

THE NEW EURASIAN

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JULY – SEPTEMBER 2013



Education:
securing the best future
for our children

PLUS

TEE TIME

Go golfing with the EA

THE COST OF LIVING WELL

How your donations improve the lives of those in need

A SINGAPORE JOURNEY

Jock Oehlers relates Singapore's history through his own eyes

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Daniel Chong

EDITORIAL TEAM

Angelina Fernandez (Chair)
Rebecca Morris (Editor)
Irfaizah Tukiman
Jean Angus
Ion Danker
Krystle Nonis

CONTRIBUTORS

Yvonne Pereira; Kenny Suriya;
Michelle Tang; Michelle Ayn
Tessensohn

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THE NEWEURASIAN

The magazine of The Eurasian Association, Singapore

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

Advertising Rates

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Full page: \$1,000
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Quarter page: \$300

Series discounts, twice a year: 5% discount

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139 Ceylon Road, Singapore 429744

Tel: 6447 1578 Fax: 6447 3189 Email: members@eurasians.org

President's Message

Our cover story this issue focuses on education – one of the three main pillars of the Eurasian Association – an area that is of particular importance for us as we see this as a means for young Eurasians to achieve a sense of self satisfaction as well as a path to ensuring a fulfilling career and life. In our discussion with some Singapore educators, which we report in this issue, we note some of the issues and challenges faced by Eurasian students. The education scene has become extremely competitive and unfortunately enrichment classes and additional tuition have become almost a norm, which is a financial burden for many parents.

The EA has a number of education bursaries and merit award schemes to ensure that students have the means and access to good education as well as to encourage good performance in school. Two such schemes, the Temasek Cares Education Bursary and Coral de Cruz Memorial Award are reported in this issue and we are extremely thankful for the continued support that our generous donors provide to our Eurasian students. In addition, the EA helps those who cannot afford to engage private tutors with the Collaborative Tuition Programme, which is run jointly by the self-help groups and provides tuition at affordable prices at centres conveniently located island-wide.

As I have mentioned in previous issues, I firmly believe it is important for our

younger Eurasians (and frankly all of us) to continually develop ourselves on a more holistic basis. To look beyond books and take a more active interest in sport, community service and various other activities that can broaden our knowledge and skills; help us to be more creative and think out of the box; and strengthen our sense of empathy. In these pages, we report on the activities of our successful dragon boat team, music classes, Toastmasters (an excellent programme for developing communication skills and leadership), Young Professional Eurasians group and the launch of our EA golf society. We also share stories of many Eurasians who have done us proud in various fields.

In terms of Community Development, we have had a series of very successful Sunday lunches in the last couple of months and it is fantastic that we are getting many more people in the community to join us for the bi-monthly get-togethers. The EA also participated in the recent Orange Ribbon Run, a national event to promote racial harmony. I encourage more of you to participate in these activities, which I am sure will be both enjoyable and fulfilling.

Last, but not least, the success of the Eurasian community is dependent on our ability to help those in our community who face difficulties or financial challenges. On our FSS pages you will find out what our services mean to one beneficiary, and how the assistance programmes have helped less



fortunate Eurasians to become self-reliant and empowered. We are reaching out to all of you to lend a hand and volunteer your time and skills for our Family Support Services programme. We are always in need of more donors to support our financial assistance programmes and more volunteers to serve as befrienders and counsellors or to assist us with our food-ration runs. Any assistance, no matter how big or small will be very much appreciated.

I trust you will enjoy reading this issue of *The New Eurasian* and find inspiration in these pages; and I hope to see you at the various EA events arranged for the rest of the year. Please keep an eye open for more information about our upcoming events on our website www.eurasians.org.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Benett Theseira'. The signature is stylized and fluid, written over a white background.

Benett Theseira
President

Swinging into Action

The EA has set up a Golf Committee – comprising a group of 10 enthusiasts who meet each week on the greens for a round of golf – to spread their love of the game to more EA members and bring families and friends together through golf and other recreational activities.

They will be organising golf challenges and are currently also looking for special tie-ups with merchants and F&B outlets to be enjoyed exclusively by EA members.

Events tee off with a game on Friday 30 August at Keppel Club, followed by dinner and drinks at the Eurasian Association. All golfers are welcome.

The price of each flight is \$650.00 (\$162.50 x 4) or \$180.00 for single players. Keppel Club members pay \$100.00. The cost includes goodie bags, green fees, buggy, dinner and a chance to win great prizes in the lucky draw. Should you just want to enjoy the dinner, the price is \$60.00.

If you would like to participate, please register with Daniel Chong, tel: 6447 1578 or e-mail Daniel@eurasians.org. You can also find out more by joining the EA Golf Facebook group by searching for 'Eurasian Association Golf Team' and clicking 'Like'.



Rolling On

The first four rounds of the annual EA In-house Balut Competition, held between March and June, set the bar high with a massive 664 points. The top four winners for the last four months were Zoe Lazaroo and Winifred Filmer, who each scored 664 points, followed by Derrick Filmer (647 points) and Dorothy Tessensohn (604 points). And there's all to play for in the remaining four rounds.

Balut is a fun dice game for people of all ages and the rules can be mastered easily in a brief session. At the EA In-house Balut Competition, members play in groups of four, each player battling against the other three in the group. A round comprises six games and the person with the highest score after the six games is deemed champion of the month. The Champion for the Year will be the player who scores the best six out of the eight scores.



