

THE neweurasian

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JULY - SEPTEMBER 2018



PLUS

Annual General Meeting 2018
Meet the Management Committee
(2018-2020)

Marshall Garnell
Striving for a better life

Carlos Andres Monasterios
A shining example

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THE neweurasian

The magazine of the Eurasian Association, Singapore

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

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President's Message

In April 2018, I was appointed the President of the Eurasian Association (EA), Singapore. I am deeply humbled and fully aware of the responsibility of the post. The EA today has multiple roles: it is a Self-Help Group, community organisation and custodian of Eurasian culture. I will work closely with the members of the Management Committee (MC), many of whom had also served in the previous term. This stability will augur well for the EA, as we continue our programmes and efforts to see through longer term projects.

However, we are not sitting still. The EA believes it can and should do more for the community. As such, we have co-opted four new members to serve on the MC. New MC members include:

- Melanie Rodrigues-Smith
- Hannah Hendriks
- Andrew Pang
- Danni Danis

Melanie will be introducing active ageing initiatives for the community, to keep both the mind and body healthy. Hannah will be developing EA's research thrusts, particularly to better understand issues facing the community. Andrew and Danni will be expanding the areas of youth outreach and youth development respectively. Details of these new thrusts will be shared when the time is right.

I would like to take this opportunity to say a few words about 2019, which is not only the 200th anniversary of Singapore's founding by Sir Stamford Raffles, but also the 100th anniversary of the Eurasian Association.

The MC has come up with the concept – EA@100 Celebrating Our Community – with plans in the pipeline

for several key events to commemorate our centenary. The MC is preparing for:

- A gala centenary dinner
- The launch of the refreshed Eurasian Heritage Gallery
- The publication of a book chronicling the history of the EA
- A Eurasian Festival to celebrate Eurasian culture and the community with Singapore.

It will be a busy 2019, and the MC will reveal details when events are firmed up. There will be much to look forward to.

I would like to put on record my thanks and appreciation to Benett Theseira, who had served as President between 2012 and 2018. Under his guidance, the EA achieved its main goals, such as educational advancement and family support for needy Eurasians, preserving Eurasian culture and heritage, raising awareness about Eurasians in Singapore and providing an avenue for community bonding. In recognition of these achievements, Benett was awarded the Public Service Medal at the National Day Awards 2017. Benett remains committed to the Eurasian community; he is the EA's representative on the Singapore Bicentennial Committee and will be involved in some of EA's major events in 2019.

I would like to end off by wishing the EA's Patron, Mr Herman H. Hochstadt, who celebrated his 85th birthday in May, many happy returns.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Alexius Pereira', written in a cursive style.

Dr Alexius Pereira
President

Meet the Management Committee 2018-2020



Front row, left to right: *Angelina Fernandez (Hon Secretary), Vincent Schoon (1st Vice President), Alexius Pereira (President), Yvonne Pereira (2nd Vice President)*
 Back row, left to right: *Hannah Hendriks, Andrew Pang, Danni Danis, Vernie Oliveiro, Julia D'Silva*
 Not in the photo: *Martin Marini (Hon Treasurer), Graham Ong-Webb, Christopher Gordon, Melanie Rodrigues Smith*

The EA held its annual general meeting (AGM) on 21 April, which saw Benett Theseira stepping down as president after six years. Dr Alexius Pereira was elected as the EA's new president.

Benett had a fulfilling tenure at EA and made significant progress in the key pillars of education and family support services. He also played an important role in advancing youth engagement and strengthening the Eurasian identity in Singapore.

The EA welcomes the its new Management Committee members for the term April 2018 to April 2020.

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Celebrating Herman Hochstadt's 85th birthday

On 10 May, the EA's trustees and management committee hosted a dinner to celebrate the 85th birthday of EA Patron Herman Hochstadt. The celebration at Quentin's Eurasian Restaurant was a chance for them to personally convey their good wishes to Herman.



Herman Hochstadt (seated, right) with the EA's trustees and management committee on the night of his birthday celebration.



Herman Hochstadt excitedly accepts his 85th birthday gift – both volumes of Xi Jinping: The Governance of China – from EA President Alexius Pereira.

Playing to win

4th In-House Balut

The In-House Balut Tournament's fourth round was held on 6 June. Deborah Branson was the June champion with 655 points and Marian Lazaroo claimed second place with 641 points.

The fifth round was held on 4 July.



