

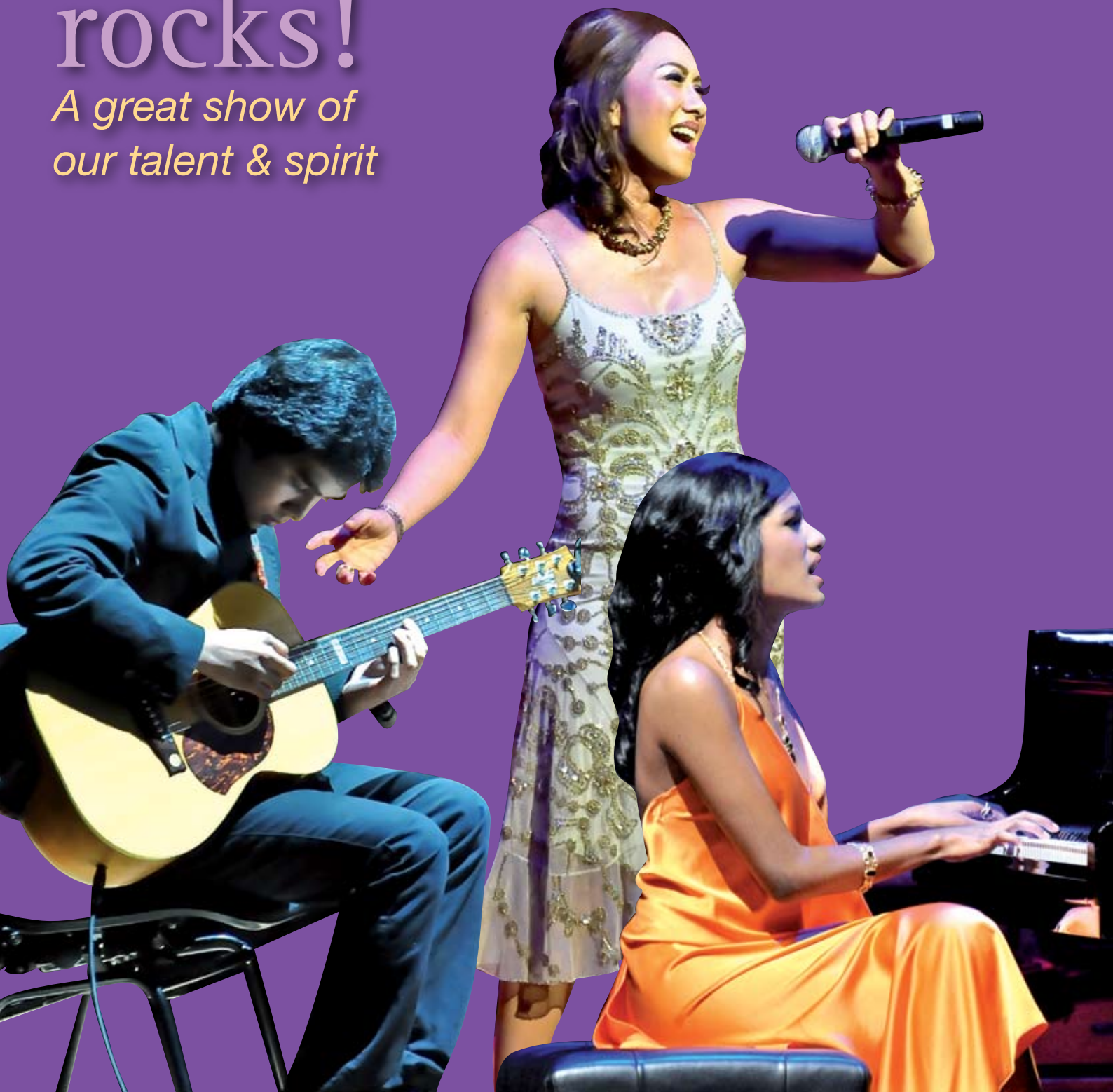
# THE NEW EURASIAN

[www.eurasians.org.sg](http://www.eurasians.org.sg)

JULY-SEPTEMBER 2009

## Eurasiana rocks!

*A great show of  
our talent & spirit*



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**On the cover:** Nick Hogan, Claressa Monteiro, Michaela Therese perform.



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# President's *Message*



The cover story of this issue focuses upon the Gala Extravaganza, held in honour of our 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. This certainly was a euphoric start, culminating in our centennial celebrations in 2019. Taking our cue from Eurasiana – A Musical Tribute which saluted our ‘Eurasian Champions’ who not only contributed to the success of our community but also played a role in nation-building the theme for this issue centres on nurturing our future leaders, future champions.

To this end, we will continue to place strong emphasis on education. This is the path to grooming our young Eurasians to excel in different sectors and eventually step up to inherit the mantle of leadership. Within these pages you will find articles on the Joint Tuition Awards and Buddhist Lodge Awards which are given out to deserving students. Also please note that the applications for the Eurasian Community Fund (ECF) Education Awards are still open and forms are available from the EA Secretariat. The importance of education in the lives of our youth can be evidenced at the recent Singapore Youth Awards, where six local talented recipients showed their balanced lives of work and community.

We also focus on interaction with our community through encouraging inclusivity as well as cohesion in our social and national responsibilities. As such, we pay tribute in this issue to those who have won accolades and brought glory to the Eurasian community in fields as wide-ranging as music and politics. We are as proud of our rocker Dixie Ferdinands and songbird Claressa Monteiro as we are of our

up-and-coming Members of Parliament, Michael Palmer, MP for the Pasir Ris-Punggol GRC, and Christopher de Souza, MP for Holland-Bukit Timah GRC .

Finally, to give credence to the importance of volunteers, this issue is pieced together by a group of very dedicated volunteers . It gives you a glimpse of the deeply rooted community of which you are a member and we hope inspires you to an active participation in the business of creating Eurasian champions for Singapore!

Wishing one and all a Blessed 44<sup>th</sup> National Day!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Edward D'Silva'. The signature is stylized and fluid, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

**Edward D'Silva**  
President,  
The Eurasian Association  
24 July 2009

# Tarmugi conferred ECH visitor status

**Eurasians honour the Speaker of Parliament with his own “key” to our community home.**

SATURDAY 31 May 2009 marked an important date in the Eurasian Association’s (EA) calendar.

That afternoon, members of the EA’s Management Committee and its various Mandatory and Advisory panels, as well as volunteers from different sub-committees, trooped down to Quentin’s, The Eurasian Restaurant in our community home on Ceylon Road.



*PAC Resident Band Daily Fix*

They were gathered there to witness the conferment of “Visitor to the Eurasian Community House” status on Speaker of Parliament Abdullah Tarmugi.

The ceremony began with EA president Edward D’Silva updating the guests on the recent progress made by the EA, such as the support our association has received from generous donors, the appointment of the various Mandatory and Advisory panels, and the greater emphasis on Family Support Services and Education.

Mr Tarmugi, in turn, reciprocated with a gracious speech on his affinity with the EA due partly to the fact that he also belongs to a minority race.

In a significant moment, Edward presented a symbolic key to the ECH to Mr Tarmugi, who unveiled a plaque designating his new title.

Guests were then treated to a



*Mr Abdullah Tarmugi (centre) with EA President Edward D’Silva (in tie), Trustee Timothy de Souza (in white shirt) and well-wishers*



*Veronica Ann, Lionel de Souza, Yvonne Pereira, Nancy Fobrogo and Dorothy Tessensohn*

sumptuous high tea while being serenaded with a medley of songs by PAC resident band, Daily Fix.

Mr Tarmugi went round to each table to chat with the various sub-committees. When it was time to take his leave, he was presented with a sugree cake to commemorate his visit.

The EA is honoured by Mr Tarmugi’s acceptance of the conferment and looks forward to a valued partnership.

## EA president appointed to NIC



IT WAS a proud moment for Eurasians and the Eurasian Association (EA) when EA president Edward D’Silva was appointed to the newly-established National Integration Council (NIC).

