

THE NEW EURASIAN

Apr - Jun 2023 | eurasians.sg



Getting to Know
EA Patron Barry Desker

When the Going Gets Tough,
the Tough Get Going

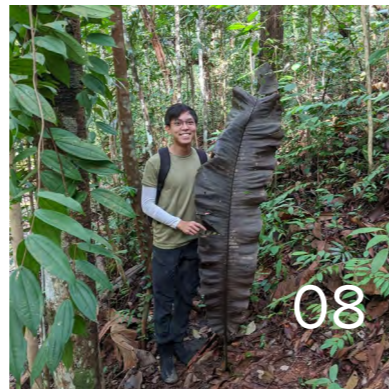
Bravo to All
EA Donors & Volunteers!

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The New Eurasian

Magazine of the Eurasian Association, Singapore

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

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The New Eurasian

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In Touch

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We are heartened by the commitment of so many people, and welcome more volunteers to join the EA.



Dear EA members

The EA had a strong start in the first quarter, and we are now into the year in full swing. We held our 2023 Annual General Meeting recently on 15 April at the Eurasian Community House, and focused on the theme of getting into action for the work done in 2022, as the EA was able to resume all physical activities from May last year. We also held an education fair on 29 April to share information on our various tuition and enrichment programmes, and financial assistance schemes.

In celebration of our multi-racial community, EA Heritage participated as one of four interactive booths at Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong's Chinese New Year Garden Party at the Istana on 5 February. More than 2,000 people visited the Eurasian Heritage Gallery in the first quarter to learn about Eurasian culture, including guided tours for close to a thousand students.

We welcomed our new EA Patron Barry Desker in a ceremony on 11 February with Minister S Iswaran as the guest-of-honour, and readers can get to know more about him in this issue's cover story on page 18 and 19.

Dedicated donors and volunteers were recognised for their tireless efforts and contributions to the community in 2022, at the Donors & Volunteers Appreciation

Tea held on 25 March. You can also read more about two of our Youth Sub-Committee volunteers; Kyle Peters, who was featured in Asian Legal Business as one of Asia's Top 40 lawyers under the age of 40; and Elliott Ong, who is actively involved in wildlife conservation work.

We are heartened by the commitment of so many people, and welcome more volunteers to join the EA in its mission to help the less fortunate, bring people together, and to share our Eurasian culture with others. Do find out more on page 24, how you can make a difference to the Eurasian community through your donations, or by indicating your area of interest to volunteer. We can only continue with our good work in partnership with you.

With the June school break coming up, if you are looking for activities to keep your children occupied, do come by the Eurasian Community House to visit the Eurasian Heritage Gallery, or sign your young children up for kidsREAD sessions on Saturday mornings – find out how on page 10. The EA looks forward to welcoming you!

Sandra Theseira
President

Share Your Stories With Us!

✉ If you have an interesting story to share with the wider Eurasian community, let us know! Email Lester Low at lester@eurasians.org

🌐 You can read The New Eurasian magazine online at eurasians.sg/neweurasian-magazine

Law of Purpose and Graciousness

One would describe being listed as one of Asia's Top 40 lawyers under the age of 40 by the Asian Legal Business as a big career accomplishment. Imagine being selected from more than 500 nominations, and being up against lawyers from various jurisdictions and practice areas.

"The accolades are nice (such as being selected as one of the top 40 lawyers under 40 in Asia in 2022), but to me the ability to contribute to meaningful causes is the most enriching and satisfying aspect of being a lawyer," said Kyle Gabriel Peters, 36, before adding, "I try to simply do my very best."

The thought of reading law was not on his radar while studying in Catholic High School and St. Patrick's School, but he described the years at the latter as being "profound and transformative".

He told the NewEurasian, "It was during those salad days that I met many friends who remain near and dear to me today. I have many fond memories of us spending time together after school, and occasionally getting up to all sorts of mischief. It was also a formative period for me, learning important Patrician and LaSallian values. I was also a proud member of the St. Patrick's School Military Band and played the bass trombone."

Kyle studied architecture at Singapore Polytechnic, before he found his calling for law during his National Service. "When I served my National Service, I hoped to be assigned to an exciting vocation. Instead, I was posted to the role of a staff assistant. That was unfulfilling. So I took up night and weekend classes, and obtained a Diploma in Law from the University of London in 2010. One thing led to another and 13 years later, I'm an equity partner in a dynamic boutique firm, practising commercial and corporate litigation."

While his journey to become a lawyer had its fair share of challenges, financing his legal education was the greatest obstacle. "Circumstances required that I had to fund my studies principally through loans - including from the firm at which I was employed as a paralegal. I will always be grateful for all the grace that I received."

"With that hurdle out of the way, I have (generally) enjoyed the practice of law. That said, the constant stress resulting from the necessity to have one's wits about every day does take a toll. So now I'm working on being mindful, and finding contentment in the everyday," he added, before acknowledging the high demands of the law profession.



Kyle with his parents and seven siblings in 2014. Front row from left: Charis Esther Peters, Philip Paul Peters, Vanessa Peters. Back row from left: Brandon Patrick Peters, Kyle Gabriel Peters, Mary Ann Peters, Philip Peters, Teresa Chua, Desiree Catherine Peters, Joel Anthony Peters.

"The high attrition rate among younger lawyers was recently covered in the media and this is, to some extent, caused by the long hours of work and, for the less lucky ones, from harsh working environments. It is unsurprising that many consider that the relatively high pay is an insufficient incentive to endure such difficulties. Many young lawyers also leave the profession because they discover that their true calling lies elsewhere. This makes sense to me."

He went on to share some 'hard truths' about the law profession, as well as some advice for aspiring lawyers.

"Practising law is more than a job - it is a calling, one which must be carried out conscientiously and with pride. I'll offer the aphorism - the practice of law is a marathon, not a sprint - with a modification. I think it is important to take care of your physical, mental and emotional wellbeing and not to stretch yourself too thin. Pacing is paramount, be wary of trying to do too much, too soon, too often. Equally important is the need to live and enjoy the journey."