June In-house Balut Champion, Deborah Branson

34th Chivas Regal Inter-Club Balut Competition

The second round of the 34th Chivas Regal Inter-Club Balut Competition was hosted by the EA at Singapore Recreation Club (SRC) on 20 June. The second-round champion was Tanglin Club with 2,464 points. Twenty teams from six clubs, comprising a total of 80 players, participated in the competition. The EA Team 2 came in sixth, while EA Team 1 placed eighth.

The EA's Hyacinth D'Silva and Ban Khi (Yang) took home a bottle of wine each. Hyacinth won for her high score of 150 points in a single game and Ban Khi bagged the spot prize for a balut in one throw.

38th Chivas Regal Interport Balut Competition

SRC will host the 38th Chivas Regal Interport Balut Competition on 23 and 24 November.



34th Inter-club Chivas Regal Balut Competition Round 1 Champions



THE EURASIAN
ASSOCIATION
SINGAPORE



**Guardians of
Mother Earth**

PRESENTS

YOUTH FORUM ON BUILDING RESILIENCE AGAINST CLIMATE CHANGE



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MINISTER MASAGOS ZULKIFLI

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Coffee painting workshop
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OR CALL 6447 1578 (EXT 212).

*ALL INFORMATION COLLECTED IS CONFIDENTIAL AND WILL NOT BE SHARED WITH
ANY THIRD PARTIES

Eurasian students receive bursary awards

Assemblies of God ceremony, 4 May

Thirty students from low-income families were awarded bursaries worth \$750 each, to mark The Assemblies of God (AG) of Singapore's 90th anniversary on 4 May.

When times are tough, I believe there will always be a helping hand. I feel so blessed and would like to thank AG Singapore for their support.

Student representative Elray Cook received a mock cheque on behalf of the students at the anniversary gala dinner held at Orchid Country Club.

"I am thankful to have received this award," Elray says. "When times are tough, I believe there will always be a helping hand. I feel so blessed and would like to thank AG Singapore for their support. God works in mysterious ways!"



Elray (second from right) with (from left) his brother Elmes Cook, mother Ellis Suriati binte Sapari, and EA Education Sub-committee Chairperson, Dr Graham Ong-Webb, at AG Singapore's 90th anniversary gala dinner.

The event was graced by President Halimah Yacob, who was also the guest of honour.

Singapore Buddhist Lodge ceremony, 5 May



Kimberly, Matthew to the left and Christopher, Shazryl to the right of the VIP's at the presentation ceremony.

The Singapore Buddhist Lodge Four rewarded four deserving secondary school students – Christopher Andrew, Kimberly Marsh, Matthew Marsh and Muhammed Shazryl Hykel bin Abdullah – with bursaries at a presentation ceremony on 5 May.

Sixteen-year-old Kimberly, who is currently studying at CHIJ Saint Joseph's Convent, is grateful and happy that there are organisations besides the EA handing out bursaries to underprivileged students who perform well in school. "It instills motivation [in students from all communities] to excel in their studies,"

she says. "I am thankful for this bursary from the Singapore Buddhist Lodge. It will go towards funding my assessment books."

The Buddhist charity works closely with the EA to help underprivileged students with their school fees, costs of books, and transportation to and from school.

Passion for healthcare

How Eurasians in Singapore are contributing to better healthcare services and outcomes

The story of the Bahau settlement in Negri Sembilan and the Eurasians who lived and suffered there during World War II has been passed down from one generation to another.

Ask any Eurasian who lived through that period and he or she will tell you how each day at the settlement was a struggle for survival. Many suffered from malnutrition and diseases such as malaria because of poor sanitation and living conditions, and lack of medicine.

If not for several medical professionals like Dr Aviet, Dr van Cuylenburg and Jock Oehlers, then a houseman dentist – who tirelessly provided medical care to those in need – the Eurasian community at Bahau would have been worse off.

Fast forward to today and Eurasians continue to play a major role in healthcare and improving community health in Singapore. In this issue, we speak to four passionate medical professionals about their contributions to Singapore's healthcare industry.

Getting to the root of pain: Dr Leroy McCully

Dr Leroy McCully always knew he wanted to become a dentist. As a boy, he was inspired by his parents' friends who were successful dentists and dreamt of achieving the same success one day.

Today, Dr Leroy runs his own practice, Dr Leroy McCully and Associates. He specialises in endodontic treatment, commonly known as root canal therapy. "I specialise in treating patients who suffer from toothache caused by root canal infection," Dr Leroy explains. "This usually happens because of deep cavities, deep fillings or trauma such as falls. Patients with root canal infection often suffer a lot of pain and are unable to eat or sleep. My job is to guide them in achieving good oral health."