The council, headed by Dr Vivian Balakrishnan, the Minister for Community Development, Youth and Sports, was formed in early 2009 to promote social integration in Singapore and help new immigrants integrate into society.

The main thrust of the NIC’s programmes is to foster integration and mutual trust and to create a common sense of belonging among Singaporeans as well as new Singapore citizens and Permanent Residents.

Edward is part of an illustrious team that comprises ministers, private sector representatives, community leaders, media professionals and academics. It is hoped that this diverse membership will help generate news ideas and broader perspectives on social integration.

Speaking to the press, Dr Balakrishnan said that a deliberate decision was made to have the majority of the team come from the “people sector” in order to encourage a “bottom-up” approach. He added that the NIC will also monitor the progress of social integration and help resolve any problems that may arise.

## AGM 2009 attracts younger EA members

THIS year’s Eurasian Association (EA) Annual General Meeting saw a total of about 60 people turn up to support and share their views on the progress of the new Management Committee (MC) under the leadership of EA president Edward D’Silva.

Held at the Eurasian Community House on 30 April 2009, it attracted a good mix of younger EA members and “young at heart” veterans.

Honorary Secretary Harry Pereira walked everyone through the AGM book and brought everyone up to speed on the events, financials and goals for the rest of the term.

Edward gave an insightful speech that provided further background on the MC as well as information on the EA’s 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations. Following his talk, all adjourned to Quentin’s Eurasian Restaurant for a hearty dinner and community bonding.

Till AGM 2010, thank you to all who turned up for making the time to attend.

# The EA Evolution – From a Members' Club to a Charity for the Community

AS the Eurasian Association celebrates its 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year, we look back with pride on how it has evolved through the years. Founded in 1919 as a members' club, to make representation to the colonial government in pushing for social, political and economic growth and welfare of the Eurasian community – it is today one of the five self-help groups in Singapore which has qualified as a registered charity and bestowed with the Institution of Public Character (IPC) status.

## Setting the Path

The recent transformation effectively began in 1992 when the Eurasian Association ("EA") decided to take on a more active role in the Eurasian community by setting up the EA Endowment Fund ("the Fund"), separate from its social and community programs, to provide funding for educational and welfare programs for the community. This was the beginning of self-help status, which had already been granted to AMP, CDAC, Mendaki and Sinda. Due to the charitable objectives of the Fund, it was granted charity status which meant that income generated by the Fund is exempt from tax. As further support, the Fund was granted IPC status for 5 years and given a matching government grant for every dollar of donations raised. That is to say, we were now a non-profit or not-for-profit organisation.

As a condition for the benefits granted, EA had an obligation to the government to account and keep separate from its income and activities, the donations and grants it received under the Fund, which had to be used solely for its charitable objectives.

*An obligation to keep our social programs and funding separate from charitable programs and funding*

## Support from the Government

The next step in the transformation occurred during our 75th anniversary celebration dinner on 10 July 1994 when the then, Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong announced the backing by government to support EA's significant contributions to the Eurasian Community by giving us approval to set up the Eurasian Community Fund CPF check-off scheme. This allowed us to raise even more funds in support of education, welfare and cultural programs to serve the whole Eurasian community. With it, the government extended its matching annual grant of up to S\$150,000 a year; and we were given a termed lease to establish our very own premises at Mountbatten Road, for which the cost of refurbishment and rental was almost

wholly subsidized by the government.

## EA, the Charitable Organisation

EA was required to amend its constitution to qualify as a registered charity and was successfully granted IPC status on 1 April 2005. The obligation to keep its social programs and funding separate from its charitable programs and funding became even more important. Shortly after, work began on finding a permanent home which would serve as a beacon for the entire Eurasian community and again we turned to the government for support. We were provided with 90% of the funding for the construction of The Eurasian Community House and for the full land rental, on the condition that it be used to promote the education, welfare and cultural needs of the Eurasian community. In the words of Minister Tharman Shanmugaratnam at our Education Awards ceremony in 2003,

*"The Association has come far, and has taken itself to a new plane in the last 10 years. Once largely a social club for its members, the Association is today a body dedicated to the educational and social upliftment of all Singaporean Eurasians, and an integral plank in our nation building efforts."*

Since then the ECF matching grants have increased to \$300,000 annually. We also receive many other government matching grants, like the Opportunity Fund, the GST-offset package, Heritage Endowment Fund, and other funding from time to time. As almost all of these grants are matching dollar-for-dollar grants, we also need to raise funds from the community in order to qualify for these grants.

*Maintaining our IPC status is essential to our fund raising efforts as it allows the donor to claim a tax deduction of 250% of the amount donated*

## The New Organisational Structure of EA

While there are many registered and exempt charities in Singapore, not all have IPC status as higher corporate governance and reporting requirements are required for IPC status. These regulations have been stepped up even further in the last few years following the failures of certain charities to maintain a strict adherence to their charitable objectives and roles. EA is in a unique position among the charities in that it started as a member's society serving

the needs of its members but has over the years taken on the role of custodian and administrator of the funds and programs for the whole of the Eurasian community. While in form it still remains a registered society and as such maintains a member's listing, it is now first and foremost a registered charity with IPC status. As a society, the members elect the management committee who are responsible for the day-to-day running of the Association. However as a charity, the board of trustees working together with the management committee has the ultimate responsibility and obligation to meet the regulatory requirements to maintain its charity and IPC status, as almost all of the funding it receives today is intended for the charitable programs. The corollary of this is that our social programs need to be self-reliant and self-funded, and this is the case today.

Such regulations require us to demonstrate that we have a transparent and efficient reporting system and to have our financial and other information posted on both our website and the charities portal, a solid system of internal controls with special emphasis on the issuance of donation receipts and the use of funds, an independent and knowledgeable board of trustees, management committee, staff and advisors with clear roles, responsibilities and accountability to its donors and the government. To ensure that we stand tall among the other much larger self-help groups, we have over the last year, expanded and strengthened our organisation structure to include advisory panels which allow us to tap on our own Eurasian professional expertise in their various fields to provide guidance, specifically in the areas of finance, fund-raising, audit matters, legal, corporate governance and media & communications to meet the stringent regulations of a charity with IPC status.

## The Next 10 years

As we move from our 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary to our grand centennial, we aim to grow from strength to strength and to reach out and serve many more Eurasians in our community and to truly be the beacon of the Eurasian Community.

To do so we will need more Eurasians to come forward to volunteer their time and to donate generously to help us help our Eurasian Community.

In the words of our founding member, Mr. E Tessensohn when he proposed the formation, "Let the Eurasian Association be the solution and answer to all." – *Jean Pereira*

# History comes alive

**Eulyth Fernandez and Lucille Marcus are Heritage Guides who bring visitors on Learning Journeys through the Eurasian experience.**

## The Eurasian Showcase

Guide: Eulyth Fernandez

“THIS programme is for anyone, from students to community groups, who wants to know more about our culture and traditions and what it is to be a Eurasian.

They learn about our European and Asian roots, mixed parentage and the various religions, administration, sports, language, food and music that our



Students viewing school textbooks used during the Japanese Occupation



Eulyth Fernandez enthraling students at the Eurasian Showcase

forefathers — for example, Portuguese, Dutch and British — brought with them out of Europe.

They also learn that being a Eurasian was not easy in the 1800s and 1900s — neither accepted by the Europeans nor the Asians but nevertheless representing the best of both worlds.

The feedback I've gotten from those who've been through the programme is that now they know more about Eurasians and how to identify someone who is Eurasian, instead of classifying us as Chinese, Malays or “others”.

To me, it is the experience of a lifetime interacting with other races and passing the knowledge of our culture and history on to the younger generation.”

## WWII — The Eurasian Story

Guide: Lucille Marcus

“THIS exhibition reveals the lives of Eurasians in Singapore from the carefree pre-World War II years through the Syonan years of the Japanese Occupation in the 1940s up to liberation by the allied forces in 1945.