Looking back, he believes his achievements today were not just the result of his own efforts but the many acts of kindness and graciousness he had received over the years. This is one of the reasons why one of his goals is to give back as much as (if not more than) he had received.



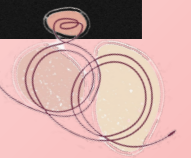
Kyle (front row) at the Singapore Sports Hub, when Tottenham Hotspur visited Singapore in July 2019.

"When I was an undergraduate student some years ago, I received a modest bursary from the EA which I very much appreciated. A few years ago, I found myself wanting to give back. Vincent Schoon, the EA's 1st Vice-President and Chairperson of the Education Sub-Committee, invited me to do so by volunteering with the said sub-committee. I took up his invitation, and it has been a most rewarding experience. I am also a member of the School Council of St. Patrick's School and contribute to the Board of Management to the Christian Brothers' Schools. I volunteer with the Criminal Legal Aid Scheme, the Law Society's Community Legal Clinics, and provide ad-hoc pro bono legal advice to old folks' homes and charitable causes."

For now, Kyle is channelling his time and efforts to add another achievement to his list of accolades - tying the knot with his fiancée early next year. "We are excitedly planning the wedding, and it's the biggest case I am working on," he joked.



Kyle and his fiancée Arias Lim in Paris, in December 2022.



When the Going Gets Tough, the Tough Get Going



For Jacqueline Galistan, 'when it rains it pours' is a phrase she can relate to. Some years ago, her fourth child, then 17 years old, suffered a massive stroke which left her severely disabled.

Speaking to the NewEurasian, Jacqueline shared, "While I was a special education teacher, my daughter was diagnosed with Moyamoya disease [a disorder that affects the blood vessels in the brain] and faced an uncertain road to recovery. I immediately resigned to become her full-time caregiver."

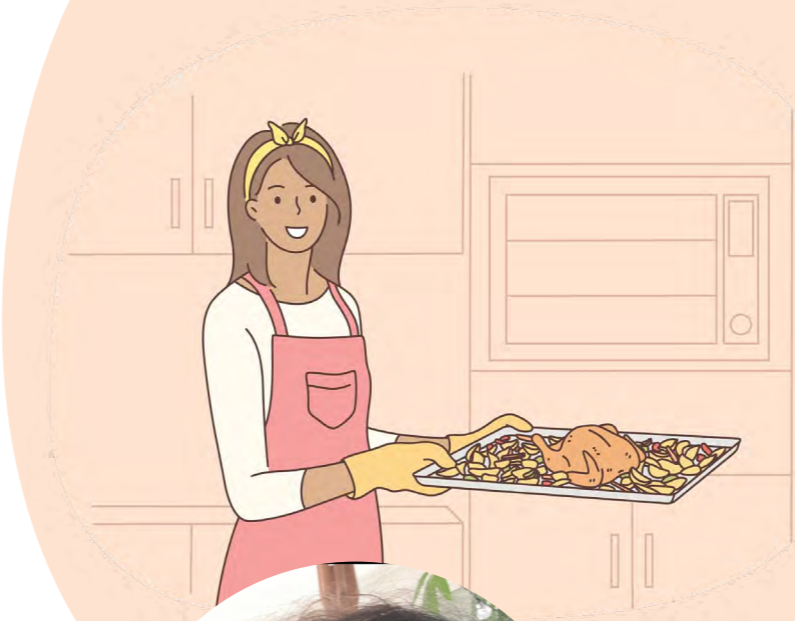
"Five years down the road, I also suffered a stroke which left me hemiplegic and unable to physically take care of my girl," said the 64-year-old, who has five children between 33 to 45 years old, and five grandchildren.

To say that Jacqueline, who has Portuguese and Spanish heritage, has a lot on her plate is an understatement. Despite the challenges faced, she has found the positive mindset and strength to persevere, to ensure she provides the best care for her daughter, and to support her family through her love for cooking by starting Jackie's Kitchen, her home based business.

"I was a homemaker when the Covid pandemic disastrously disrupted my husband's offshore oil and gas survey business. Working from home seemed the most viable option of supplementing the family income. So, I took the leap to finally realise my lifelong dream of opening Jackie's Kitchen," said Jacqueline.



The family that eats together, stays together. Christmas celebrations with her family (Jacqueline, left) and extended family (back row, fifth from right) a few years ago.



Jacqueline Galistan, owner of Jackie's Kitchen.

Her love for cooking goes back to when she was 13 and learning the ropes on her own through trial and error, from recipe books of her favourite chefs. At St. Margaret's Secondary School, her favourite subjects were sewing and cooking.

After her O-levels, she went on to work as a secretary and receptionist before becoming a stay-at-home-mum. She returned to the workforce as a special education teacher when her youngest child started primary school.

Today, Jacqueline is glad she took a leap of faith to become a business owner, as she can fulfil her passion for cooking and also be present to care for her daughter.

"Whilst our domestic helper/caregiver aide tends to her personal needs, I feed, take her for walks and watch over her throughout the day. I balance my work around her pattern, wake up early to cook while she is asleep and during her nap. I only bake after dinner when she has gone to bed," she said, adding that time management was one of the key challenges faced in running a business.

"Besides the food prep, I also handle online marketing, sourcing of items, inventory, customer service, courier delivery, meal planning, menu print-out, photography, advertising, food orders, payments and accounts."

To place a food order with Jackie's Kitchen, send a WhatsApp message to Jacqueline at 9833 7854.



When it comes to food, a picture says a thousand words.

Looking back, she is grateful for loyal customers who have supported Jackie's Kitchen, and for being given the opportunity to supply some food items for EA's Family Support Services' 2022 Christmas hampers. She feels the need to pay it forward by supporting the less privileged in the Eurasian community.

"Charity begins at home. It gives me joy to share and contribute towards our Eurasian community as much as I am able to. We are, after all, one family," said Jacqueline.

