark De Souza first became interested in music when he joined St Joseph Institution's Military Band. When his time came to do National Service, he enrolled for the Navy band.



SSO percussionist Mark De Souza

On completing NS, he decided to join the SSO as a freelance percussionist. During this time, he was offered a Public Service Commission scholarship to pursue music studies. That was some 25 years ago, and he has been with the SSO ever since. The talented musician now plays the guitar, piano, drums and other percussion instruments.

"YouTube instructional videos are great but they won't be able to check your mistakes and improper technique"

Mark says his career with the orchestra has been enriching and fulfilling. He recalls one standout occasion that he has probably enjoyed more in retrospect than he did at the time. "Once I played the xylophone in an encore entitled *Sabre Dance* at breakneck speed in a concert themed 'Russian Nights' some years ago. The Russian conductor led the orchestra in such a fast tempo that it was nearly

impossible to play! I managed to play in unison with the violins and the adrenaline overtook any nerves I had." The event was covered in the newspapers, much to the amusement of his colleagues.

"The Russian conductor led the orchestra in such a fast tempo that it was nearly impossible to play!"

"Another memorable experience was when I performed in *Hello Broadway* musical when I had to cover three players' parts. I managed to pull it off and also was given the soloist spotlight when the conductor invited me to go in front of the stage to start the drum beat to Lion King's Circle of Life. It was an exhilarating experience," he says.

Mark also conducts masterclasses in schools and spends some time teaching music. He says that as a teacher, preparing school band members for the Singapore Youth Festival competition is one of the toughest challenges he has to face. The school's budgets have to be spent over a



Mark accompanies a performer on the drums

good, experienced teacher. YouTube instructional videos are great but they won't be able to check your mistakes and improper technique," he advises. And teamwork is vital in an orchestra in order to work literally and metaphorically in harmony with your colleagues.

Mark could be starting a dynasty of musicians. "Today I am a proud father as both my sons, Brendan and Colin, have learned how to play the piano, percussion and French horn," he says.



Mark with his wife Dixie Wong, a former SSO French horn player, and sons Brendan (left) and Colin

four-month period and he has to decide how to spend the money in the most effective and efficient manner.

A successful career in the music industry relies on talent harnessed to "dedication, hard work, consistency and proficient practice", he says. "First and foremost, a beginner should have lessons with a

Catch Mark at the SSO's upcoming Discovering Music concert on 18 February, which explores how composers use stories, plays and poems as an inspiration to write great music. More information about all SSO productions can be found here: <https://www.sso.org.sg/whats-on.php?CategoryID=322&Upcoming=1>



Roaring into the New Year

Guests let down their hair and shook off the cares of 2016 as they ate, drank and danced their way into 2017 at the EA's New Year's Eve Dinner and Dance themed 'The Roaring 20s'.

Organising chairperson and MC for the night, Charlene Lee, and EA Second Vice-President Yvonne Pereira greeted the 200 guests at the Marina Mandarin Vanda Ballroom, who began the evening with cocktails and a chance to grab a snap or two at the photo booth before enjoying a buffet spread and a night of music by Ernesto Valerio, The Music Men band and DJ Bernard Jeremiah.

The lucky draw segment provided exciting prizes from the sponsors, with the winner of the top prize walking away with three-day stay at a luxurious villa in Phuket. As the seconds crept towards 12 o'clock, Old Father Time (aka Graham Ong-Webb) appeared, and on the stroke of midnight guests celebrated with party poppers and confetti guns.

Charlene Lee says: "We welcomed 2017 in a fabulous way! I would like to thank Yvonne Pereira, all the sponsors, entertainers, EA Secretariat and our lovely guests for supporting this annual event."