On how he gets patients to calm down before treatment, Dr Leroy says, "They are often scared and nervous when they come in. One thing I've learnt is that you need to have and project strong confidence and assurance for patients to trust you."



Dr Leroy specialises in treating patients who suffer from root canal infection.



If you are interested in dentistry, I would encourage you to intern at a dental clinic, whether over weekends or school holidays, to get a feel of what it's like. Many dentists are happy to share their experiences and thoughts with interns.

For young Eurasians who wish to pursue dentistry, Dr Leroy has this to say: "Dentistry requires patience and intense concentration as well as good manual dexterity and hand-eye coordination. Think about whether you have these attributes. Good 'chairside' manners and gentle hands are, of course, an advantage!"

But, he admits, passion is perhaps the most important factor. "During hard times, passion and grit are what will give you the drive to go on and not give up."



Keeping smiles bright: Dr Melisa Lazaroo

As a young girl, Dr Melisa Lazaroo, 30, enjoyed visiting the dentist. "I loved getting my teeth cleaned and found all the instruments and procedures extremely fascinating!" Back then, she already knew she wanted to become a dentist.

But her journey was not a straightforward one. Dr Melisa initially graduated with a degree in biomedical science degree and worked for a pharmaceutical company for a year, before deciding to pursue her dream of becoming a dentist at the age of 24.

Last year, she graduated from the University of Adelaide, and is now a dentist at Gentle Dental Group.

A memorable moment on the job was when she helped a child overcome his fear of dentists. "This child was screaming and did

Dr Melisa hopes to set Singaporeans on the right path to good oral health.

not even want to sit on the dental chair on his first visit with me," Dr Melisa recalls. "But after several appointments with me, he now jumps onto the chair as soon as he walks in!"

Overall, she feels fortunate to be in a job where she sees the results of her work every day and the difference it makes to her patients' lives. "Not only is it satisfying, it also reassures me that I made the right decision to become a dentist," she adds.

On her future plans, Dr Melisa says: "I want to set up my own practice!"



Dr Melisa hopes to set Singaporeans on the right path to good oral health.

Healing Minds: Dr Tracie Lazaroo

Like her sister, 31-year-old Dr Tracie Lazaroo knew she was born for a career in the healthcare industry. "Through my involvement in church and volunteer work with the EA, I realised how much I enjoyed supporting others therapeutically in their time of distress. It cemented what I had always known – that I was born for a career in this industry!" she quips.

In 2010, Dr Tracie graduated with a Bachelor of Science majoring in Neuroscience and Psychology from the University of Western Australia. She also has a doctorate in clinical psychology from James Cook University (Singapore). Since 2016, Dr Tracie has been a clinical psychologist at Better Life Psychological Medicine Clinic.

She works with clients of all ages who are facing emotional issues and severe psychiatric problems. "My job allows me to connect with others, keeps me on my toes and challenges me. It also gives me the opportunity to make a difference in people's lives, which is meaningful and rewarding," says the mother of two.

Above all, Dr Tracie wishes to change the perceptions associated with mental illness. "Mental illness should not be seen as a stigma

"Never lose sight of your motivations. Be brave, stay committed, be willing to learn and never underestimate your potential."

or something to be ashamed of. We have all faced difficulties and it takes courage to reach out and seek support. I believe everyone has the potential to overcome adversity and lead a purposeful and meaningful life."



One of Dr Tracie's main goals is to change the perceptions associated with mental illness.

Excelling in healthcare

Given that mental illness is still poorly understood in Singapore, Dr Tracie believes that this is a field where Eurasians can enter and make an impact. "There is a growing importance and need for clinical psychologists, to implement evidence-based therapeutic interventions to equip people with the life skills they need to overcome their personal difficulties," she explains.

She also believes that Eurasians, with their multiracial backgrounds, have a distinct advantage in the healthcare industry. "For me, my multiracial background allows me to easily connect and work with people from all walks of life," Dr Tracie adds. "I also feel that my Eurasian values of being family-oriented and embracing others with love and warmth have led to my success in healthcare."

Dr Melisa, who is fiercely proud of her Eurasian heritage, echoes her sister's sentiments. "I must say that growing up as a Eurasian in Singapore has taught me resilience and tenacity, both of which are important qualities in this field of work."

"The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others"

- Mahatma Gandhi

YOUNG EURASIAN LEADERS' PROGRAMME

WHAT IS THE LEADERS' PROGRAMME?

An exclusive programme to groom Eurasian youth leaders. Participants will go through an internationally-recognised leadership development programme and have the opportunity to lead a project team to deliver positive change on a social cause.

WHAT CAN YOU LOOK FORWARD TO?