"Whenever I was approached to provide bento meals for the less privileged, profit was never the criteria. I always felt humbled and blessed to satiate each diner with my homestyle food."

Jacqueline hopes to expand Jackie's Kitchen offerings in the coming years. "Hosting and hospitality are my forte. I have already introduced the home dining experience at my own dining table to a group of customers from within a Eurasian private group."

With her eye on the future, more people could soon enjoy a delightful Eurasian home-style dining experience.

Mission: To Protect and Preserve Our Environment



“I just find the natural world fascinating and want to do my best to help preserve it because at the end of the day we can’t survive without it.”

Biodiversity and wildlife conservation activist Elliot Ong.



Avid adventurer Elliot exploring the Ogof Ffynnon Ddu (Welsh for ‘Cave of the Black Spring’) in South Wales, United Kingdom.

Since young, Elliott Ong enjoyed his screen time just like any other child. But while many children may have had their eyes glued to the television watching cartoons, Elliott’s interests were a little different.

“I have always been interested in animals from young, maybe because I watched Animal Planet and Discovery Channel. I just find the natural world fascinating and want to do my best to help preserve it because at the end of the day we can’t survive without it,” said the 26-year-old, who has a Chinese father and Eurasian mother.

Since then, that interest in nature and his love for the outdoors shadowed him wherever he went, during his education at St Joseph’s Institution where he was a boy scout, and later graduated with honours in Environmental Studies from the National University of Singapore.

It is no surprise that he decided to embark on a wildlife conservation career.

“I manage and support the funding of wildlife conservation projects around the Southeast Asian region, and am transitioning into a new role in establishing partnerships between corporate companies and conservation projects on the ground, which will benefit both people and nature,” said Elliott. “For example, if a company wants to invest in an environment project such as reforestation, my role is to find these projects and pitch it to them for funding.”

He added that he has been actively involved in conservation-related work over the past six years, from helping in the filming of a wildlife documentary “Wild City”, to doing field research on endangered species like the Raffles’ banded langur and

documenting the species of sea cucumber and fish maw being traded in Singapore.

Through his work, he aims to raise awareness about the connection between climate change and preserving biodiversity. “Climate change will impact our lives in many ways and have significant impacts on biodiversity. For example, clearance of forests makes climate change worse as there are fewer trees to absorb carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, and the number one cause of forest clearance in the world is agriculture, to produce the food we eat.”

One of his hopes is to see more young people come forward to volunteer. “Get involved! There are many nature groups out there that run volunteer engagement events. NParks also runs volunteer events for people to get involved with conservation. Other groups include Jane Goodall Institute Singapore, Nature Society Singapore and the Herpetological Society of Singapore. For groups tackling wider environmental issues, there are the Singapore Youths for Climate Action (SYCA), Zero Waste SG and PMHaze to name a few. There is also this wonderful website run by a group of inspiring youths called ‘lepakinsg’ that has an environmental event calendar you can refer to.”

Even with many things on his plate, Elliott makes time to volunteer with the EA Youth Sub-Committee. During his free time, he is quite the adventurer.

“I enjoy wildlife photography and will also be out to look for new experiences such as climbing mountains, exploring caves or travelling to cities and islands around the region, and I hope to do more scuba diving,” said Elliott.



In nature’s midst: Elliott at the Central Catchment Nature Reserve, helping out with a survey on the fruiting cycle of forest plants.

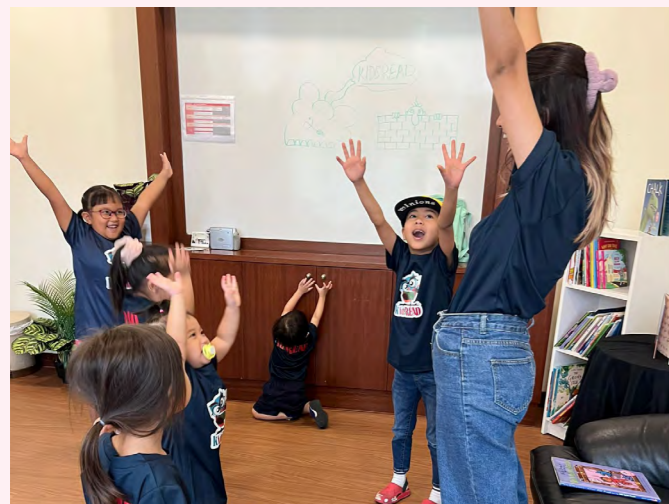


A Wonderful World of Books

Children between 4 to 8 years old were treated to storytelling and hands-on activities, conducted by past EA University Scholarship recipients, as the first session of kidsREAD kicked off on Saturday 11 March and over subsequent weekends.

Introduced by the National Library Board (NLB), in partnership with People's Association, the four Self-Help Groups, community organisations and the Ministry of Education, kidsREAD aims to instil the love of reading, and provide an avenue for young children to interact with others from different races and backgrounds. Children who join the programme will receive a kidsREAD sling bag and workbook with curated kids' activities.

Sessions are held on selected Saturday mornings throughout the year, and registration is open to Singaporeans and Permanent Residents. Contact shareen@eurasians.org to sign your children up.



Children in action at kidsREAD sessions in March, in a cosy corner at the Eurasian Community House.

Easter Fun at the EA

Easter festivities filled the Eurasian Community House on Sunday 9 April, bringing together friends and family at the Easter Sunday Tea Dance. 90 guests enjoyed an afternoon of Eurasian tea delicacies and a joyous, lively dance atmosphere with entertainment by 'The Rangers' band.



Maria Amri, lucky top prize winner of an Easter-themed suggee cake.



Grooving to the Easter beat!



From left: Alexander Charles Louis (President, United Nations Association of Singapore), Chua Poh Choo-Shepherdson, Yvonne Pereira (EA 2nd Vice-President), Sandra Theseira (EA President), Percival Shepherdson (EA MC member).