Artefacts, documents, photographs and memoirs bring out the trials of living in the Changi and Sime Road camps, the horrors in constructing the Siam-Burma Railway and the struggles to eke out a living in food-scarce Singapore.



Learning journey guides and Kristang Cultural Dance Troupe dancers with Singapore Sports School students



Students at the WWII- The Eurasian Story

My uncle was one of 3,000 settlers in the little-known Eurasian settlement in Bahau, in the middle of the Malayan jungle. We have a scaled-down model that shows what the disease- and mosquito-infested settlement looked like.

Being a Heritage Guide has brought me closer to my roots as my father, a doctor, was one of those sent to the Siam-Burma or “Death Railway”. Whenever I show his passport and the poem he wrote on the horrors he faced during that time, I feel a sense of closeness to him.”

Learning Journeys, conducted at the Eurasian Community House, provide visitors with glimpses into the history and heritage of Eurasians in Singapore. For more information, call the Education Executive at 6447-1578. Or go to [www.learningjourneys.edu.sg](http://www.learningjourneys.edu.sg)

## A helping hand for students

HE had to depend on grants to help him pay for his entire education — from school right through university. Despite the odds, he made a success of himself and is now giving back to students in need.

Singapore Eurasian Lawrence da Silva has generously donated \$150,000 (\$50,000 a year over three years from 2009) for a new bursary/scholarship scheme for ITE, polytechnic and junior college students, to be administered by the Eurasian Association.

“I want to provide a helping hand to our youth, especially those from needy backgrounds,” says Mr da Silva, who was orphaned in World War II. Funded all the way by government bursaries and scholarships, he capped his education in 1962 with an honours degree in economics from the then University of Singapore.

Besides being Deputy Registrar at the Singapore Polytechnic for five years, Mr da Silva also set up the United World College of South-east Asia in 1972, and was Director of Administration and Company Secretary until he retired in 2002. Even after retirement, he has been active as chairman of the Christian Brothers Schools board, and headed the move to establish SJI International in 2007, which he also chairs.

His philosophy: “I firmly believe that education enables a person to realise his true potential and equips him or her to face the realities of life and career.”

# Calling all students!

APPLY for the Eurasian Community Fund (ECF) Education Awards! The awards encourage all Eurasian students — primary, secondary, junior college, polytechnic, ITE or university — to be the best they can be by providing assistance as well as encouragement.

If you're a Singapore citizen or Permanent Resident and are Eurasian or have one parent who is Eurasian, you can receive a bursary, study grant or a Distinction or Excellence Award.

Get application forms from the EA Secretariat, Level 3 Eurasian Community House. Or call Jacqueline Peiris at 6447-1578 or e-mail her at [jacqueline@eurasians.org](mailto:jacqueline@eurasians.org).

## Tuition awards for deserving students

THE Joint Tuition Awards (JTA) are presented to students who achieve significant improvement in their results at the PSLE, GCE N and O level examinations after participating in the Collaborative Tuition Programme (CTP).

Jointly run by the four self-help groups, the Chinese Development Assistance Council (CDAC), Eurasian Association (EA), Singapore Indian Development Association (SINDA) and Yayasan MENDAKI, the CTP provides tuition to students of all races.

This year's JTA ceremony, organised by CDAC, was held at Nanyang Polytechnic Auditorium on 11 July. Ms Grace Fu, Senior Minister of State for National Development and Education, was the Guest-of-Honour, and EA volunteer Ms Charlene Lee was the Emcee.

A total of 13 Eurasian students received awards, and the top three academic performers were Tricia Fernandez (O level), Vanessa Rozario (N level) and Samuel Wittberger (PSLE).

To find out more about the CTP programme, contact Education Executive Jacqueline Peiris at 6447-1578.



## Man U coaches train our boys

THREE Manchester United Soccer Schools (MUSS) coaches from the UK were again in town in mid-June to conduct coaching programmes with young local teams as part of the MUSS ongoing efforts to develop young individuals and teams in Singapore and Malaysia.

This time, the Eurasian Association (EA) Soccer School was selected, and our boys and coaches were treated to a special two-hour training session on 16 June, conducted by UK coaches Robin van der Laan, Robert Peck and Andy Dixon.

Though the session was intensive, all enjoyed it tremendously. It even inspired our coaches to come up with some new ideas for our training syllabus.

Anyone interested in joining the EA Soccer School can call Harry Pereira at 9638-2733.

## Five students get bursaries

FIVE Eurasian students received bursaries at the 31<sup>st</sup> Buddhist Lodge Award Presentation Ceremony (Secondary Level) held at the Singapore Buddhist Lodge Auditorium on 25 April.

At the event, officiated by Guest-of-Honour Dr Vivian Balakrishnan, Minister for Community Development, Youth and Sports, Bridget Ann Welford of Paya Lebar Methodist Girls' School accepted the certificates on behalf of the Eurasian Association.

The other Eurasian students were:

- Hazel Melissa Pereira of CHIJ Secondary
- Nurfaizah bte Muhd Faizuan of Temasek Secondary School
- Siti Nafira bte Mohamed Noor of Pasir Ris Crest Secondary School
- Patrick Anthony Nair of St Gabriel's Secondary School

They were awarded \$650 (Secondary 4 level), \$400 (Sec 3) and \$300 (Sec 2).



Bridget Ann Welford accepting certificates from Dr Vivian Balakrishnan



# Tough & tumble

**National level rugby player Daniel Chow (left, in red) – whose dad is Chinese and mum Eurasian – talks about his love of the sport and being true to yourself.**

## **Eurasians and rugby. Is that a rare combination?**

In fact, there are many Eurasians playing rugby in Singapore. In the national squad, there were a few of us

such as Paul Foster, I think his dad is English and his mother is Chinese. Nick Groen, who's half-Canadian half-Chinese. My younger brother, David, plays for a club side as well. I know there are several up-and-coming Eurasians looking to break into the national team.

## **How did you get into rugby?**

I started in Raffles Institution, so I've been playing rugby for about 12 years. Through my teenage years, my interest in the sport grew and I moved on to playing for clubs and national age group teams.

## **And you made it all the way to the national team...**

I earned my first 2 caps for Singapore in the summer of 2007 and was in the national team that competed in the SEA Games in December that year. We won a bronze medal. It's my proudest rugby achievement.

## **Was it tough juggling studies and rugby?**

It was a challenge, especially when I was at the Singapore Management University. I had to make a lot of sacrifices, training in the evenings and then back to the library to study. At times, I did lose my focus, mostly because of the stress. Academically, I think I could have done better. But overall, I did my best to balance my studies, sports and social life. It's very important to have your own expectations and I think I reached my own so I have no regrets.

## **What are your plans?**

Having graduated from SMU, I'll be doing what everyone else does, look for a job! In the meantime, I'm helping out at my mother's security company.

## **What does being Eurasian mean to you?**

I think it's unique to be a Eurasian in Singapore. I think someone of a mixed heritage exemplifies what Singapore is all about. I believe it's very important to get in touch with your roots, and I always make the effort to know more about my family background, both the Chinese side and Eurasian side.

## **Any advice for aspiring youngsters?**

Go out there and chase your dreams, but don't lose yourself while doing it. Always keep in touch with your principles, yourself, your friends and most importantly, your family.

## Young Eurasians live on radio

THREE community-active young Eurasian professionals, as well as Member of Parliament Christopher de Souza, got up close and personal with listeners to MediaCorp Radio's 938 Live station on June 1 in a special edition of talk show "The Living Room".

Mr de Souza, an MP in the Holland-Bukit Timah GRC and a Eurasian Association (EA) volunteer, told hosts Pamela Ho and Stanley Leong that the EA reaches beyond the Eurasian community, and that its doors are open to anyone from any ethnic group who wants to be part of Singapore's Eurasian family.

Sybil Rocha, corporate lawyer and chairman of the EA's Mentoring Young Leaders Network (MYLN), Zaf Coelho, conference manager and MYLN vice-chairman, and Kimberly Gordon, media professional and MYLN creative manager, joined in the "lively chat".