- Internationally-certified leadership development programme
- Networking opportunities with leaders from public and private sector
- Mentorship opportunities
- Opportunity to lead a team on a service learning project



Upon successful completion, participants will receive a certificate of completion and have future opportunities for leadership development

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- Key in your details and complete the registration

To find out more, please contact Ms Vinitha at vinitha@eurasians.org or call 6447 1578 (ext 212).

*All information collected is confidential and will not be shared with any third parties.

Spreading festive cheer

EA beneficiaries receive Hari Raya gifts as part of Project Joy

Festive seasons are all about giving and spreading cheer. This year, in conjunction with the recent Hari Raya celebrations, the EA nominated three families to receive hampers, grocery vouchers and food packs under Project Joy, Yayasan MENDAKI's annual Ramadan charity drive.

The event took place at Geylang West Community Centre on 19 May, and was graced by Yayasan MENDAKI Chairman Dr Yaacob Ibrahim, who was the guest of honour.



MENDAKI Volunteers all smiles as they pose for the camera



MENDAKI's staff and volunteers celebrate the successful completion of Project Joy

On top of receiving festive gifts, parents also participated in a digital quotient workshop, where they learnt tips on how to help their children navigate the online world safely and responsibly.

Beyond uplifting the Malay/Muslim community through education, Yayasan MENDAKI supports individuals and families through charity drives such as Project Joy, working together with donors and volunteers to visit and support beneficiaries.



Gift of knowledge

The 33rd edition of the Singapore Book Fair, held from 25 to 31 May at Capitol Singapore and CHIJMES, gave more than 1,000 children from low-income families a reason to smile. At the fair – organised by Singapore Press Holdings Chinese Media Group and supported by Kwan Im Thong Hood Cho Temple – each child received book vouchers worth \$50 to buy books and other educational materials. Other highlights included talks, performances, and book sharing and signing sessions with authors.

Striving for a better life

78-year-old Marshall Garnell is determined to not let his deteriorating eyesight get the better of him

Shortly after his wife passed away 30 years ago, Marshall Garnell began suffering from rapidly deteriorating eyesight. This led to him experiencing double and triple vision.

In 2013, doctors diagnosed Marshall with macular degeneration in the right eye.

"I thought the doctors were joking and asked, 'is that the name of an animal?'," he says with a slight laugh. Macular degeneration is one of the leading causes of severe, irreversible vision loss in people over the age of 60.

Marshall's treatment regimen included monthly injections for three months. However, his condition did not improve. By 2016, the disease had affected his left eye too. Marshall was put through another round of injections, but his condition barely improved. His vision continued to deteriorate further to the point he could no longer perform his then-job as a security guard.

Marshall stopped working in September 2016. "Due to my deteriorating eyesight, it was impossible to find a new job," he laments. This meant a loss of income and resulted in Marshall finding it difficult to pay his monthly rent. To make ends meet, he declared himself bankrupt, and his CPF funds were used to pay off his debts.

In 2017, on advice from a friend, Marshall turned to the EA for help. "I really



Marshall (second from left) with Carmelita, Quentin Pereira, and his mother.

Words are not enough to express my gratitude to the EA for helping me during my time of need. I will always remember this kind act.

appreciate what the EA has done for me, especially Mr Ram, who has helped me secure financial assistance from the EA and a Social Service Office in Singapore," Marshall adds.

The same year, Marshall's life took a positive turn when he married

Ms. Carmelita Siguin. She is currently attempting to secure a Singapore long-term visit pass so that she can move here to look after Marshall.

"Without my wife's care, it is very difficult for me to move around because of my bad eyesight," Marshall says. In the future, he also hopes to be able to rent a flat where the two of them can live together peacefully.

When asked what his long-term wish was, Marshall said he hopes that more people will come forward to support the EA in their efforts to help those in need. "I hope they understand that the EA is doing a lot for underprivileged Eurasians. My wish is for others to realise this and to participate or volunteer in one way or another."

If you would like to help Marshall as well as others like him who are in need of assistance, you may contact Ram at ram@eurasians.org or call 6447 1578 (ext 210).



Marshall (second from left) with Carmelita, Edmund Rodrigues, and his wife.

Stronger focus and less stress with mindfulness

Workshop helps youth focus their minds and attention

Students often have many commitments and struggle to manage their time effectively or focus their attention on the things that truly matter, says EA Youth Sub-Committee Chairperson Christopher Gordon. One way to sustain one's focus and attention is through practising mindfulness.