Bravo to All EA Donors & Volunteers!

EA donors and volunteers were recognised for their contributions at an appreciation tea on Saturday 25 March at the Eurasian Community House. There were 18 donors and more than 150 volunteers who were recognised for their tireless efforts and contributions to the community in 2022. The guests were presented with certificates by EA President Sandra Theseira, and were also treated to a Jinkli Nona performance by EA dancers Florabelle Beins and her three children.

In her opening address, EA President Sandra Theseira voiced her gratitude on behalf of the EA, for the support of all volunteers and donors through the years. She shared examples of volunteers, including youngest dancer Laylabelle Beins-Au who turns 9 years old this year, 20 and 30-year long-serving volunteers Dorothy Tessensohn and Geoffrey Morris respectively, and founder of online Eurasians International (EI) Sandra Galistan. She also shared how generous donations had enabled the EA to help students and low-income families through Education and Family Support Services, and bring people together through Community Development initiatives. For example, education awards such as the Coral de Cruz Memorial Fund and the Edward D'Silva Scholarship had made an impactful difference in helping needy students achieve their full potential.

In closing, she called for more to come forward, to help the EA further its mission to assist the less fortunate, bring people together to strengthen our social compact, and to share our Eurasian culture with others.

Thank you to all donors and volunteers for your dedication and generosity.



Thank you to the volunteers from Community Development and EA Sports and Recreation.



Sandra Theseira (EA President) and Edmund Rodrigues (EA MC member & FSS Chairperson) with FSS volunteers Christine Pereira (left) and Mary Toh (right).



EA dancers Florabelle Beins (second from right) and her three children (from left) Janeiro, Laylabelle and Rio.



Sandra Galistan and her EI team of volunteers promote Eurasian businesses, help needy households and connect Eurasians online.



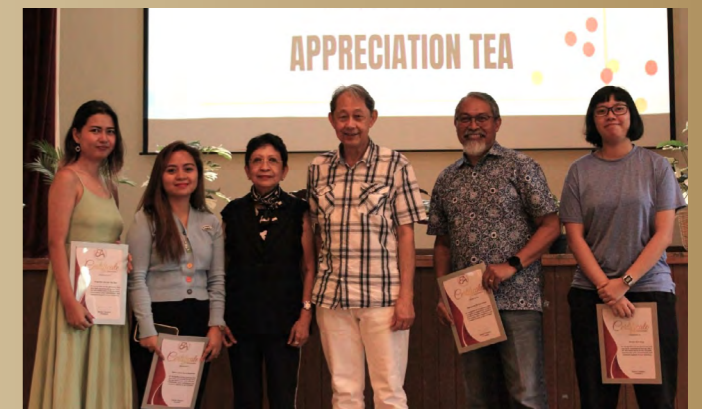
The Edward D'Silva Scholarship assists needy students pursuing further studies in Polytechnic or ITE.



Donor Ambassador Simon de Cruz with EA President Sandra Theseira.



Donor Joseph Tan Jude Benny LLP – represented by K Murali Pany.



Education volunteers from left: Augusta Lea Loi, Ferny Laine, Sandra Theseira (EA President), Vincent Schoon (EA 1st Vice-President & Education Chairperson), Humphrey Conceicao, Nicole Ann Ong.



Time for the Jinkli Nona!



EA President Sandra Theseira (second from right) with members of the EA Audit Committee (from left): Ruby Cheah, Helen Lee, Christopher Teo.



Heritage volunteers recognised for their contributions.

Heritage Spotlight

Cultural Booths

Eurasian Cultural Booth at Prime Minister's CNY Garden Party

The EA was proud to be part of four interactive booths at Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong's Chinese New Year Garden Party at the Istana on 5 February.

EA's booth featured two activities; a photo-taking station where guests could dress up in a Eurasian dance costume; and a magnetic badge making activity with a Eurasian-style Cabaia Kumpridu (Portuguese 'long blouse') or Eurasian tile design.



EA MC members and volunteers. From left: Danni Jay Luke Danis, Percival Shepherdson, Claudia D'Silva, Sandra Theseira (EA President), Misha Monteiro-Benson, Christopher Gordon, Jacqueline Peeris, Priscilia Lin.



With foam board props such as sugee cake and curry debal. From left: Jacqueline Peeris, Misha Monteiro-Benson, Deborah Branson, MP Joan Pereira.

Tours

NHB's Battle for Singapore – EHG-CCM Joint Tour

The Eurasian Heritage Gallery (EHG) partnered with Changi Chapel Museum (CCM) to organise a special twinned tour as part of the National Heritage Board (NHB)'s Battle for Singapore programme.



EHG docent Long Chin Peng (left) with WWII tour participants on 11 February.

EHG School Tours

The EHG received young visitors from Dunman High, Tao Nan School, St. Anthony's Primary, Xinmin Secondary, Tanjong Katong Secondary and Zee Juniors Kindergarten.



EHG docent Valerie Scully shared the origins of the Eurasian community with primary three students of Tao Nan School who visited the EHG over five days in February and March.

Events & Partnerships

EHG Docents & Heritage Sub-Committee Excursion & Gathering

EHG docents and the EA Heritage Sub-Committee visited the Former Ford Factory Museum and Reflections@Bukit Chandu on 7 January, before adjourning for a team bonding session.



From left: Richard Ong, Trevor Nerva, Sharon Miller, Geoffrey Morris, Percival Shepherdson (Heritage Chairperson), Jacqueline Peeris, Carol Dragon, Alison Dragon, Long Chin Peng, Hafiz Rashid, Ramesh Shahdarpuri and the Reflections@Bukit Chandu docent.



Back at the Eurasian Community House!

NHB-MR Hongbao Campaign



EHG visitors received red hongbao packets as part of NHB's Museum Roundtable (MR) Hongbao Campaign from 6 January to 3 February.