The three gung-ho 20somethings willingly volunteer their time and energy "to engage, equip and empower other young people – and not only within the Eurasian community", explained the hosts in a blog about the broadcast.

They shed valuable light on MYLN's initiatives and goals and how it is nurturing leadership among young Eurasian professionals, and the sterling work being done by the EA to better the lot of the community.

They also highlighted the MYLN-organised seminar on post-secondary options for students and their parents – regardless of race, language or religion.



## EA visits Eurasians at Republic Poly

THE MYLN committee – together with Eurasian Association (EA) Management Committee members Harry Pereira, Christine Clunies-Ross and Yvonne Marie Pereira – visited Eurasian staff and students at Republic Poly on 15 May as part of MYLN's outreach programme.

During the visit, an overview of the EA, highlighting its key programmes and activities, and the MYLN was presented to the audience. After the presentations, participants and visitors mingled over light refreshments.

All found it an enjoyable and beneficial evening and the visitors were heartened that those who attended were appreciative of EA's efforts to reach out to Eurasians in society.

*Heartfelt thanks to Mr Yeo Li Pheow, Principal of Republic Poly, for gracing the event and Mr Khng Eu Meng and Ms Tan Lay Pheng of the Corporate Communications Department for organising the visit.*



# Fair exchanges

“A wonderful, insightful cultural experience” is how **CRISPIN RODRIGUES** describes his week of interacting with youth leaders from around Asia.

“PUT 36 strangers in a room, each with different viewpoints, ideals and perceptions of life, and ask them to work together, exchange ideas and create change in their societies and what do you get: The 2<sup>nd</sup> ASEAN+3 Leader Executive Programme (LEP), held in Singapore in late March.

I embarked on the LEP not knowing what I was to gain from it or even if I would even fit in. Not only was I the only Eurasian, I was also the youngest. I felt very small compared to my fellow participants, who ranged from social workers to heads of department and even a vice-mayor.

But I fitted in perfectly. And I had the opportunity to network and create lasting friendships.

I introduced a South Korean delegate to the idea of holistic education and discussed with the Malaysian delegate exchange programmes between the Eurasian Associations of our countries.

I also had tons of fun taking the

delegates on the Singapore Flyer, late-night shopping at Mustafa Centre, going bowling at Marina Square and even clubbing at Clarke Quay. And I brought a couple of the delegates to the Eurasian Community House, where they tasted the delicious Sunday buffet at Quentin's and visited our exhibitions.

Throughout the week, the delegates also tasted the huge selection of Singapore cuisine, from spicy laksa to sinful char kway teow to good old chicken rice.

One concrete outcome of our discussions was the creation of an independent entity from ASEAN, which would utilise the Singapore-ASEAN youth fund to create opportunities for the various ASEAN+3 nations to collaborate and get involved, including programmes to create awareness of the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), opportunities for exchange of ideas, cultural displays and leadership development.

In June, this independent organisation brought together youths from the various nations to the Philippines to collaborate with Gawak Kalinga, a prominent non-profit organisation, to learn about environmental sustainability and how to achieve the MDGs.

Personally, I resolved to collaborate with my counterparts, both regional and local, on various independent projects.

Overall, I felt that the programme was not just about developing strategies, but also about strengthening bonds between neighbours and friends. As Eurasians, we bring our own style and flair to the melting pot of ideas, and the friendships I made and the lessons I learnt were priceless.”

Visit the group's Facebook page called *ASEAN+3 alumni* or <http://sites.google.com/site/asean2009/>



## For a brighter future

SECONDARY students — and their parents — had an invaluable opportunity to find out about post-school study options at the *What's Next: Exploring Post-Secondary Options event* at the Eurasian Community House on 6 June.

Organised by the Eurasian Association's Mentoring Young Leaders Network (MYLN), it saw about 50 students and parents, five polytechnics and three junior colleges come together for an afternoon of talks, presentations and discussions.

The event — the first of its kind organised by a self-help group — evolved from an idea suggested at an MYLN monthly coffee session. Some members had raised concerns that there were no avenues for students to explore their

options and clarify their doubts.

Besides a career talk by Ms Debra Scully, a career counsellor at Katong Convent, the eight institutions took part in a panel discussion, made presentations on their courses and showcased them in booths so that students could consider the choices at their leisure.

Overall, the event proved an unqualified success. Many students and parents left with a better understanding of post-secondary options, the entry requirements and a determination to enter the courses of their choice.

*MYLN thanks the institutions, Ms Debra Scully and all those who helped out in one way or another.*

### OPEN & USEFUL

“All the polytechnics were here under one roof. I gained a lot of knowledge that will help me make an informed choice for my future.” — **SINDA student**

“I found the event really useful. Now, I have a clearer idea of my goals and I'm going to work hard at my O levels.” — **St Patrick's student**

“This event exposed the students to many different opportunities and allowed them to clear their doubts about what's ahead.” — **Aaron Angus, Facilitator, Republic Polytechnic**



One for the album: President S R Nathan and Mrs Nathan with Eurasiana artistes and PAC dancers



The grand finale

# What a wonderful show

Marking the Eurasian Association's 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary, *Eurasiana* celebrated the Eurasian spirit – and cultural harmony. CHRISTIAN EBER and CRISPIN RODRIGUES were thrilled to experience it.



Rocker John Molina

EURASIANS of all ages turned up in droves at the Esplanade Concert Hall on 26 and 27 June to enjoy and take pride in the community's musical talent in a sparkling concert called *Eurasiana – A Musical Tribute*.

Co-presented by the People's Association (PA) and the Eurasian Association (EA) and marking the EA's 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the 2 evenings drew packed houses and wowed audiences who called the shows "magnificent!", "spectacular!" and "fantastic!"

As the concert was also this year's edition of the PA's signature annual concert Soundwaves, *Eurasiana* was a shining example of cross-community collaboration that produced a uniquely Singaporean experience.

Multi-talented Cultural Medallion recipient Dick Lee, the creative director, worked to make it "a landmark concert with all the colour and rhythm of our multiculturalism". And with fellow Cultural Medallion recipient Iskandar Ismail as music director and conductor, *Eurasiana* was 95 minutes of musical magic!

## Classy performers

Hosted by veteran radio DJ Brian Richmond, suave presenter Hamish Brown, elegant former-NMP Eunice Olsen and classy host Andrea DeCruz, it had something for everyone – from golden oldies to upbeat arrangements of familiar ethnic songs to the latest pop hits.

Our new generation of talents like singer-songwriter Michaela Therese,

Iskandar Ismail, musical director and conductor of *Eurasiana*



Vernon Cornelius, 'Peter Pan' of Pop





The three divas Vanessa, Alemay and Candice belt their hearts out

Guest Claudine Rodrigues with volunteer Elizabeth Schurmann



Humphrey de Conceicao, Daphne da Silva, Lawrence da Silva and Edward D'Silva



Host Brian Richmond with son Don, Minister Mah Bow Tan, Stephen Francis and son, and John Molina

Alemay and Vanessa Fernandez and Candice de Rozario thrilled with their powerful vocals, while those who lived through the 1960s had their nostalgic moment with the Peter Pan of local pop, Vernon Cornelius, and accordionist Royston Minjoot.

Women went gaga over sexy rocker John Molina. Stephen Francis and Marina Xavier did a swinging duet, and singer-songwriter Don Richmond, youngest son of Brian, turned up the tempo with his own song from the local production of the hit play, *Bent*.

Sultry songstress Claessa Monteiro gave a lovely rendition of *Somewhere Over The Rainbow* to the simple yet heart-stirring solo guitar accompaniment by super-talented youngster Nick Hogan, who's studying at the prestigious Berklee College of Music in Boston, USA.

But her brother Jeremy Monteiro —

the jazz pianist, singer, composer, music educator and Cultural Medallion recipient — one-upped her. Even those not into jazz were awed by his world-class performance on piano, with just bass and drums, of his unique take on the tune that sings of the Eurasian love of music, dance and life, *Jinkli Nona*.