On 28 April, the EA Youth Sub-Committee organised a mindfulness workshop under its flagship Mentorship Programme to introduce youth to this useful life skill and show them how it can be used to focus their minds in order to achieve success, both academically and personally. The session, the first in a three-part mindfulness workshop by Golden Space, was held at the Eurasian Community House.

After the workshop, I started removing unnecessary clutter from my desk and realised that it helped me to focus better.



Nicole (right) with her friend, Shamon Fernandez, at the workshop.



There were good vibes all around at the EA's first mindfulness workshop, organised by the Youth Sub-Committee.

Eighteen-year-old Nicole Seraphina describes the workshop as very useful. "It helped me further expand my knowledge of mindfulness meditation. I have apps on my phone that have taught me how to practise mindfulness but the session helped me to understand its benefits and how the techniques can be extended to my studies."

One of her key takeaways from the workshop was the metaphor "study tables are the visual representations of one's mind". "After the workshop, I started removing unnecessary clutter from my desk and realised that it helped me to focus better. I enjoy learning

mindfulness meditation and will continue to practise it daily," she adds.

The next mindfulness workshop will be held on 8 September from 10am to 1pm. It is a practical workshop that aims to empower youth by helping them visualise success and focus their sights clearly on attaining it. There is also a separate parents' workshop to provide parents with tips on how to have conversations with their children on their goals in life and to partner them to work towards their aspirations. If you are keen to sign up, please contact Vini at vinitha@eurasians.org or call 6447 1578 (ext 212).

Making a good impression

Workshop teaches students resumé-writing and job interview skills

In today's increasingly competitive world, it is important for students to be able to effectively express their skills, abilities, key interests and experiences to employers. As such, EA held a resumé-writing and interview skills workshop at the Eurasian Community House.

The four-hour workshop was led by experienced personal branding strategist, Mr Lionel Lim, who has taught many secondary and tertiary level students how to write a winning resumé and cover letter, as well as how to ace an interview and overcome nervousness.

The students who attended the workshop shared positive feedback and



Personal branding strategist, Mr Lionel Lim (fourth from left), posing with the students who attended the workshop

felt motivated to send out their new resumé. "The workshop equipped us with the knowledge of how to present ourselves and also create a portfolio that is concise and suitable for the job we are interviewing for," says 18-year-old Shannon Cara Fernandez.

Christian Tide Van Huizen, a second-year Millennia Institute student, adds: "If not for this workshop, I wouldn't have known how important a resumé was or how necessary it was to impress during an interview. It taught me how to portray

If not for this workshop, I wouldn't have known how important a resumé is or how necessary it is to impress during an interview.

myself in a better light and made me aware of how essential preparation is prior to an interview. I'm looking forward to more of such mentorship sessions!"

Shaping Singapore's future leaders

Inaugural Young Eurasian Leaders' Programme introduces participants to five practices of exemplary leadership

Singapore needs leaders for the future – people who can critically analyse situations, shape new initiatives and solve problems. On 19 and 26 May, the EA Youth Committee held its first Young Eurasian Leaders' Programme, kick-starting its drive to shape Singapore's future leaders.

The comprehensive leadership development programme began with a leadership challenge, where participants were introduced to the five practices of exemplary leadership. They were taught different leadership techniques and how to apply them to real-life challenges by a trainer from Halogen Foundation, a local youth development charity. During the course of the challenge, the youth were also encouraged to reflect on their own leadership skills and development through exciting thought-provoking games.



The Young Eurasian Leaders' Programme also gave participants a chance to get to know and learn from one another.

Daniella Danis, who came to know about the programme through her sibling, Danni, who sits on the EA Management Committee, found both sessions introspective and helpful. It was also Daniella's first time attending an EA Youth Committee

initiative. "The programme fosters [leadership] growth through interaction and bringing together everyone's skills. This helped me to see the gaps in my own leadership style, which I can now develop further," the 23-year-old shares.

Another participant, 21-year-old James Stuart, found the workshops – which were held as part of the leadership challenge – extremely fulfilling and very well facilitated. "I feel a lot more

I feel a lot more confident [in my abilities] as a leader after learning about the framework and concepts that this programme has introduced me to.

confident [in my abilities] as a leader after learning about the framework and concepts that this programme has introduced me to."