EA's Support for the Nomination of Kebaya (by NHB)



EHG docents (from left) Valerie Scully and Geraldine Gomes were interviewed by the National Heritage Board on 16 February, to represent the Eurasian community's support for the kebaya's nomination to the UNESCO list of intangible cultural heritage.

Peranakan Museum (TPM) Reopening



From left: Percival Shepherdson (Heritage Chairperson), Jacqueline Peeris (EA Heritage manager), with EHG docents Hafiz Rashid and Long Chin Peng, and a TPM docent, at the reopening of the Peranakan Museum on 16 February.

EHG: Visit, Snap and Win!

From 1 June to 31 December, when you visit the Eurasian Heritage Gallery (EHG), simply snap a photo of yourself there and post it on your Facebook page, and you could win an exclusive EHG portable charger.

We also have more gifts for you. From now until end June, all EHG visitors will receive a souvenir fridge magnet of a Eurasian tile designed by Ruby Wyse, symbolising the unique mix of cultures in Singapore.

View the poster for details on how to participate.



EHG: Visit, Snap and Win
 Be part of the Eurasian Heritage Gallery (EHG)'s social media campaign from 1 June to 31 December 2023!

How to enter:

1. Scan the QR codes below to follow EA's Facebook or Instagram pages.
2. Take a fun photo of yourself at one of the exhibits or artefacts in the EHG.
3. Set your Facebook post to 'public'.
4. Post your photo with the hashtag #VisitEHG2023 and one of the following captions:
 - a) "I enjoyed my visit to the EHG because ___."
 - b) "My favourite artefact in the EHG is ___ because ___."
 - c) "My favourite exhibit in the EHG is ___ because ___."
5. Show your post to the receptionist to redeem an ultra slim portable powerbank worth \$10.
6. Limited to the first 20 entries per month.

EA Facebook EA Instagram

Eurasian Heritage and Inter Religious Visit to Synagogue



Eurasian Heritage and Inter Religious Visit to Synagogue

Date: Sunday, 9 July 2023
 Time: 2.00 – 4.30pm

Programme
 2.00pm Introduction by Mr Gerald Kong at the Eurasian Heritage Gallery
 2.45pm Travel to Maghain Aboth Synagogue
 3.15pm Tour of Synagogue and The Jews of Singapore Museum
 4.00pm Q&A
 4.15pm End of Tour

Start point: Eurasian Community House
 (139 Ceylon Road, Singapore 429744)

End point: Depart from Maghain Aboth Synagogue
 (24/26 Waterloo St, Singapore 187968)

Terms & Conditions
 Tour Fee: \$15/pax
 Minimum 10pax to proceed; Maximum 20pax
 All participants will receive a Eurasian Heritage Gallery souvenir.

Registration starts from 1 June, on eurasianheritagegallery@peatix.com



Kebaya Talk

Join us for a talk on Kebaya to discover its rich history, origins, and unique styles.

Date: Saturday, 29 July 2023
 Time: 10.30am – 12.30pm

Registration starts from 1 June, on eurasianheritagegallery@peatix.com



'Lizzy's Journey of the Heart' by Liesl Massang

About the Author

Liesl Massang spent her early childhood in East Coast Road, Singapore and much of her early years were impacted by her family's unique background and stories, particularly from her mother's side. She is a wife - to husband, Matthew - and mother to a son, Samuel. Liesl firmly believes that families (even challenging ones) play an essential role in the formation and emotional well-being of all children and teenagers. Liesl hopes that her book on her own family and personal journey will give encouragement to others who face similar issues and challenges. She also hopes that all who read it will have more insight into mental illness and understand how it can affect families in different ways.



Author Liesl Massang.



Liesl with her husband Matthew and son Samuel.



More than 10 years of memories in Liesl's journal entries.



About the Book

Much of this memoir is centred on my mother, my parents' fractious relationship, and our family life; especially us (my siblings and myself) growing up and watching the break-up of our parents' marriage. It is also not easy to talk about mental illness, much less admit that I come from a family facing it. Some of my stories will not be easy to hear or even to understand, but that is fine. That is what made our lives authentic and unique. Most importantly, it shaped us to be the people we are today.

I share some slices of life growing up in Singapore as a child in the 1970s, as a teen in the 1980s and as a young adult in the 1990s in the background of my (complicated) family life.

The book costs \$14.90.

Contact Liesl Massang at bandylegs1985@gmail.com or at 9661 2571 to purchase her book.

Getting to Know EA Patron Barry Desker

As a teenager in St. Patrick's School in the 1960s, Barry Desker would describe himself as a normal student who enjoyed the outdoors, camping, hiking and sea activities, as school back then faced the sea. He was also involved in other school activities such as the Literary, Debating and Dramatics Society which he led.

Said Barry, when asked to describe his school days at St. Patrick's, "We had an excellent debating team, including Gerald Pattinson and Charles Remedios."

But he was most active as a Scout, and he shared a life-changing moment which sowed the seeds of his interest in international affairs.

"My most memorable experiences, because they were life-changing, began with my selection to attend the Australian Scout Jamboree in December 1964. As the Malaysian contingent (Singapore was then part of Malaysia) travelled around Australia, we gave Australians a better idea of the challenges posed by Indonesian confrontation. In retrospect, it marked the beginning of my interest in international affairs and my future career as a diplomat," said Barry, who is married to Peggy and has a son, Bevin, a daughter, Tiana, and two granddaughters.

After spending three months down under, Barry returned to Singapore to focus on his academic work in the months leading to the A-level examinations. He added, "To my surprise, I was one of the best performers in the exam in Singapore and was awarded the President's Scholarship."

Barry later took his interest in international affairs into his career life, joining the foreign service, heading the Trade Development Board and serving as the founding Dean of the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS), Nanyang Technological University (NTU). He continues to be a Distinguished Fellow at RSIS and Nanyang Professor of Practice at NTU.

Eurasians in the East Coast

"Going to St. Patrick's and living in the East Coast area meant I grew up not being aware that the Eurasian community was a very small minority," shared Barry as he recalled his growing up days in his family home in Telok Kurau.