*continued to page 12*

Backstage team Crispin Rodrigues, Humphrey De Conceicao and Kimberly Gordon

Hosts Brian Richmond, Eunice Olsen, Andrea De Cruz and Hamish Brown banter on stage





EA Eurasiana dancers with Dick Lee



Patrick Zehnder and Mrs. Jennifer Yeo, Minister George Yeo and singer-songwriter Don Richmond

**Pop Orchestra wows**

In addition to a short emotive video honouring pioneer Eurasians such as President Benjamin Sheares, Edwin Tessensohn, Ambassador Stanley Stewart and law minister E.W. Barker, audiences applauded the 50-strong Singapore Pop Orchestra. A musical melting pot that included traditional Chinese, Malay and Indian instruments, it was a joy to listen to.

And like all great Eurasian parties, the concert ended on a high with our very own Eurasiana Dancers motivating the audience to dance All Night Long to the Lionel Richie classic, with a twist of *Jinkli Nona* thrown in.

The atmosphere was so electrifying that the first-night's VIPs — guest of honour President S R Nathan, Minister representing Eurasians in Parliament George Yeo, National Development Minister Mah Bow Tan and Eurasian MPs Christopher de Souza and Michael Palmer and their wives, as well as PA Chief Executive Director Tan Boon Huat — rose to their feet with the audience to give the performers a standing ovation.

In the post-concert euphoria, a member of the audience likened the concert to “a delicious buffet spread combining new talents with old-world charm”. And Brian Richmond commented that “Eurasians have always had a hold on the best musical talent”.



Jeremy and Claressa Monteiro and Humphrey De Conceicao



Accordionist Royston Minjoot



Co-producer Anna Belle Francis



Solo Guitarist Nick Hogan

Indeed, *Eurasiana* was a once-in-a-lifetime event that will surely live long in the memories of those fortunate enough

to have been there. After all, it was more than a concert — it was an affirmation and a celebration of the Eurasian spirit.

**Take a bow!**

A huge thank-you to our behind-the-scenes support and lovely Eurasiana Dancers.

**EA's Eurasiana Organising Committee & Production Team**

**Chairman & Sponsorship**

Humphrey De Conceicao

**Advisor & Sponsorship**

Edward D'Silva

**Co-Producer & Talent Management**

Anna Belle Francis

**Reception & Sponsorship**

Elizabeth Schurmann

**Script & Sponsorship**

Crispin Rodrigues

**Eurasian Tribute Research & Concept**

Geoffrey Morris, Vernon Cornelius

**Eurasian Tribute Research & Videography**

Kimberly Gordon

**Backstage Management**

Leon Francis

**Budget Management**

Harry Pereira

**Photography**

Mark Spencer

**Secretariat**

Jeanie D'Conceicao

**EA Secretariat**

Patch Tan, Lester Low, Lorraine Bligh

**EA Eurasiana Dance Group**

**Head, EA Dance Group & Wardrobe**

Lanette Stuart/De Conceicao

**Lead Performer, Dance Team 1**

Vanessa Garnell

**Lead Performer, Dance Team 2**

Sarah De Conceicao

**Performers**

Jamie Yun, Hannah Alphonso.

Claire Lopez, Dewi Sulastri, Heather Thomaz,

Loraine Thomaz, Nicole Da Silva,

Veron Ann Lincoln, Low Poh Wan

# Spotlight on MP Palmer

**Eurasian Member of Parliament Michael Palmer becomes a “key voice”.**

AFFABLE and approachable Michael Palmer, MP for the Pasir Ris-Punggol GRC, is also a man who “speaks his mind, asks tough questions and pushes the boundaries of political debate”, revealed *The Straits Times* in a two-page interview with him on 12 June.

That’s the reason he was thrust into the limelight. The 40-year-old became a “key voice” in Parliament when he called for greater transparency from Temasek Holdings after it revealed that its sale of its entire stake in Bank of America had resulted in losses of between S\$3.3 billion and S\$6.7 billion.

In his interview with Correspondent Zakir Hussain, topics ranged from his role as chairman of the Government Parliamentary Committee (GPC) for Defence and Foreign Affairs to his excitement about the vibrancy of modern Singapore to why he feels Singapore’s state investment agencies need to be more upfront with facts and information.

Other MPs had also called for more openness. Mr Palmer explained that behind such calls is the fact that Singapore now

has a mature, educated population that wants and is prepared to question and probe for more information so that they can assess a situation for themselves.

If those in their 40s are regarded as more outspoken now, as compared to the past, those in their 20s are even more demanding, he pointed out. That does not indicate a distrust of the Government, he added, but a yearning for more information.

A partner at law firm Harry Elias Partnership, Mr Palmer — who became an MP three years ago — has a “reputation for raising sometimes sensitive issues in a thoughtful but sharp manner”, noted Mr Hussain.

In a “surprise honour”, Mr Palmer was picked from among 10 GPC chairmen to open the five-day debate on the President’s Address in Parliament in May — and to sum it up at its end. A sign that he’s rising in the political ranks perhaps? Mr Palmer laughed off the suggestion in his signature affable style.



## Portuguese dance expert passes on her skills

SINGAPOREANS are familiar with Chinese, Malay and Indian dance forms as part of our shared culture and heritage. We have embraced Western types of social dance, too, such as ballroom, Salsa and line dancing.

In recent years, there has also been a growing interest in the Eurasian community, especially in our culture, food, beliefs, practices and language, as well as in our heritage and roots. Even Eurasians are more interested than ever!

To cater to this interest, the Eurasian Association (EA) decided to act on an idea mooted by President S R Nathan to tap on the wealth of talent from various European countries, starting with Portugal, which form part of our heritage.

The plan is for experts to visit Singapore for one to two weeks, giving talks and classes that offer greater insights into the cultural roots of the Eurasians.

To kick it off, the EA brought in an expert in Traditional Portuguese Folk Dance (TPFD). Professor Margarida

Moura, of the Human Kinetics Faculty at the Technical University of Lisbon, visited from 28 June to 5 July.

As her visit here was short, Prof Moura conducted classes in TPFD and Portuguese Line Dance only for dance instructors, trainers and dance groups, who came from the Kristang Cultural Troupe (from Siglap South CC), the People’s Association Folk and Line Dance Instructors and the EA’s Eurasiana Dancers.

The results of the workshop were showcased on 4 July at a special event, organised by South East CDC, aptly titled *Shall We Dance? An Evening Of Portuguese Dance*. The entire project was generously sponsored by the President’s Challenge and South East CDC.

Coming up: Our Eurasiana Dancers will represent EA at various public performances, and the group’s head dancers will be conducting classes at EA and various schools. For details, check with EA’s Secretariat at 6447-1578.





Claressa Monteiro

# Two of our best singers honoured

**Congratulations to Claressa Monteiro and Dixie Ferdinands!**

TWO of the Eurasian community's finest vocalists have been honoured with awards from COMPASS (Composers and Authors Society of Singapore), which they received at the society's 14<sup>th</sup> awards presentation at Raffles City Convention Centre on 17 May.

Velvet-voiced Claressa, whose brother is jazz legend Jeremy Monteiro, received the Award for Artistic Excellence, together with singer Kit Chan. It is given to outstanding individuals who have excelled in the fields of performing, composing, arranging and producing music.

She joins such local music giants as Iskandar Ismail, Dick Lee, Jacintha Abisheganaden and the T'ang Quartet, all recipients of the award. "It is lovely to receive this award, a wonderful validation of the last 22 years of my musical career," she told the TODAY newspaper.

Besides performing in Dubai, Cambodia and the *Eurasiana* concert and Sun Festival in

Singapore, Claressa also has a radio show on Gold 90 FM.

Veteran performer Dixie Ferdinands received the COMPASS Meritorious Award, together with classic music composer Phoon Yew Tien. The award is given to prominent individuals for their outstanding achievements and contributions to the development of local music.

Dixie, who comes from a family of music-makers, wrote his first song in 1966. He is perhaps best known as the founder-member and lead guitarist of Gypsy, one of the leading bands in Singapore's flourishing entertainment scene in the 1980s.