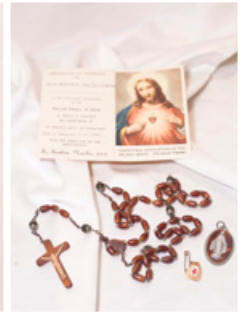
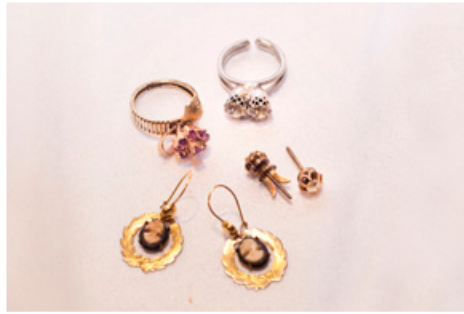
Participants are now eager to participate in the five-part Leader Community Involvement Programme, which gives them the opportunity to work on community projects that they are passionate about and make a difference in the wider Singapore community. The programme commenced on 6 June.

EA Youth Sub-committee Chairperson Christopher Gordon is pleased that more young Eurasians are taking part in EA programmes. "The Young Eurasian Leaders' Programme is mainly to help youth find their passion and achieve personal mastery and success in their education and careers," he explains. "We are also looking out for youth who demonstrate [leadership] potential. These individuals will be encouraged to take on leadership positions in the EA as well as in the Eurasian community."

Time to put on your thinking and drinking cap!

Close to 20 young Eurasians gathered at Canjob Taproom on 10 May for a night of Think & Drink trivia fun. Trivia nights are held for Eurasian youth to get together and make new friends. For details about the next trivia night, visit <http://www.eurasion.org.sg/events/think-drink/>

Preserving treasures and stories of the past



Do you have historical items or heirlooms that have been handed down to you, which hold memories of your family and heritage? If yes, we would love to hear from you!

The Eurasian Heritage Centre is currently undergoing a revamp and is inviting the community to participate in the exercise by donating or lending objects that reflect our Eurasian heritage. So come and share with us your precious treasures or stories of your family's roots, life in the old enclaves, and your memories of school days and early working life.

A list of possible or suggested items might include:

- Accessories Eurasian women liked to wear - brooches, bracelets, ear rings, necklaces. (And the stories behind it.)
- Items for the altar.
- Incense holder. For burning incense.
- Baby baptism gown. Including booties and bonnet.
- Old family photos and wedding photos.
- In-action sports photos of Eurasian sportsmen and women.

- Hand-written family recipe books.
 - Tea set (pot, sugar bowl, milk jug, teaspoons, forks and saucers)
 - Cutlery for dinner table setting.
 - Dressing table items (big hand mirror, jewellery box, perfume dispenser, powder puff etc.)
 - Photos of typical/old Eurasian houses (in former Eurasian enclaves)
- * Only selected items will be displayed in the EHC, due to space constraints. Thank you for your understanding.

The loan or donation of heritage items, as well as sharing of stories from back in the day, will help the EA preserve Eurasian history and culture, and better tell the story of Eurasians in Singapore at the Eurasian Heritage Centre. The Revamped centre is set to be unveiled at the EA's centenary celebrations next year.

For more details, visit <http://www.eurasion.org.sg/events/artefact-stories-call-out/> or email jacqueline@eurasion.org

Speaking of the Past

The Eurasian Association is partnering with the Oral History Centre of the National Archives of Singapore to strengthen the national oral history collection and ensure that it represents all of Singapore society. As part of this, the Eurasian Community Oral History Committee is seeking to collect the stories of diverse Eurasians on topics ranging from their growing up, school years and careers to the contributions they have made to Singapore.

The EA is requesting the public's help in identifying Eurasians who have a good story to tell

The EA is requesting the public's help in identifying Eurasians who have a good story to tell that pertains to Eurasian history, traditions, heritage and culture. The project began last year and to date interviews have been conducted with eight Eurasians.

If you would like to contribute or identify an individual suitable for the interviews, please contact Jacqueline at jacqueline@eurasion.org or call 64471578 (ext 202).



Participants undergo training to act as interviewers in the oral history project



Participants actively engaged in training

Back to the groovy cultural days of the past

Singapore Heritage Festival ends on a grand note with Armenian Street Party

Partygoers were treated to an Armenian Street Party – which featured performances and activities, and a feast of Peranakan and Eurasian food and drinks – on the last two days of the Singapore Heritage Festival. The celebration on 20 and 21 April also marked the 10th anniversary of the Peranakan Museum.

Event highlights included a talk by author Matthew Tan, who spoke about the differences between Eurasian and Peranakan delicacies, and a sharing session led by Melissa de Silva, who read excerpts from her book 'Others' is Not a Race, which explores what it means to be Singaporean and Eurasian.

There were also plenty of performances over the two days by the likes of Peter Diaz, Trevor Martens Wong and Jared Martens Wong, who played lots of old-school tunes, much to the delight of the audience. The music brought back memories of days gone by and complemented the "Balik Kampung" theme of the event.