Balut convenor Yvonne Pereira with Dorothy Tessensohn, one of the top scorers so far

Members and guests aged 18 and above are welcome to join the sessions, which are held on the first Friday of each month, and the 'baluteers' will be pleased to show you how to play. **Contact Bridget Basnayake, tel: 6447 1578.**

Schooling Makes Another Splash



Teenager Joseph Schooling has done it again. The Singapore star swimmer broke three national open records and took home two gold medals at the recent US Arena Grand Prix in Charlotte, North Carolina. The 17 year old is busy training for four events in the FINA World Championships and has qualified to enter for seven events in the 2013 Myanmar SEA Games in December.

A Close Shave

Plucky Gin Oliveiro bared all – of her head – when she had it shaved to raise money for the Children’s Cancer Foundation’s fundraising event, Hair for Hope, which took place during the weekend of 27 and 28 July.

The 47 year old far exceeded her target of raising \$500, having received pledges of no less than \$1,388.88 for the foundation’s patient assistance fund, which gives cash help to cancer patients and their families.

Gin, who has worked as an animal care officer with the SPCA for 20 years and also runs a pet-sitting business with her partner says: “All my life, I have been blessed with good health and this small gesture shows my support for those who are not so fortunate, especially young and innocent children.”

You can pledge a donation and show your support for Gin Oliveiro at <http://www.hairforhope.org.sg/index.php?shavee/ideails/2670>. Further information for Hair for Hope is available at <http://www.hairforhope.org.sg/>



Gin Oliveiro is laid back about her impending hair shave

Sunny Side Up

Eurasian food was the highlight of one of the nation’s swankiest establishments when The Fullerton Hotel’s Town Restaurant featured a Eurasian Heritage Buffet from 24 to 30 June. The man behind the menu, Town Restaurant’s sous chef Sunny de Costa, is of Eurasian descent and he whipped up dishes using his own family recipes that have been handed down through generations, included favourites such as devil’s curry, *sabak* (braised pork belly with spices), and Eurasian-style baked prawns.

He says: “As Eurasian cuisine is not easily available in restaurants, we created a ‘Eurasian heritage buffet’ to showcase the unique cuisine so that all Singaporeans and overseas guests staying at our hotel could enjoy the delicious traditional dishes.”



Chef Sunny de Costa at Town Restaurant and (inset) *sabak* and a medley of Eurasian dishes

People’s Lunch

Yam Ah Mee, former chief executive director of People’s Association, visited the ECH on 3 May to have lunch with the EA’s management committee at Quentin’s Restaurant. EA President Benett Theseira presented Mr Yam with the book, *The Eurasian Face* by Kirsteen Zimmern.



Benett Theseira presents the book to Yam Ah Mee



The EA Management Committee during the lunch

Looking for a Room to Hold your Event?

At the EA, we have many rooms available to rent for a variety of occasions. All rates are based on a four-hour block and a deposit of \$300, which includes audio/visual and light/sound, is required on booking. A technician is not included. Please note that no outside food or beverages are allowed. Food and beverage catering can be made through Quentin's Restaurant. For enquiries and bookings, contact Bridget Basnayke, tel. 6447 1578 or e-mail: bridget@eurasians.org

Venue	Level	Capacity (est)	Rates	Peak (Sat, Sun, Eve of PH & PH)	Non-Peak (Mon-Fri)	Optional
Platinum Lounge	1	40 to 60 pax	EA Members	\$150	\$130	Free use of TV / DVD
			Government Agencies / Non-Profit / Institution	\$160	\$140	TV / DVD / Projector (\$50)
			Corporate / Guest	\$180	\$160	
Conference Room (JH Room)		15 to 18 pax	EA Members	\$180	\$150	Free use of TV / DVD
			Government Agencies / Non-Profit / Institution	\$200	\$180	TV / DVD (\$50)
			Corporate / Guest	\$220	\$200	
Meeting Room	2	15 to 18 pax	EA Members	\$160	\$140	Free use of TV / DVD
			Government Agencies / Non-Profit / Institution	\$180	\$160	TV / DVD (\$50)
			Corporate / Guest	\$200	\$180	
Multi-Purpose Hall (MPH) 50ft (L) x 36ft (W)		120 pax (12-seater table) 200 pax (theatre seating)	EA Members	\$500	\$500	Audio / Visual / Light / Sound / Technician (\$100)
			Government Agencies / Non-Profit / Institution	\$550	\$550	
			Corporate / Guest	\$600	\$600	
Dance Room	4	30 to 50 pax	EA Members	\$150	\$130	
			Government Agencies / Non-Profit / Institution			
			Corporate / Guest			
Roof-Top Garden		80 pax	EA Members	\$100 @ 4 hours	\$100 @ 4 hours	
			Government Agencies / Non-Profit / Institution			
			Corporate / Guest			

Find Your Rhythm

EA Music Studios offers a wide range of equipment for musicians from the passionate hobbyist to the seasoned professional.

Located on the 4th level of the Eurasian Community House, the jamming room features: a nine-piece drum kit; three electric guitar amplifiers; a dual keyboard workstation; a newly acquired bass combo; and three microphones for lead and background vocals. Fully air-conditioned, with atmospheric lighting and music memorabilia adorning the noise-reduced walls, it is the perfect setting for band rehearsals, choral singing practices, music auditions, songwriting sessions and more. Studio rates are \$18 per hour.