He has also worked as a producer in Bangkok, taught music to Vietnamese refugees as a volunteer in 1991, and has even performed in hospitals, homes for the aged, RCs and community clubs and numerous charity shows.

And he has strong ties with the Eurasian Association (EA). He has been the EA's guitar tutor since Jan 2002, encouraging students to perform in shows organised by the Performing Arts Chapter, and composed the song *Eurasiana*, which was performed by Dixie and his 19-piece ensemble at the EA's official opening in 2003.



Dixie Ferdinands



COUPLE Senthil Kumara and Laura Rebecca Jonathan are among the top five couples in the "Beautifully Imperfect" contest on Facebook, launched in April by the Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports (MCYS).

Organised as a follow-up to the "Funeral" TV commercial that urges people to appreciate others' differences, the contest aims to bring to light the different facets of couples who recognise and appreciate each other's imperfections.

Laura, who is Eurasian, and Senthil, who is Indian, were inspired to enter the contest after watching the "Funeral" ad. They were one of more than 370 couples who signed up. The

## Perfectly imperfect

winning couple will be the one who gets the most number of "like" clicks from friends and the Facebook users.

What makes this couple "Beautifully Imperfect"? Their differences, says Laura. "But we share many similarities too. We are both adventurous, love travelling and enjoy nature. And we're very optimistic which allows us to dream big and work with determination towards success."

Laura describes their relationship as "a bed of roses, including the thorns!" Yet "we are able to accept each other's imperfections, and that's true love."



Author Kirsteen Zimmern

## Eurasians, booked!

SINGAPORE Eurasians will feature in an upcoming book on Eurasians in Asia. On three days over the Easter weekend, Hong Kong Eurasian Kirsteen Zimmern visited the Eurasian Community House to photograph and interview several EA members for her book, *The Eurasian Face*.

The book, to be published in late-2009, is the 30-year-old photographer-author's first. It will feature black-and-white portraits of Eurasians in Asia, accompanied by interviews that reveal their thoughts and experiences of being Eurasian.

Speaking to EA members Zoe Lazaroo, Joan Pereira, Burton Westerhout, Catherine Zuzarte, Lionel de Souza, Dorothy Tessensohn, Christina Theseira, Jean Consigliere, Warren Consigliere and myself, Kirsteen appeared fascinated by the strength of our cultural identity.

The interviews also brought to light the differences — and similarities — between Hong Kong and Singapore Eurasians.

Born in Hong Kong in 1979 to a Chinese father and Scottish mother, Kirsteen spent her early years in a Chinese village in the New Territories with her parents and extended Chinese family.

After primary and secondary education in Hong Kong, she read law in the United Kingdom and attained her Bachelor's and Master's degrees. After "eating her dinners" at Inner Temple in London, she was called to the Bar of England and Wales and returned to Hong Kong to practice as a barrister.

Kirsteen has always enjoyed photography, particularly portraiture. She is married and has three children — a son and two stepdaughters. — *By Yvonne Pereira*

LADY NAN OEHLERS, 1909-2009

## Farewell to a bonnie Eurasian

FAMILY and friends of the late Lady Nan Oehlers came together at a memorial service held at the Eurasian Community House on Tuesday 19 May to reminisce about and pay homage to a lovely and remarkable woman.

Lady Nan passed away on 29 April 2009 in Adelaide, just a few months after reaching her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday on 18 January. On that special occasion, she had received letters from Queen Elizabeth II and the Prime Minister of Australia, and enjoyed a rousing party with family and friends — even taking a celebratory nip of her favourite tippie, whiskey!

Born in Edinburgh, Lady Nan — whose maiden name was Annie Kirkwood Flynn — came to Singapore in 1929 with her first husband, Dr Clem Tessensohn, whom she met while he was studying medicine in Edinburgh. During the Japanese Occupation, she was, like many other Europeans and Eurasians, interned at Changi and Sime Road camps together with her son Robin, then an infant, and daughter Louise, aged 12.

Her two older sons, Reggie and Edwin, who later became presidents of the Singapore Recreation Club, stayed with Dr Clem, who was not interned, and ran his clinic, Sinnan Clinic, in Victoria Street.

After Dr Clem's death in 1962, she married her second husband, Sir George (Geno) Oehlers, the first Eurasian to be knighted and the first local Speaker of the then Legislative Assembly.

Lady Nan is fondly remembered for her fun-loving, vivacious personality that made her the life of any party. She lived by the motto, "What was done today is forgotten tomorrow". She was partial to Dewars White Label Scotch, which she drank every night until four years ago. She also enjoyed a good game of mahjong.

Lady Nan is survived by her children Louise, Edwin and Robin Tessensohn, Lynette, Harry, John and Katherine Oehlers. Her step-daughter Jill passed on many years ago and Reggie, her eldest son, passed away in 1993.



# Come toast with us!

Join the new EA Toastmasters Club and learn to speak in public like a pro.



From left: Dayal Khemlani, Michael Rodrigues, Linda Neo, Anne Marie Gutierrez, Dorothy Tessensohn, Yvonne Pereira, Robert Ng, Terence Shepherdson.

IT'S your best friend's wedding dinner. You've rehearsed your speech over and over but you're nervous and sweaty and what comes out of your mouth is "Er... Well... Hmm... You know..." And the rest is a blur.

Not any more. Learn to speak well in public and do it in a friendly and supportive atmosphere in the new Eurasian Association (EA) Toastmasters Club. It was formed on 11 July 2009, and the set-up fee was generously sponsored by Terence Shepherdson, a Toastmaster and the chairman of the EA's Community Bonding Advisory Panel.

In case you're wondering, a Toastmaster is an expert speaker who belongs to a

club that is one of the many global spin-offs of Toastmasters International, an 85-year-old, non-profit organisation aimed at developing speaking and leadership skills through practice and feedback in local clubs.

In its initial months, the EA club — which already has 24 members — is being mentored by the well-established and experienced Singapore Recreation Club (SRC) Toastmasters Club. It will help the new EA club's members develop their speaking skills and network with other clubs in Singapore and across the region.

The thumbs-up for the EA club came at the end of a fun and educational Toastmasters Workshop at the Eurasian



Community House on 11 July. The afternoon saw entertaining speeches by the SRC club's Robert Ng, Anne Marie Gutierrez and Leong Kai Yan.

Christian Eber, chairman of EA's Corporate Communications Committee, won the Best Table Topic Speaker award, while SRC's Dayal Khemlani entertained all with his hilarious speech, "To India With Love".

Interestingly, the new EA Toastmasters Club is a revival of collaborations between SRC and EA that date right back to 1917, when the joint Eurasian Literary Association was formed to discuss topics presented by various speakers ranging from health to local and colonial politics. It lasted until the mid-1920s.

If you're interested to join the EA Toastmasters Club, call Sugiman at 6447-1578 or e-mail [sugiman@eurasians.org](mailto:sugiman@eurasians.org).

*Thanks to Yvonne Pereira, chairperson for EA's Silver Circle Committee, for re-kindling the connections between EA and SRC.*

## Invest in yourself

THE personal development industry in Singapore is enjoying a boom of sorts, according to a report in The Sunday Times on 5 July. And that's thanks to more people who are prepared to pay to learn how to help themselves.

The report cited a 25-year-old financial planner who paid more than \$3,500 for an 18-month finance course. It also said the most popular courses deal with financial matters, such as managing money, wealth creation, investing and success psychology.

People are even paying princely sums

to hear big names speak in Singapore. One example: Well-known motivational speaker Anthony Robbins' workshop at the Singapore Expo in September. Tickets for it are priced from \$995 to \$3,995.

But not everything is big-ticket. Trainers are also offering courses tailored to the needs of the unemployed and retrenched — those hit hardest by the recession, the report added. The bottom line: Invest in yourself to get ahead — or survive.

"When you invest in yourself, that's something no one can take away from you," said Adam Khoo, executive chairman

and chief master-trainer of Adam Khoo Learning Technologies Group. His recent free seminar on personal development drew 150 people, compared to the usual 50.