The EA's booth – selling crafts, books and merchandise – was a hit with revellers, who also enjoyed and savoured Eurasian food favourites such as curry devil, meaty cutlet and Pang Susie, courtesy of EA member Mary Gomes.

For EA Heritage Sub-Committee Chairperson Julia D'Silva, the celebration was meaningful and memorable. "We were delighted to collaborate with the Peranakan Museum for this event, and we are happy that all guests enjoyed transporting themselves back to the groovy cultural days of the past!" she says.



(From left) Jared, Dan and Trevor entertaining the crowd with their music.



The Armenian Street Party featured a feast of Peranakan and Eurasian delights.



The Armenian Street Party featured a feast of Peranakan and Eurasian delights.



Visitors at the Eurasian Heritage Centre, where they learnt more about Eurasian culture and heritage. Hosted by EA's Jacqueline Peiris (far left) and Trevor Nerva (second from left).

HeritageFest 2018

On 22 April, more than 10 visitors had an exciting time exploring Eurasian culture and heritage through the various exhibitions at the Eurasian Heritage Centre. The visit was part of this year's Singapore Heritage Festival (SHF), an annual event that celebrates the city-state's cultural diversity. At the Eurasian Heritage Centre, visitors took part in the Eurasian Experience Tour, which included a guided tour of three galleries, participation in a traditional Eurasian folk dance and sampling sugee cake, a popular Eurasian delicacy.

A shining example

How Carlos Andres Monasterios left his old life of delinquency to begin a new one

To say that Carlos Andres Monasterios' life has been a rollercoaster ride is an understatement. He has lived through what most would consider a nightmare and done things that parents warn their children against.

friends regularly engaged in notorious acts and anti-social behaviour, and together they bullied kids, especially those from "perfect" families.

Often, Carlos adds, his actions and

The YAG, which was set up in August 2017, comprises 12 youth members from various walks of life, whose main



Carlos Andres Monasterios with his mother in Vietnam.

Overcoming that phase of my life does not mean I can rest on my laurels. I still have a long way to go in growing and developing myself.

Carlos was born in Bolivia to a father of Spanish descent and a Singaporean-Chinese mother. When he was four, his family uprooted and moved to

decisions were driven by a desire for instant gratification with no regard whatsoever for the consequences. "To make matters worse, my mother always sided with me whenever someone tried to correct my behaviour, so I got away with a lot of things."

In 2008, Carlos faced his first arrest for harassing a homeowner on behalf of an unlicensed moneylender. "I was remanded for three weeks at the Singapore Boys' Home, detained for a year at the Singapore Boys' Hostel and sentenced to a six-month probation at home," he recalls.

When he got out, he began doing drugs to suppress his emotions. But he recounts,

"The drug abuse affected me physically and mentally. I became more depressed, violent and paranoid. It took years to recover from the addiction and abuse."

It was during this period that Carlos decided enough was enough. He checked into The Hiding Place, a Christian home for rehabilitation, to recover and get help in rebuilding his life.

Today, Carlos sits on the Youth Advisory Group (YAG), an initiative by the National Committee on Youth Guidance and Rehabilitation (NYGR) under the Ministry of Social and Family Development. Formed in 1995, the NYGR seeks to address problems and issues related to juvenile delinquency in Singapore, through its various partners such as social service agencies and self-help groups.



Carlos Andres Monasterios as an Emcee at an MSF event.

Singapore. He was enrolled in a local school but dropped out in Secondary 3, choosing instead a path that led to self-destruction.

By the age of 16, Carlos had done it all, from drugs to working as a loan shark runner. So what led to these poor decisions?

"Multiple factors," Carlos says. "I was mischievous and left uncorrected, so I became worse. Growing up, I felt like I did not have both my parents as they were divorced. This made me very independent, and I did not feel accountable to anyone." But as he grew older, Carlos felt something missing in his life.

He made up for this by making a lot of friends – but not the good kind. These

role is to advise NYGR's partners on the relevance and effectiveness of policies and programmes for at-risk youth, before they are implemented.

But Carlos' journey of recovery and self-growth is not over. In an April interview with Channel NewsAsia, he mentions that he is still a "work in progress". "Overcoming that phase of my life does not mean I can rest on my laurels," he adds. "I still have a long way to go in growing and developing myself."

His immediate goal is to do more volunteer work for youth events. He sees this as a way of giving back to society for all the support that he has received. Additionally, Carlos hopes to travel around Southeast Asia to gain a better perspective on people and life outside Singapore. "I am also looking forward to commencing my studies at a local university and equipping myself to give back economically to Singapore."