EA Studios also doubles as a music school which offers music lessons for groups and individuals at beginner and intermediate levels. Classes are conducted regularly by Joe 'Suicide' Ferdinands, an established singer/lead guitarist, multi-instrumentalist, songwriter and music instructor. Joe has composed, arranged, recorded and produced three full-length albums with Suicide Solution and has contributed to a number of local releases, compilations and films. He has vast musical knowledge and teaching experience.



Young musicians enjoy a jamming session at the Eurasian Community House

Courses offered are: electric guitar; bass guitar; drums. Lessons are held daily during afternoons and evenings. A month's course of four lessons of one hour a week, is: \$80 for beginners, \$90 for intermediate (group); or \$160 for beginners, \$180 for intermediate (individual).

For music course registration and studio bookings, please call Joe Ferdinands on 9691 2891.

Gift of the Gab

Silver-tongued Emilie Oehlers proved she can talk with the best of them when she became the first EA Toastmasters member to reach the District level contest.

To do so, she had to compete against three other Area clubs to win a place in the Division contest, which comprises some two dozen clubs. Her winning speech was based on Eleanor Roosevelt's quote: "The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams."

Emilie then won the Division competition, held on 27 April, with her impromptu table topic speech. The subject for these is given only a couple of minutes beforehand and Emilie's response to the topic, 'Why fit in when you were born to stand out?' was to talk about being Eurasian and how it taught her to be more sensitive to people of other minorities.



Emilie Oehlers (second from left) with the district Toastmasters

Emilie's victory at the Division contest qualified her for the Toastmasters' District contest which consists of all the toastmasters clubs in Singapore and Thailand. She did not win but remains inspired that the EA is now competing at a higher level and she is hopeful that someone in the EA can do the association proud by winning a future District contest.

PLAY DAYS

The EA has lined up a programme of fun events for the coming months - so clear your diaries! All will be held at the ECH unless specified.

- 1. RED & WHITE SUNDAY LUNCH**
Sunday, 18 August from 12pm to 3pm
- 2. OKTOBERFEST**
Sunday, 6 October from 12pm to 3pm
- 3. CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS TREAT AND FAMILY CHRISTMAS CARNIVAL**
Sunday, 15 December from 11am to 5pm
- 4. CHRISTMAS DINNER & DANCE**
Saturday, 21 December at 7.30pm
- 5. NEW YEAR'S EVE DINNER & DANCE**
Tuesday, 31 December at Concorde Hotel

For more details, contact Bridget Basnayake, tel: 6447 1578 or e-mail: bridget@eurasians.org

Stand out in Red & White

Be at the Eurasian Community House

Join us in our Red & White Luncheon as we celebrate Singapore's 48th National Day

Date: Sunday 18 August
Time: 12:00 noon to 3:00 pm
Venue: Quentin's Restaurant
Cost: \$22.00 net for payments made by 5 August, thereafter at \$25.00 net. Children aged 6 to 12 years old dine at half price.

Quentin's cuisine promises to satisfy every palate while Chato & Qamal of D'Highlights will have you dancing and singing along to your favourite tunes.

Look forward to attractive prizes from exciting tombola and card draw games.

Enjoy great bargains from the Artsy Craftsy Circle or Pam's Teatime Treats.

Let's get together with family and friends!

Reservations can be made via our EA Events Executive Bridget at 6447 1578 or via Quentin's restaurant at 6348 0327

NOTE: As car park space is limited, we encourage you to car pool or use public transport.

Giving Students the Chance to Shine

Guests of honour and founders of the Coral de Cruz Memorial Fund, Justice Judith Prakash and her brother Simon de Cruz, Singapore's non-resident ambassador to Ukraine, presented bursaries provided by the fund to six secondary students in a ceremony held on 27 April at the Eurasian Association. The bursary covers school fees, books, uniforms and transport.

They also presented grants to 28 primary students donated by the Temasek Cares Education Bursary.

In her speech, Justice Prakash spoke of their mother, Coral's ambitions, which were put on hold to look after her children and family. Her mother's story inspired her children to establish and fund the Coral de Cruz Memorial Fund to give Eurasian students the opportunity to attain their academic goals.



Children at the Coral de Cruz and Temasek Cares ceremony

Work Hard, Play Hard

Eurasian pupil Sarah Rozario has already perfected the work-life balancing act



Sarah Rozario (left) with a friend

Having two older brothers to look up to has encouraged 14-year-old Sarah Rozario to show she can do just as well as them. The Holy Innocent's High School pupil emerged top of her class and is due to receive an award at the upcoming Eurasian Community Fund ceremony.

The youngest in her family, Sarah says she has a special bond with her two older brothers: "We share many common interests, especially music."

"I pay attention during lessons and ensure that I understand what is being taught"

They are also her biggest inspiration. One is already at university and the other has a place for when he completes his national service. Sarah says her brothers lead an active social life, too, which has taught her that you can have fun and still do well academically.

Her favourite subjects are Physics, Mathematics and English and she is also a member of her school's drama club, where she enjoys performing and singing. She also finds time to do arts and crafts, read and listen to her favourite music.

How does she do so well? "I pay attention during lessons and ensure that I understand what is being taught. I recap those lessons by making my own notes to study for examinations. My parents encourage me to keep me motivated. My father, who is on long-term medical leave, also helps me out in Mathematics," she says.