"You are a product and a brand and you need to keep reinventing yourself," Mr Khoo added. Ms Cindy Anne Berlandier, managing director of training company DynaMind Associates, told the paper: "Find a purpose you can pursue with a passion. Work on the strengths you already have."



# Winning for charity

**THE EA Dragons won silver – but it was gold for 200 needy children.**

THE EA Dragons rowing team performed remarkably well in the People's Association Paddle Championships, held at Bedok Reservoir over the 25/26 April weekend.

The team clinched 1<sup>st</sup> runner-up spot in the 10-crew mixed Invitational Race – clocking a hot 1 minute 42.82 seconds – being pipped at the finish line by only 1.43 sec! From competing in a field of 18 starters in the heats the day before, the team was thrilled with its 2<sup>nd</sup> place in the finals.

But silver was, in fact, gold for many needy children in Thailand. Just before the race, several generous donors to the Children of Pai Project agreed to up their pledges – if the EA Dragons won a medal. This incentive spurred our rowers to give 110% effort, which was richly rewarded with \$3,100\* being raised for the project. Well done, guys and gals!

The EA also fielded a 20-crew mixed

team for the first time. Though the team finished 20<sup>th</sup> out of 24 starters in the heats, its final time was within 1 sec of 12<sup>th</sup> place, effectively placing it in the middle of the pack.

Even the coach was heartened by this performance, especially against teams from the universities, polytechnics, junior colleges and expatriate clubs with their years of competition experience. Not bad for rowing virgins!

So come and support the EA Dragons at the Singapore River Regatta in November 2009, and see if they can win gold! – *By Geoff Morris who is a rower and team member of the Children of Pai Project.*

*\* The money raised will be used to help build a new dormitory for over 200 boys in the Sangwanwit 3 School in northwestern Thailand. Construction work has already started, and completion is expected this September.*



The EA Dragons ready to row for the Children of Pai



Captains Clifford Le Caine and Bianca Hoeden with Silver Cup

## Have fun, get fit!

To join our rowers, contact Clifford Le Caine at 9450-3076 or clifford@templar.com.sg

# New members' night



THE second batch of new members to join the Eurasian Association (EA) family were welcomed by EA vice president Dr Barry Pereira and Community Bonding committee chairperson Yvonne Pereira at a get-together at the Eurasian Community House (ECH) on 22 May.

The newbies got insights into the history of the early Eurasians in Singapore and ECH's activities and facilities and were impressed by the EA Family Support Service's efforts to help needy Eurasians and deserving needy students.

After a tour of the ECH's heritage corner, which displays the rich history and culture of local Eurasians, they were treated to a light dinner and got to know each other and other EA members. What they surely took away was a sense of bonding and belonging.

# Brunch with Alice

A FEW SHY of 100 people, the women gaily dressed in happy florals and charming hats, flocked to the Eurasian Community House on March 29 to enjoy a Sunday brunch that was part hello to spring and part Alice in Wonderland fun-tasy.

Amid whimsical decorations of flowers and butterflies – and intriguing arrows hinting at Alice's whereabouts – the bubbly brunch-ers tucked into a sumptuous buffet fit for a Queen of Hearts, catered and partly sponsored by Black Angus. Chef Marty did the carving honours on the juicy prime rib.

Besides three delightful little girls dressed up as playing cards, there was also a foot-stomping performance by the St Anthony's Canossian Secondary School Percussion Band under the baton of Mr Suhaimi and Madam Bey, and a set of evergreen rock songs by Crozzroads that had energetic sorts taking to the dance floor.

The Eurasian Association (EA) had the pleasure of hosting Mrs Raelene Tan and Mrs Kay Chee of the now-defunct Cosmopolitan Women's Club, which honoured expatriate women who married

locals and made Singapore their home. The EA now houses a plaque commemorating the former club.

At the end of an entertaining afternoon of Alice quizzes, tombola and lucky draw, guests still wanted to party on. Mrs Christine Dragon, winner of the top prize of a sugree cake, said she'd tell her friends of the brunches and would definitely be back for the next one.

*Thanks to Christine Clunies-Ross, Chairperson of Women's Wing, for organising this event.*



From left: Christine Clunies-Ross, Edward D'Silva, Raelene Tan and Yvonne Pereira



Performers from Siglap South CC's Kristang Cultural Troupe

EURASIANS were very much part of the Peranakan Museum's first anniversary bash.

On the weekend of 25 and 26 April, the car park next to the Peranakan Museum came alive with colour, excitement and ladies in ethnic costumes as colourful as birds-of-paradise to celebrate the museum's first anniversary.

Lively skits by Francis Hogan and cronies, *ronggeng* music and dance, fashion parades and even special appearances by Pierre Png and Jeanette Aw, stars of the hit TV serial *The Little Nyonya*, kept guests entertained throughout the two days.

The Eurasian community had its place in the sun as well. Catherine Zuzarte, Laraine Parry, Monica Leicester-Wong,

## Our Peranakan side

Christine Clunies-Ross, Geraldine Lowe and Lorraine Ess-Sim from our Women's Wing and the Committee on Heritage and Culture came dressed in Eurasian-styled *kebaya* and *baju panjang*.

The *baju panjang* shows influences from both the Malay *baju kurung* and the Peranakan *baju kebaya*. Interestingly, the Malay word *kebaya* is derived from the Portuguese word *cabaia* which means blouse.

Our resident experts on Peranakan culture, Mr Kevin Aeria and Ms Rosemary Thompson were also at hand to explain the Peranakan icons linked to our culture.

### Showcasing Kristang

On Sunday, Siglap South CC's Kristang Cultural Troupe performed a series of items that showcased Kristang culture and its Peranakan and Kronchong elements. Cake maestro Greg Gomes also demonstrated how to decorate and ice a three-tier sugee cake, which is a staple at Eurasian weddings and other celebrations.

Our Committee on Heritage and Culture,

too, showcased its cache of books such as *Wartime Kitchen*, *Jungles are Never Neutral*, *Eurasian Heritage Dictionary* and *Memories and Hopes* as well as the Something Eurasian CD. The books drew much interest from visitors, many of whom also took up copies of The NewEurasian magazine and EA membership forms.

All in all, the event was a wonderful opportunity to raise awareness of our rich Eurasian culture and heritage and to revisit the many elements we share with the equally rich Peranakan culture.



From left: Greg Gomes, Christine Clunies-Ross, Lorraine Ess-Sim, Shirley Rodrigues, Laraine Parry

## BBQ, Polynesian-style

QUENTIN'S – The Eurasian Restaurant at the Eurasian Community House went all Polynesian for the bi-monthly fund-raiser BBQ on 24 April, complete with decorative coconuts and coconut palms to set the mood.

Some 80 sporting guests came dressed to suit the theme! Those brave enough downed pina colodas and tequila shots, and generously added to the Eurasian Association's coffers.

The hungry horde made short work of the dizzying buffet array that included beef, lamb, sausages, shrimp and stingray as well as fried rice, mee siam and a dessert spread. Stomachs satisfied, many found the energy to dance to the smooth, upbeat singing style of Jude Paul and music by deejay Bernard, and Guests also enjoyed the ever-popular tombola game, adult music chairs and other games. — *By Christine Clunies-Ross*

Lovely ladies from the women's wing



## Health check a hit

PREVENTION is better than cure, the saying goes. Taking that to heart, some 30 women had themselves tested in the second quarterly cervical cancer screening held on May 30 in a special bus parked near to the Eurasian Community House.

In the "bus" — actually the National Healthcare Group Diagnostics (NHGD) mobile health screening unit — health officer Aminah conducted the checks in a professional and reassuring manner, and the "tестees" were pleasantly surprised at how painless and easy it all was.

You can prevent the disease with a proper diet, healthy lifestyle and regular exercise, said Ms Yu Chun Yen, a Health Promotion Board nurse educator, in her talk. The bus also drew praise from Eurasian Association (EA) president Edward D'Silva for its advanced technology and high level of privacy. — *By Christine Clunies-Ross*

The health screening was organised by the EA Secretariat and Women's Wing.