For at-risk youth, Carlos has this advice: "Do not be afraid to admit your vulnerabilities. Get help by talking to a counsellor or religious leader. There are always people willing to help you."

When asked how he would advise parents and teachers, Carlos says, "Be wise and do not be mean. Be careful how you deal with youth and what you say to them, especially when they have done something wrong."

Teacher with a special interest

How Barbara D’Cotta became a special education teacher and her new role at Mayflower Primary School

As a teenager, Barbara D’Cotta wanted to be a teacher – not just any teacher, but a special education teacher. She was intrigued by how language could be communicated visually through sign language, gestures and facial expressions to help children with hearing loss.

In 1979, at the age of 19, she applied for a teaching role at the Singapore School for the Deaf despite not knowing sign language. “When I first started in 1979, I did not have any formal training for special education. I just wanted to learn and be part of the process,” she says.

And learn, she did. In 1982, Barbara graduated with a diploma in special education, and recently attained a degree in special education. She is currently pursuing a masters in special education at the National Institute of Education. “It is my commitment and responsibility to keep abreast of the knowledge and skills needed for this job, for the benefit of my students,” she adds.



In early 2018, Barbara moved to Mayflower Primary School.

Barbara taught at the Singapore School for the Deaf for 38 years – the last five years of which she served as its vice principal – before the school closed for good as part of a move to integrate pupils with hearing loss into a mainstream primary school and allow them to interact and learn alongside their hearing peers.

In early 2018, she moved to Mayflower Primary School, which was designated as the first primary school for pupils with hearing loss who want access to mainstream curriculum. Her role there as a specialised teacher for pupils with hearing loss is slightly different from her previous position at the Singapore School for the Deaf.

“Even after years of experience, we [educators] must constantly be aware not to fall into the trap of thinking that we know it all. Continuous learning goes beyond increasing knowledge; it brings new insights and opens you up to new ideas.”



Barbara teaches English and maths to pupils with hearing loss at Mayflower Primary School.

“A co-teaching approach is used. This is where a mainstream teacher and specialised teacher – who is proficient in signing and trained in hearing loss pedagogies – plan and deliver lessons together to meet the needs of all students in a class,” she explains.

With this integration, there has to be weekly meetings, and planning and collaboration among teachers to ensure that lessons go smoothly. At the meetings, the teachers usually discuss the pace of lessons and ways to make them more visually accessible and interactive. “For subjects such as physical education, art and music, for instance, an educational interpreter shadows the class teacher to deliver the lessons in sign language to pupils with hearing loss,” she says.

On the benefits of integrating pupils with hearing loss into mainstream schools, Barbara believes that it builds their confidence, gives them greater access to mainstream curriculum and allows them to maximise their learning potential as well as experience life in a mainstream school.

Additionally, they can benefit from having a larger circle of friends and

acquaintances (both hearing and deaf) and access to facilities and programmes typically offered by mainstream schools. “For the hearing pupils, this creates a natural setting for developing social-emotional skills such as empathy and patience as well as learning how to overcome communication barriers and accept friends who may be different from them,” she says.

Barbara also believes that parents and families have a key role to play in nurturing their deaf children’s development and learning. She encourages families to learn sign language as soon as they find out that their child or sibling has hearing loss; to seek different opinions on the best communication and educational delivery models; and, most importantly, to choose a plan that is holistic and most suitable to their child’s needs to ensure their happiness.

For educators, Barbara has this advice: “Even after years of experience, we must constantly be aware not to fall into the trap of thinking that we know it all. Continuous learning goes beyond increasing knowledge; it brings new insights and opens you up to new ideas.”



A night of music and dancing

Mel Ferdinands – one half of the popular local brother duo Mel and Joe Ferdinands – put on a memorable show before an audience of more than a hundred people at the Eurasian Community House on 5 May.

He performed with Rani Tofani from Indonesia; the INDOPURA band; Get Back – a Beatles tribute band; The Dukes; and The Lesslars as part of an exciting Country Rock & Roll concert. Together, they dazzled the crowd and even got them dancing to their tunes.

“It was truly a night of rock and rolling, and I would like to thank all the musicians who joined me and dazzled with their performances,” Mel shares.

EA Community Development Sub-committee Chairperson, Yvonne Pereira, lauded the musicians for doing an amazing job. “This triumphant show was made possible by Mel Ferdinands and all the musicians! I would also like to thank Quentin Pereira for the delicious snacks and drinks, and I believe that all members enjoyed the refreshing concert.”