As yet, Sarah doesn't have a long-term career plan, but she is considering following her brothers' footsteps by attending St Andrew's Junior College after 'O' levels.

One suspects that whatever she does, this determined young student is going to produce more high-flying results.



John Welford receives his vouchers from guest-of-honour Minister Lawrence Wong

Temple of Learning

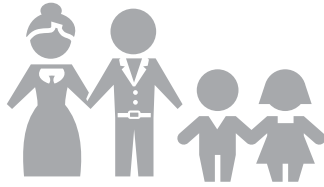
The Singapore Book Fair, held from 5-10 June, was organised by Singapore Press Holdings, Chinese Newspapers Division.

This year, with the support of Kwan Im Thong Hood Cho Temple, book vouchers worth \$50,000 were presented to 1,250 children from low-income families through the four self-help groups.

Over 90 Eurasian students at primary and secondary schools received the vouchers, which they could then exchange for textbooks and other reading materials at the fair.

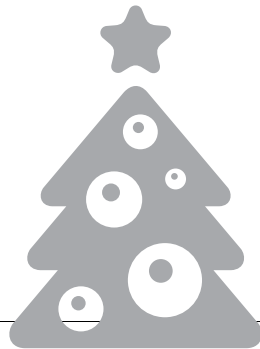
Where your money goes

The EA's spending on the Family Support Services for 2012



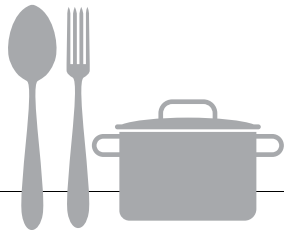
\$688

Activities/events for FSS families



\$13,950

Family Christmas lunch for FSS recipients includes hampers and gift vouchers



\$41,791

Food rations & expenditure



\$1,250

Beyond financial assistance. This programme gives one-time financial assistance for costs such as rental, utilities and/or service and conservancy charges

\$85,400

Financial assistance. This comprises monthly cash grants to meet basic living needs

133
people

Individuals who benefitted from the FSS Financial Assistance programmes monthly



Living Life One Day at a Time

Diagnosed with cancer, single parent Janet Chen Cummings is facing the toughest time of her life

Being a single parent is challenging enough, but when exhausting chemotherapy is part of the mix, it is easy to reach breaking point. Fortunately, Janet Chen Cummings, 55, finds strength in the kindness of family and strangers, as she fights Stage 4 breast cancer while raising her twins, Charmaine and Charlene, who are 18 this year.

Janet was first diagnosed with breast cancer in 2008. She says: "At the time of my diagnosis, I was scared because I didn't know what was going to happen to my family. I often asked myself this question. I felt so alone."

The EA's Family Support Services stepped in to help in the shape of monthly food donations, vouchers, emergency cash relief and grants. Janet said: "I felt happy and

relieved. Mr Ram was kind enough to buy me a pair of spectacles and he also got me a job as a kitchen helper at EtonHouse school. The spectacles really helped me as my job required me to read labels."

The twins, who are now studying at ITE College East in Simei, also receive grants and bursaries for school.

Alas, this better state of affairs didn't last. Janet suffered a relapsed and her cancer has spread, which left her with no choice but to quit her job because she always feels weak after chemotherapy sessions. She says: "The steroids for my cancer treatment swell up my face and legs and my legs have grown weaker and weaker. I feel the need to rest all the time."

But the family is rallying round. Her brother has hired a helper to assist her during walks and her daughters occasionally work as part-time promoters for IT fairs and to lessen their financial stress. Janet tells herself to remain positive about the future these days and her main thoughts are those of a mother: "I only hope to get better so that I can get back to work and be there for my children," she says.

Your contributions make a difference: any donation you can make will help the EA to continue to meet the needs of our community, specifically low-income families, young people at risk, struggling single parents and lonely and poor elderly people. To make an online donation, please visit: <http://www.eurasians.org.sg/a-helping-hand/fundraising/>





A Head Start *through Education*

In an increasingly complex world, ensuring that our children have the right skills to equip themselves for adulthood and the working world is an ever-evolving process. Here, some Eurasian educators discuss how Singapore – and specifically the Eurasian community – is meeting those challenges

It is impossible to over-estimate the importance of education to our economic well-being in a sophisticated, high-tech age. Around the world, education systems are struggling to remain relevant in a changing world. What does this mean to a nation like Singapore at the beginning of the 21st century? How do we balance the need to develop individual talents and encourage the joy of learning, while also grooming our children for the unforgiving demands of the marketplace?

Keeping Up with the Higher Standards

At the EA, education plays a critical role as one of the association's three major pillars. As the standard of education continues to rise, and our society becomes more competitive, Geoffrey da Silva, who chairs the association's Education Sub-Committee, says: "More parents are looking to engage tutors to teach their children, especially for secondary and junior college level, so that their children can get good results in their O-level and A-level exams."

However, as the cost of private tuition continues to increase, the EA helps those who cannot afford to engage private tutors by referring them to the Collaborative Tuition Programme run by the self-help groups (SHGs). The CTP provides tuition at affordable prices at centres conveniently located island-wide.