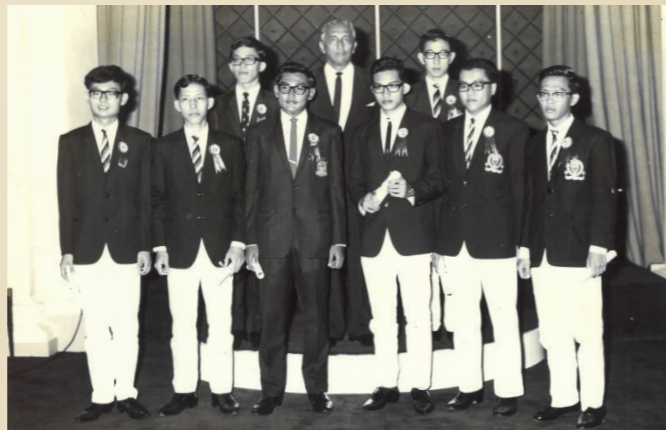
With the East Coast area a familiar neighbourhood for several Eurasian families and the community small, it was the norm back then to know almost everyone.

"There were several Eurasians in my class. Our family attended the Church of the Holy Family for Sunday mass and there were many Eurasian families. On feast days, we went to St. Joseph's Church in Victoria Street and it was dominated, at that time, by the Eurasians," added Barry, before describing what it was like living with neighbours from different races.

"It was a multi-ethnic community with Chinese, Indians, Malays, Eurasians and even some Arab families. It was unusual for the 1960s as most residents were English-speaking. We mixed freely with our neighbours, many of whom were fellow students at St. Patrick's. I also met my friends living in Frankel Estate and the East Coast area, riding on my bicycle to meet them."



Barry and Peggy celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary in August 2022, with their daughter Tiana, son Bevin and his wife Bo Jing, and their two granddaughters Anya and Freya.



Barry (front row, third from left) following his receipt of the President's Scholarship Award in 1966, with then-President Yusof Ishak.

Life as a diplomat

Turning his attention to his time as a diplomat, Barry was sanguine when he spoke about his interest in African affairs, having travelled extensively in eastern and southern Africa in the 1980s on diplomatic duties, and built on his earlier exposure to African history and politics.

"After I retired from the civil service, and having spent seven years as the CEO of the Trade Development Board, I accepted invitations to work on trade and logistics issues as part of teams reviewing the economic development of Botswana, Mozambique, Kenya and Zambia, among others. I am due to visit Liberia later this year on a similar mission."

Given his years of service as a diplomat, there is a particular country which is close to his heart. "I am probably better known



At the first ASEAN Summit in Bali in 1976. In the photo are then-Foreign Affairs Minister S. Rajaratnam and then-Finance Minister Hon Sui Sen (seated), Tan Boon Seng (standing behind Ministers), and Barry Desker and Daniel Selvaratnam, EDB (back row).



Speaking with Pope Benedict XVI, after the presentation of credentials as Singapore's Ambassador to the Holy See in December 2007.



Barry speaking as Chair of the ASEAN Inter-Governmental Commission on Human Rights in 2018.

for my exposure to Indonesia. I wrote my Masters' thesis on Indonesia, and picked up Bahasa Indonesia and Dutch along the way," said Barry, before he added how he "forgot the language" from not using it when he last visited Amsterdam after more than 20 years.

He went on to recall his time being posted in Jakarta for 11 years, including seven years as Ambassador to Indonesia. "Our children grew up in Jakarta. We travelled extensively through

the archipelago. Our children enjoyed telling their friends about their experiences snorkelling, beyond the reefs of coral islands, seeing the varied underwater landscapes and what seemed like a bottomless ocean below!"

But when it came to work, Barry made sure he was on the ground to have a good sense of the challenges governing Indonesia, as well as the opportunities available.

"I have visited every province in Indonesia, sometimes sleeping in 'zero star' accommodation and travelling in DC-3 aircraft and outrigger canoes. This exposure provided the background for my advice to the Singapore government and the business community."

Serving the Eurasian community

Barry first got involved with the EA in 1989, when then-EA President Victor Olsen invited him to speak on the Eurasian community, with a talk that initially ruffled some feathers.

"I emphasised the need to focus on education and support for the less privileged in the community. Unwittingly, I caused a storm by raising the question of the EA broadening the definition of Eurasian, beyond those who claimed European lineage through their paternal ancestry."

"I argued that maternal descent should also be accepted as well as those born of mixed marriages between Indians and Chinese, for example," he explained, before sharing how pleased he was when a positive outcome was later achieved.

"I was therefore pleased that the EA later changed its policy. It is important that the EA adopts an inclusive rather than exclusive policy. As a Trustee, I welcomed the EA's support of policies aimed at fostering a Singapore identity. It is critical that Eurasians are seen as part of Singapore society, committed to Singapore and sharing the Singapore experience with the other ethnic groups in Singapore."

As he continues his contributions to the Eurasian community as the EA's newly appointed Patron, after serving as EA Trustee for 20 years from 2001 to 2021, Barry shared his hopes for the future.

"As Eurasians, we are part of Singapore society. Our roots are here in Singapore. This is our homeland. The EA must focus on assisting the least privileged within our community. Creating such opportunities through its support for educational upliftment and meeting the welfare needs of the Eurasians will be the benchmark for determining the success of the EA."



Barry Desker receiving his certificate from guest-of-honour Minister S Iswaran, during the ceremony on 11 February where he was appointed as a new EA Patron.

Marketing Yourself as a Job Candidate: Tips to Stand Out from the Pack

In a competitive job market, having the right skills and experience may not always be enough to get that interview. [Workipedia by MyCareersFuture](#) brings you key tips for marketing yourself effectively, to up your chances of being noticed by employers and landing that coveted job.