Intrepid trekkers at Bollywood Veggies



Veteran nature guide Alan Lee imparts his knowledge

## Into the wilds of Singapore

SATURDAY 18 April promised lots of sunshine for the 30 eager beavers raring to start on the jam-packed itinerary of unique Singapore spots.

At 8.45am, our convoy of three minivans left the Eurasian Community House (ECH) at Ceylon Road and headed for Kranji. Thankfully, the going was smooth. When we arrived at the Sungei Buloh Nature Reserve at 9.20am, our guide, Mr Alan Lee, was waiting for us.

On the hour-long trek through the reserve on the new boardwalk, it was exciting to spot kingfishers, a large monitor lizard, squirrels, even hairy caterpillars. Our expert guide shared some intriguing forest knowledge with us, too.

After a welcome tea break, we set off for seafood wholesaler Fassler Gourmet in Woodlands to stock up on air-flown salmon, fish cutlets and exotic soups. The kind people at Fassler even helped us pack our goodies in free cooler boxes.

Next up was the highlight of our tour — lunch at Bollywood Veggies, an organic farm in Lim Chu Kang. As we dined on simple, hearty fare grown on the farm, its well-known co-owner, Ivy Singh-Lim, regaled us with rib-tickling anecdotes about her colourful life, then took us on a tour of the farm and her home she shares with 14 huge dogs. We left with goodies courtesy of Ivy.

Our last stop was the Newater plant in

the east near Upper Changi Road, where a knowledgeable guide took us on a 45-minute tour showing how drinking water is salvaged from waste water. We are indeed lucky to have leaders who foresaw that Singapore would be vulnerable with no alternative source of water.

At 5pm, the tour ended, and we tired but happy trouperes headed back to Ceylon Road satisfied with the day's outing — and our stamina! — *By Christine Clunies-Ross*

*Thanks to EA Secretariat for handling the logistics, Women's Wing vice-chairperson Lorraine Ess-Sim for planning the tour and our three drivers.*

## Thanks, mum



AS MOTHER'S Day was in May, that month's Sunday Brunch at the ECH was, appropriately, dedicated to all mums.

The brunch drew a capacity crowd of 120, and the lucky ladies all received door gifts of vouchers sponsored by Monde d'Or at VivoCity, well-known for its exquisite jewellery.

The beautiful floral centrepieces adorning the tables were donated by Mrs Christine Dragon of flower shop Hooked On Flowers, who has long been a member of the Eurasian Association (EA) and donor to the community's fund.

Entertainment for the afternoon ranged from crooner Cedric Sahetapy, to deejay Maverick who rocked guests with past and present hits (including *Jingkli Nona*), to table games and quizzes. The winners of the "How well do you know your mum?" contest were mother Morinne Henson and daughter Tricia, who were totally in sync.

The Mother and Daughter Lookalike contest drew about 10 pairs who were peas in a pod. But the clear winners were Alison Humphries and her lovely little girls.

*Thanks to Marks & Spencer, Botanical Nails, A Semi Precious Life (owned by Ms Dawn Pereira), EA Women's Wing and other generous sponsors.*

## Cooking Japanese

MAKING Japanese specialties was a great way for 40 or so food-lovers to spend an afternoon — especially as they could savour what they had made in the cooking workshop held at the ECH on 19 April.

The gourmet guide was Chef Tetsuya Yoshida from Japan. A regular visitor to Singapore with business ties to Oliveiro Co Ltd, a Eurasian family business, he was game to share his native knowledge of Japanese culture and his expertise in its cuisine.

And Japanese cuisine is very hands-on. For instance, rolling a rice ball right is an intricate art, and the participants were very amused at some of the strange shapes they turned out!

After learning the proper ways to handle chopsticks and how to pour tea for guests, all tucked in to a delicious meal of teriyaki chicken, grilled salmon, the hand-made rice balls, miso soup and pickles. The recipes are on [www.eurasians.org](http://www.eurasians.org).

The afternoon ended with a lucky draw. Mrs Valerie Scully won a bottle of wine and Mrs Christine Dunster, a sugee cake, and everyone went home happy with a door gift from Oliveiro Co Ltd.

*The workshop was organised by the EA's Secretariat and Women's Wing. For the next cooking session, go to [www.eurasians.org](http://www.eurasians.org)*



From left: Chef Tetsuya shares with participants Lucille Marcus, Raj, Lorraine Ess-Sim, Christine Clunies-Ross and Lorraine Bligh the fine art of rolling rice balls

# Heart and soul

Two enthusiastic and dedicated EA volunteers tell us why volunteering means so much to them.



Women's Wing Volunteer Lorraine Ess-Sim at the Peranakan Museum's first Anniversary celebrations



Education Volunteer Edmund Rodrigues at Singapore Buddhist Lodge awards

## Lorraine Ess-Sim

"TO be a volunteer is to give back. To be a volunteer at the Eurasian Association is even more meaningful for me," says Lorraine Ess-Sim who has been a dedicated EA volunteer since 2006.

Though Lorraine has contributed to the Eurasian Community Fund for many years, she'd had to put volunteering on hold due to her busy work schedule as personal assistant to the managing director of a regional company and raising three children.

Still, she has always felt the need to give back and has been involved in a number of projects. Under Habitat Homes, she has helped build houses in Phuket and Udon Thani for victims of the Asian tsunami. She is also involved in church ministry at the Church of the Holy Trinity.

Lorraine joined the Family Support Services in 2006 as a befriender to a family in need, then joined the EA's Women's Wing where she has worked hard and contributed much to the Association.

What she enjoys is being with a group of women who are passionate about raising awareness about the EA, the fellowship shared at the many community events and the strong bond forged between the women. – *By Christine Clunies-Ross*

## Edmund Rodrigues

EDUCATION has played a large role in Edmund Rodrigues' life. A teacher in Saint Patrick's School for 40 years, he has always had an affinity for under-achieving students.

Shortly after joining the EA Management Committee in 1988, he started the Education sub-committee which established a team of 15 volunteers to give free tuition to students from lower-income families.

Mr Rodrigues recalls those early days under then-President Victor Olsen as an exciting era of rejuvenation for the EA, which set out to break the prevailing stereotypes about Eurasians and reach out to all Eurasians, rather than simply being a social club.

Meetings would start at 7.30pm and last until 3am as the Committee worked to establish spheres of interest such as Education and Welfare. "Everyone knew they had a role to play and put in more than a hundred per cent," he recalls.

He mentions Freddy Fox, who started the soccer school, and his wife Evelyn Leicester who used to stand outside Holy Family Church on Sunday mornings "dishing out membership forms to everyone who looked Eurasian". Within two years, EA membership had jumped from 100 to 2,000.

He also recalled stalwarts such as:

- Don and Judith Arul, who were in charge of a Heritage Week event at the National Museum that showcased Eurasian

culture, cuisine and artistic talent, and came up with the idea for the EA's 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary commemorative book.

- Duncan Trollope who, as social events chairman, raised fund for education and welfare by organising gala dinners that had then President Wee Kim Wee and Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong as guests of honour.

- Burton and Maureen Westerhout, who used to shop for presents to give the children at the Christmas Treat.

- Colin Pereira who, as chairman of the Education committee, got school principals on board and more than 25 tutors to give free tuition.

- Past EA president Victor Olsen, who spearheaded the Eurasian revival and brought in qualified people, and Timothy de Souza, who saw the EA move from operating in private homes to a Nissen hut to a temporary home along Mountbatten Road and finally, to its permanent home in Ceylon Road.

Mr Rodrigues also has fond memories of "Eurasian Day" at Saint Patrick's School. With activities such as cake-selling, sack and egg-and-spoon races, it was a family-oriented event that brought the community closer together.

The National Day celebration in 1990 was the EA dance troupe's Inaugural participation and was part of it too!

Thanks for all your wonderful contributions and setting the benchmark for all Singaporean Eurasians!