Teachers, too, need the right tools for the job. Geoffrey says Singapore has many dedicated teachers and it is vital that they pass the baton on to a new, younger batch of equally passionate and well-qualified teachers. The Ministry of Education (MOE) is also actively recruiting better-qualified teachers at all levels. With the setting up of the Early Childhood Development Agency, the quality of pre-school education will also see improvement.

Making it Relevant

But Geoffrey believes that students should be assessed not only on their paper qualifications but also on their all-round abilities. He points out: "There are successful entrepreneurs who do not have such high credentials but worked their way up from the bottom. Students with high qualifications may lack certain social skills of how to interact pleasantly with other people. They need to have a balanced education, absorbing knowledge, being tolerant to our cultural diversity, and learning how to interact with people in our multi-racial society."

Timothy Rodrigues, a lecturer at Singapore Polytechnic, says that for education to be relevant to industry, an assessment of disciplines closely related to the industry will reflect the competencies that industry requires. He cites the example of the Conceive, Design, Implement and Operate (CDIO) pedagogy, an initiative designed to produce the next generation of engineers. It was developed with the input of academics, industry, engineers and students. He says the future may see the development of more such initiatives.

Broadening the Mind

Elsewhere in the world, there is a growing emphasis on broader learning as an economic necessity. As more people are seeking higher



Timothy Rodrigues (right) with Graham Ong-Webb, chair for youth, and his wife

"Students need to have a balanced education, absorbing knowledge, being aware of our cultural diversity, and learning how to interact with people in our multi-racial society,"



education, Dr Alexius Pereira, a professor at National University of Singapore, stresses: "We need to move away from rote-based learning to thinking-based learning. Students lack the ability to be critical; they simply take whatever is given. They can tell when what's given is bad, but they don't know why."

Derek Scully, a member of the EA's Education Sub-Committee, adds: "Children should be assessed on their ability to think out of the box and there should be at least three assessors for each project-based learning process. For a country to innovate, to be creative, it needs imagination, not just knowledge and know-how of a specific field of study."

He believes that the education system should look at ways to allow a child to learn more, at his or her own pace, and should enable a child "to think and not to reproduce or replicate".

In Singapore, schemes such as Reading Clubs and EduSave awards are some methods of motivation used to keep kids engaged in learning. These drivers encourage kids from a young age to develop the desire to read and attain knowledge and use that knowledge to get good results in their exams, which leads to their receiving an award in recognition of their hard work. It is positive reinforcement that hard work pays off.



Alexius Pereira



EA members discussed education during the recent Eurasian Singapore Conversation exercise



Geoffrey da Silva (centre) attends a Eurasian education funding event

Good Behaviour

How should the school system handle a child's behavioural problems? Derek counters that with another question: "Why should there be issues in the first place when discipline starts at home, well before the child enters school life? Children spend more time at home and this is where the grounding for behaviour starts. As this is seriously lacking in today's society; parents now push this parenting role to the schools. This is when all the behavioural issues originate."

Alexius says: "Now there are trained counsellors in school. Every school has at least two counsellors. Trained counsellors are best equipped to handle these issues." The school counsellor works closely with the school management in planning and implementing a school-wide counselling system. He or she provides direct counselling intervention to at-risk students and case consultations to school personnel and parents; training is also given to teachers and parents on counselling-related issues. The school counsellor will also identify, devise and deliver specialised group guidance programmes for at-risk pupils who need additional help with social and emotional development.

The MOE has also introduced Social Emotional Learning in schools (which is also implemented in other countries including Australia, Canada and Portugal), where students are taught subjects such as self-awareness, social-awareness, self-management, relationship management and responsible decision-making.

Cultivating Team Spirit

Geoffrey says that Republic Polytechnic has an innovative way of nurturing students. "Rather than spoon feeding and overloading students with information to regurgitate in the exam paper, the larger percentage of a student's grade is for project work where the student has to work with his team mates. This focuses more on fostering good team-player skills, and helps students learn how to interact with people who have different ideas – and to manage their time well, juggling several projects at a time."

Timothy points out the importance of harnessing innovation to practical application. "We want the processes involved in innovating to be understood so that we can better apply them and for innovation to become part of our culture," he says. To this end, the MOE has started the IvP or Innovation Programme for primary and secondary schools. Students who go through this programme form teams and look at problems they can resolve by innovating a product or products. The students have help from expert mentors from the polytechnics, NUS and NTU, who guide the students through developing their product. "The IvP programme culminates in a 'Young Innovators Fair', where selected participants showcase a prototype of their product."

Opportunities for All

How does the education system ensure that all children have the same chance to succeed? This is where the self-help groups come in. The SHGs are dedicated to help students from lower-income families so that they have access to the same opportunities as other kids. The MOE also helps by providing financial assistance schemes to lower-income families and there are also loans available for the purchase of laptop computers, which all tertiary students are required to buy.

Geoffrey explains: "The nature of the support ranges from study grants all the way to our merit bursary awards. We want to see improvements across the board at all levels and the support is intended to give a lift to those in less-privileged families to ensure they are able to receive supplementary assistance to help level the playing field."

A Eurasian Perspective

How do Eurasian youth fare in their studies? Most Eurasians come from English-speaking families and generally do well in English. A good grasp of English gives them an added advantage in other subjects as they need to understand the question fully in order to work out the answer.



Derek Scully (second from left) with EA Education Management at an EA education event

However, Timothy says some Eurasian parents he has spoken to are concerned that their kids are having trouble with the second language and maths. He says that here is an opportunity for the EA to help. He suggests the association organises second-language camps.