Marketing yourself means you're the product

Think of a drink in your fridge. Before you even tasted it, what attracted you to purchase it? Was it the packaging? Maybe the health benefits? Or the humorous way it was advertised?

Similarly, in marketing yourself to employers, you're the product, and the employers are the consumers. To make a good impression during the interview, it is critical to do enough homework beforehand by asking yourself:

- What are potential employers looking for?
- How would hiring me help with their business objectives?
- What makes me a better hire than others?
- How do I best communicate my strengths to potential employers?

The more prepared you are, the more ready you are to turn up with the right mindset, energy, and knowledge to communicate with the interviewer.



Here are five great ways to prepare yourself before the job interview:

1. Know the potential employer

Doing thorough research on a potential employer will help you to better understand the organisation's ethos and the skills, personality and knowledge they value.

Start by visiting the company corporate website's 'About Us' section. Identify the keywords used to describe the company, and insert these in your CV submission or verbalise them during the interview.

2. Know what you bring to the table

If you have the skills and experience fitting for the role, tell your potential employers what you can bring to the table! Not doing so is self-sabotage.

You can do this even before the interview stage by making sure your CV is updated with your current skills and recent achievements. This is not the time to be shy to list your accolades.

3. Know what to say

Qubits. Superposition. Gate Fidelity. Do these words mean anything to you? Maybe not, unless you're doing quantum computing. Having said this, the terminology in your application is important.

Identify and understand the niche terms in the industry. Pepper these terms and keywords from the job description into your CV and verbalise them at the interview. Impress your potential employer with your familiarity!

4. Know the latest industry trends

The world of work is never stagnant. Stay updated on any developments and news in your industry via industry publications, influential blogs and websites.

It's good to remember at least one industry trend when turning up for an interview – you never know when an interviewer may pop a bonus question!

5. Know how to network

Job searching is not only about what you know – who you know can also give you a headstart.

Whether you're a jobseeker or gainfully employed, it's beneficial to subscribe to social networking sites such as [LinkedIn](#), [Quora](#) and [Slack](#), to connect with other professionals and uncover new opportunities.

Networking helps you establish credibility in the industry, and nurturing connections will help to grow your career.

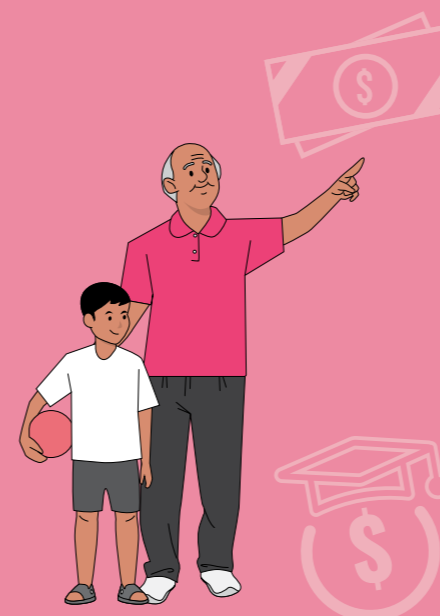
Want more career advice and resources? Visit Workipedia by MyCareersFuture for more articles: <https://go.gov.sg/workipedia-kol-ea>

Assurance in 2023

The Government is helping Singaporeans cope with the increase in daily expenses due to higher inflation and GST increase.

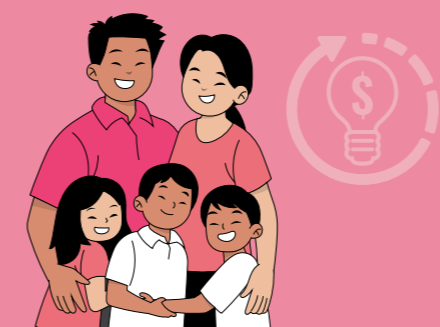
Singaporeans can benefit from the following measures in 2023:

For Individuals



- **Cash**
 - Age 21 to 54 **Up to \$1,700**
 - Age 55 & above **Up to \$2,300**
- **MediSave Top-Ups**
 - Age 20 & below **\$150**
 - Age 55 & above **\$150 - \$600**
- **Child Development Account Top-Up** **\$400**
- **Edusave Account & Post-Secondary Education Account Top-Ups** **\$300**

For Households



- **CDC Vouchers** **\$300**
- **U-Save Rebates** **\$440 - \$760**
- **S&CC Rebates** **1.5 - 3.5 months**

Find out what you may be eligible for using our [Support For You Calculator](#):



Updated on 14/02/2023

Football and Family Fun – Abroad!



United over football!

It was a road trip weekend of football and family fun for members of the EA Football Club (EAFC) from 11 to 13 March, that started and ended at the Eurasian Community House in a 30-seater coach.

The destination? Malacca, for a football match against Veterans Klebang Football Club at the St. Francis Institution (SFI)'s school field on Sunday 12 March. The EAFC mixed team put up a spirited fight against a younger team and first took the lead in the 15th minute with a penalty scored by Christopher Pereira, but eventually conceded the game with a 7-3 loss.

The EAFC players with their families including wives, children, and elderly parents, joined in the fun as spectators at the match, and enjoyed a spirit of camaraderie over dinner at the Portuguese Settlement on both evenings.



Mr and Mrs Gomes, parents of EAFC member Colin Gomes who came to cheer the team on.



What better way to bond than over delicious food?



EAFC players in action on the football pitch.

EA, Jewish Welfare Board Strengthen Ties

The EA hosted Ben J Benjamin, Secretary of the Jewish Welfare Board, to lunch on 19 April at the Eurasian Community House, where they had engaging discussions on potential partnerships, such as working more closely on Heritage initiatives in the future. Earlier in January, a few members of the EA Management Committee had also visited The Jews of Singapore Museum at his invitation.



Meaningful discussions over delicious Eurasian food.



From left: Percival Shepherdson (EA MC member), Sandra Theseira (EA President), Ben J Benjamin, Lester Low (EA General Manager).

Make the Eurasian Community House Your Venue of Choice!