He says: “The goal of the camp should be getting the participants to communicate in the second language. So these camps should get the participants to speak and write, only in the second language for the duration of the camp. We can start with the pre-school and lower primary levels, because this will work best if we can get them into the habit of speaking the second language from the very beginning.”

He added: “As for maths – I don’t know what the problem is exactly. Here is my best advice – practice! Maths needs practising – simple, but true. If we get our kids to be better in maths and the second language at the primary level, we will also see an improvement for these subjects at the ‘O’ levels.”

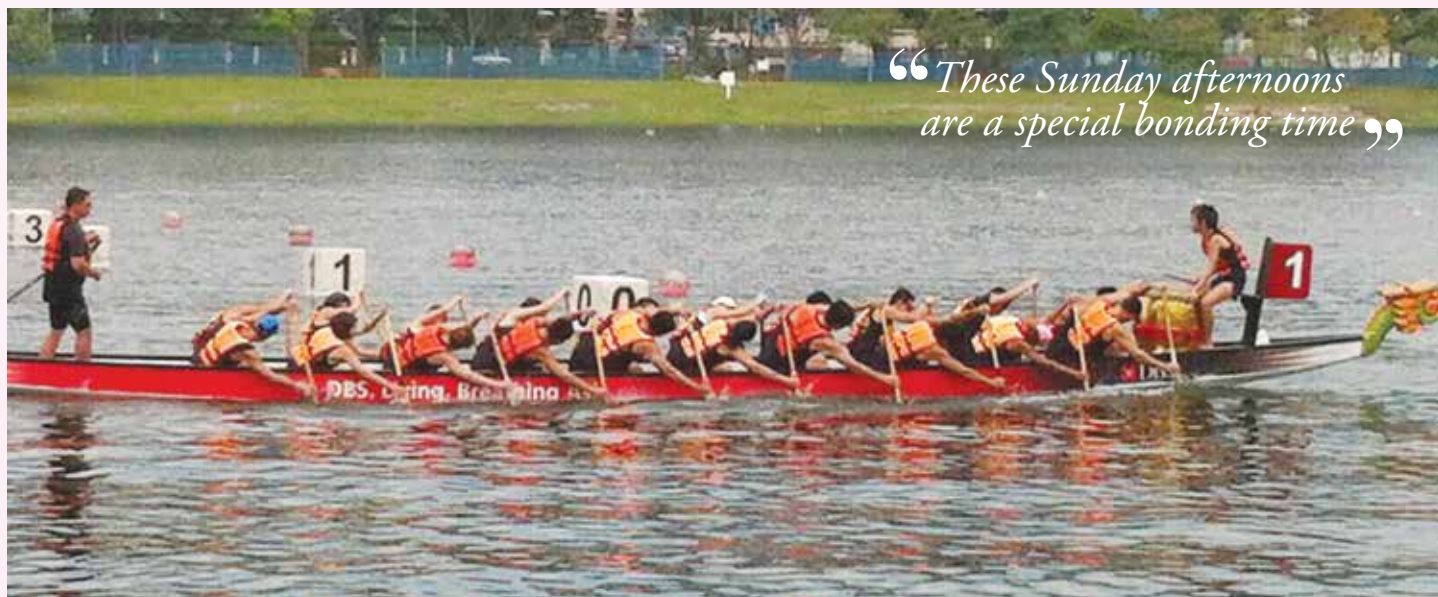
And in Derek’s view, some Eurasian parents are not very particular about which secondary school their children make it to after the PSLE. If a majority of parents think this way, it would have an impact on the whole community as the motivation for a Eurasian child to do better could be lost. He also adds that rich children will always have the upper hand in terms of their access tuition and self-motivating courses, which children from less well-to-do families will not have. A few schools are known to have such programmes to benefit all.

There is an abundance of opportunities available to all students, both in higher education and in career prospects. Our education system has evolved to offer numerous courses in diverse areas at the polytechnics and in our universities. Our economy too has evolved to offer employment in a wide area of professions. So students have a bright future ahead.

But Geoffrey points out: “No matter what, at the end of the day, it is up to the student to motivate himself; to have the desire to study hard so that he can get a good education, and thus job to support his family later in life.”



“Discipline is seriously lacking in today’s society; parents now push this parenting role to the schools”



“These Sunday afternoons are a special bonding time”



“The team has grown tremendously, not just in size but in commitment”

All Aboard

The EA Dragons rowing team is one big happy family

When a father and son are out at the youngster's weekend sporting event, dad is usually cheering him on and yelling advice from the comfort of the sidelines.

But when Clifford LeCaine sets off to Kallang with teenage son Cyrus each Sunday, the older muscles are due for as much of a workout as the younger ones. Clifford is former captain of the EA Dragons rowing team and Cyrus is its youngest member. The Dragons, who meet at the Peoples Association Water Venture Outlet at Kallang on Sunday afternoons, are perhaps the only sporting team where members range from 15 to 59. They're a mix of students and working professionals, long-time friends, married couples and, of course, father and son.

Clifford first rowed for the EA at the Singapore River Regatta in 2007. The team was put together only a few weeks before the race and came fifth out of six. Disappointed, Clifford was determined to do better. He recalls: “I spoke to a couple of guys in the team back then and asked them if they wanted to form a proper team that trained regularly.” In January 2008, the EA Dragons started their Sunday trainings and that year won a Bronze and later a Silver medal.

A year later, the team finally won a Gold medal in an invitational race at the Singapore River Regatta in the ‘small pool’ category; since that victory the rowers have forged their way to compete with the ‘big boys’ in the Open categories.

Get Inspired!

The subject of the younger generation took centre stage at the ECH again recently when members of the Young Professional Eurasians (YPE) discussed the work they did during a meal at Quentin's Restaurant.

Entrepreneur Alan Oliveiro spoke about setting up your own business and pointed out: “Running your own business can be an escape route out of the dole queue for young people – and a route to success.”

Michelle Tessensohn gave an update on her pilot survey on Singapore Eurasians. She is still seeking households who want to be interviewed. The survey will help to identify the needs of the Eurasian community so the EA can serve it better, and the aim is also to give better support to elderly Eurasians.

Hubert Yohannan will be co-organising a team-building activity with young EA members during July or August. The event will be a half-day session and aims to attract 50 participants. The Youth Sub-Committee hopes that this fun activity will encourage more young Eurasians to join the EA.

Edmund De Silva, a newcomer to the YPE, told the meeting that he had never met so many Eurasians before. He said that the gathering had been interesting and he believed it was a good opportunity to get connected.

The Youth Sub-Committee hopes members of the group will be able to suggest venues or fun themes for the next gathering, which is slated for August.

This year at the PA Paddle Championships, the EA Dragons reached the semi-finals in the Men's Open category for the first time, and were also in the finals of the Mixed Open category (with a crew of 22), when both teams clocked their best ever timing. Clifford says: "The team has grown tremendously, not just in size but in commitment. We train every week, encourage and push each other on, whether it's a competition or just our usual training. The team has really bonded. We know what we want and we strive for it." Referring to the recent achievement, Clifford adds: "I am really proud of the team, and having my eldest son, Cyrus there with me, is icing on the cake!"

For the LeCaines, dragon boat racing is a family affair. Clifford's wife Geraldine and their younger sons Causi & Caleb have been one of the pillars of support at the races, since 2007. The family have also hosted the team at their home on several festive occasions over the years.

Wanting his son to experience the EA Dragons' team spirit, commitment and camaraderie among the members, Clifford encouraged Cyrus to come on board. Cyrus says: "I wanted to join the team as I was inspired to be like Dad. Also, dragon boat racing is a very uncommon sport among youth my age. I wanted to be unique."

Although Cyrus was initially worried, Dad knew best. Clifford recalls: "After a few sessions, he knew it was his sport. In time, he felt fitter and stronger, his little muscles began to show, and he was quite pleased with it. After that, there was no stopping him. These Sunday afternoons are a special bonding time between father and son."



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Members of the Young Professional Eurasians enjoy a relaxed but productive night out



Our Nation's Past Times

The National Heritage Board presented the EA with complimentary tickets to the National Museum of Singapore on 4 May and gave the association's Heritage Committee members a guided tour of the museum's Living Galleries, which comprise four galleries on the themes of Fashion, Film, Food and Photography.

The group explored the social aspect of Singapore's history, from the shifting identities of Singaporean women from the 1950s to '70s, to the nation's favourite subject – Singaporean food – and much more.

The museum is open 10am-8pm daily. Admission is \$10 for adults and \$5 for seniors, children and students.



EA visitors at the museum and some of the exhibits



Rodney and the Anonymous Goddess

For Rodney Oliveiro, stepping into the shoes of a scheming moneylender, a 19th century coolie or a transsexual is all in a day's work

Rodney Oliveiro started treading the boards while still at school, training at the now defunct Townsville Institute in Margaret Drive before joining The English Literary, Drama and Debating Society (ELDDS). He reckons his portrayal of Jewish moneylender Shylock in a school production of Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice* is still one of his best performances.

In 2001, he graduated from the National University of Singapore with a degree in Theatre Studies and English Literature. Since then, he has worked with many leading theatre companies in Singapore.

“The show was outrageously funny but also had moments of aching beauty and artistry sprinkled over it like fairy dust”

Rodney admits he doesn't know where his acting talents come from, being the only member of his family in the entertainment industry. “All of them have sensible careers,” he jokes.

The 37 year old, who has more than 40 ticketed performances under his belt, also trains and directs youngsters in English drama clubs at local polytechnics. “I work very closely with them in improvising, scripting, and performing original pieces as well as published Singaporean plays, he says.

His most recent performance was in Alfian Sa'at's *Dreamplay: Asian Boys Vol. 1* staged by WILD RICE. “It was about a celestial



Rodney Oliveiro (right) on stage

being, an unnamed goddess who descended to earth to investigate the curious phenomenon of the local 'gay boy'. It was one of the first Singaporean plays that had homosexuality as a theme, front and centre. I played many characters, ranging from a transsexual to a 19th coolie worker. The show was outrageously funny but also had moments of aching beauty and artistry sprinkled over it like fairy dust.”

Rodney hopes audiences were able to understand what it means to be different and will be able to accept and embrace all people, no matter how different they are.

At the moment, he's in no rush with future career plans. Having removed the grease paint after his last performance of the run, he is currently enjoying spending more time with his children.