Looking for a unique venue for a family celebration or corporate event?

The Eurasian Community House (ECH) provides affordable rooms with different capacities for both casual and formal events, with preferential rates for EA members.

Platinum Lounge



Tucked in a cosy corner on level one, the Platinum Lounge has flexible seating options and is suitable for smaller events such as parties or meetings.

	Theatre	Dinner
Capacity	40 pax	50 pax

Rental Rates (4-hour block) Peak (Sat/Sun/Eve of PH/PH) Off-Peak (Mon-Fri)	Rates start from \$130 for off-peak and \$150 for peak, for EA members. Complimentary use of projector for EA members.
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John Hochstadt Conference Room



The conference room on level two has a semi-formal concept and is popular for conferences and presentations. It comes with in-built furnishings, whiteboard and projector.

	Conference Style
Capacity	15 pax

Rental Rates (4-hour block) Peak (Sat/Sun/Eve of PH/PH) Off-Peak (Mon-Fri)	Rates start from \$150 for off-peak and \$180 for peak, for EA members. Complimentary use of projector for EA members.
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Multi-Purpose Hall



Need a larger space? The Multi-Purpose Hall (MPH) on level two is a pillarless ballroom with a 6-metre-high ceiling, with a built-in stage and audio-visual systems.

It can also be turned into an 1800-square-foot open space for celebrations or other events, with a dance floor and more.

	Theatre	Dinner
Capacity	200 pax	120 pax (Up to 12 tables)

Rental Rates (4-hour block) Peak (Sat/Sun/Eve of PH/PH) Off-Peak (Mon-Fri)	Rates start from \$500 for EA members. Separate charges apply for use of audio-visual systems.
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Scan the QR code for more pricing details:

<https://www.eurasians.sg/community-house>

Contact David at 6447 1578 (ext. 212) or david@eurasians.org to make your booking.



Make a Difference to the Eurasian Community

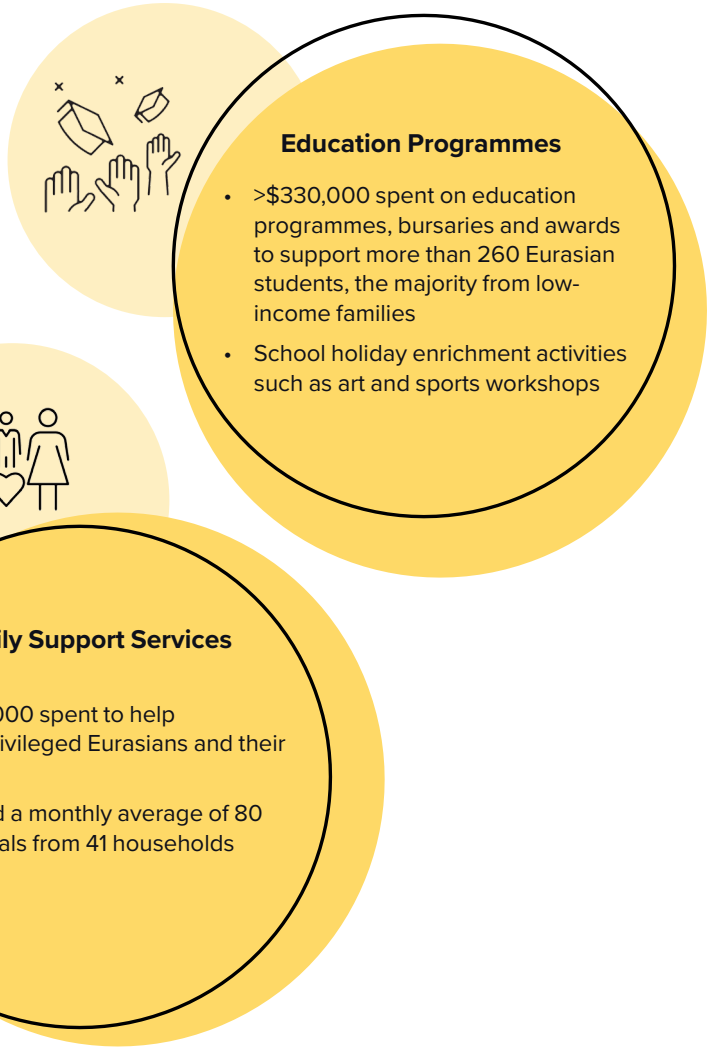
Donate to the EA, or **Volunteer** today!

Your donations, and monthly contributions to the Eurasian Community Fund (ECF) go a long way to help the EA do more, for those who have less.

The funds received help support the EA's key pillars; through Education awards and programmes for children and youth; Family Support Services' (FSS) initiatives for the less fortunate; and Community Development events to bring people from different backgrounds together, strengthen community bonds and promote inter-racial harmony in Singapore.

As part of its mandate to serve the community, the EA also works to preserve unique Eurasian heritage, and raise awareness about the Eurasian community in Singapore.

Here's a summary of how the ECF and other donations have been used in 2022:



Education Programmes

- >\$330,000 spent on education programmes, bursaries and awards to support more than 260 Eurasian students, the majority from low-income families
- School holiday enrichment activities such as art and sports workshops

Family Support Services

- >\$250,000 spent to help underprivileged Eurasians and their families
- Assisted a monthly average of 80 individuals from 41 households

Community Development Initiatives

- >\$140,000 spent on community development and outreach
- Events for all ages, collaborations with fellow Self-Help Groups and welfare organisations to bring people together, and promote multi-racial harmony in Singapore

Help the EA to do more for the community, by:

- Making a one-time or monthly donation through Giving.sg
- Indicating your interest to volunteer with the Education, Family Support Services, Community Development, Youth, or Heritage volunteer teams.

Scan the QR code to:



Donate on Giving.sg

<https://www.giving.sg/web/the-urasian-association-singapore>



Download donation forms

<https://www.eurasians.sg/make-a-difference>



Volunteer

<https://www.eurasians.sg/volunteering>