Eat Your Greens

Guests from all walks of life came together to enjoy an eco-friendly lunch at Quentin's in April. The Save the Earth lunchtime event was planned as an early observation of Earth Day, which aims to instil awareness of a green environment. More than simply being delicious, the Eurasian meal had a low carbon footprint and the restaurant's decorations were made of recycled materials.

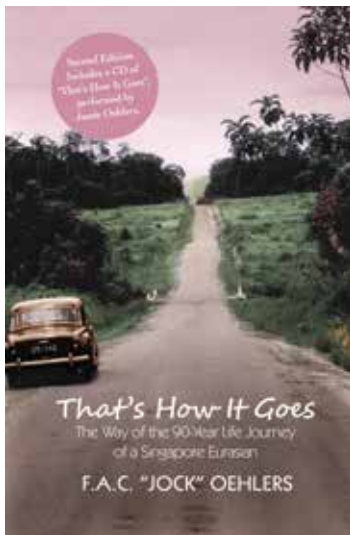
Guests were entertained by local duo The Aaron Angel, and guests also took part in an environmentally themed quiz. The winners, Team Avocado, walked away with a bag of organic goodies, which was generously sponsored by Nothing but Green, a local organic speciality food shop.

During the event, the organisers also collected old books, clothes and shoes for the Singapore Really Really Free Market, which took place in the ECH's Multi-Purpose Hall on 30 June. In this market, aimed towards a sustainable environment, all the goods and services were shared free – nothing was for sale. Anyone with items or skills to share was welcome to set up a stall, and those who found something they wanted were welcome to have it.



Happy Earth Day to you!





Jock Oehlers' autobiography, *That's How It Goes: The Way of the 90-Year Life Journey of a Singapore Eurasian*, chronicles the life and hardships of a Singapore Eurasian during the Japanese Occupation and the post-war years, recounting memories that are both painful and heartwarming.

Farleigh 'Jock' Oehlers was born in Singapore on 2 April 1921, the youngest of 12 siblings. He studied at Singapore's King Edward VII College of Medicine after the war and in 1963 became Professor of Oral Surgery at the then University of Singapore Dental School.

His interest in research, supported by experiences with his own patients, led him to publish several scientific articles and papers in professional medical journals. "All the manuscripts that I submitted were accepted for inclusion in the journals, credit given each time as having originated from the University of Singapore Dental School, which I took pride in," he says. "I was pleased to note that they were generally well received and my findings approved and adopted, some still quoted, this very day, on the internet."

One Man's Path through Singapore's History

Author Jock Oehlers has discovered that it's never too late to make use of latent talents



"I want our future progeny to learn something of what we experienced during our eventful lifetime"

But it was not until he was 80 – and living with his wife, Ursula, in Perth, Australia – that he was inspired to write about something much more personal. Jock admits that his father in law, John Bertram van Cuylenburg's book, *Singapore – Through Sunshine and Shadow*, motivated him to write his own story, and family and friends encouraged the project. The tale of his experiences in Singapore and Bahau Catholic Colony during World War II became *That's How It Goes*:

Autobiography of a Singapore Eurasian and was published in 2008 when he was 87.

The book's success led to a second edition, which contains added material as well as a complete Part II covering his life in Australia after he emigrated there in 1990. The book also has a CD of the song *That's How It Goes*, which became a hit at the Bahau colony. His grandson Jamie Oehlers, a saxophonist, and his pianist friend Tal Cohen produced the song for his 90th birthday.

He admits: "In writing my first manuscripts I had to depend on my memory of past events, not having kept a diary. It involved recollections of the past years of my life including reliving the uncertain, worrying and terrifying times that my wife, Ursula, and I endured during WWII. As I completed the first drafts of each chapter, I would go over them, inserting anything else that was relevant, always attempting to maintain continuity and interest". His writing style is simple, natural, and with subtle humour.

Now aged 92, he says that his last book has left him feeling greatly accomplished, satisfied and extremely happy.

His books are available at Select Books, Kinokuniya, Popular and Times. You can also purchase them online at www.selectbooks.com.sg or www.amazon.com

Dads' Delightful Day

Families treated their dad to a special celebratory meal at Quentin's restaurant to mark Father's Day in June. To get the festivities off to a good start, fathers were given a moustache on a stick and – even better – cool complimentary cufflinks sponsored by Johnny Walker.

The fathers and their families were treated to a full fanfare of games, music and food, while popcorn, ice-cream, and a bouncy castle kept the younger kids happily occupied.

Throughout the afternoon, Emily Oehlers from EA Toastmasters presided over the event, keeping the families busy with a quiz and a scavenger hunt.



Who says men have to wear the moustaches?



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ORANGE RIBBON

The annual Orange Ribbon Celebration, set up three years ago to promote racial and religious harmony, this year included an inaugural Orange Ribbon Run. The event, on 6 July, themed 'Race Against Racism', comprised a 10km competitive run and a 2.7km fun walk along Marina Bay Sands and Gardens by the Bay.

The Marina Reservoir area was a sea of orange as guests and organisers alike donned orange T-shirts. Lawrence Wong, Acting Minister for Culture, Community and Youth, was guest of honour.

The event spread into the evening with sand painting, booths showcasing various local cultures and performances of national dances. A quartet of EA Eurasian dancers put on a display of three traditional Portuguese folk dances.

Watch the racial harmony YouTube video, Voice of Harmony, by Jack and Rai at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oO_ljQUkcCg

