

THE NEW EURASIAN

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OCTOBER – DECEMBER 2014

Enterprising Eurasians

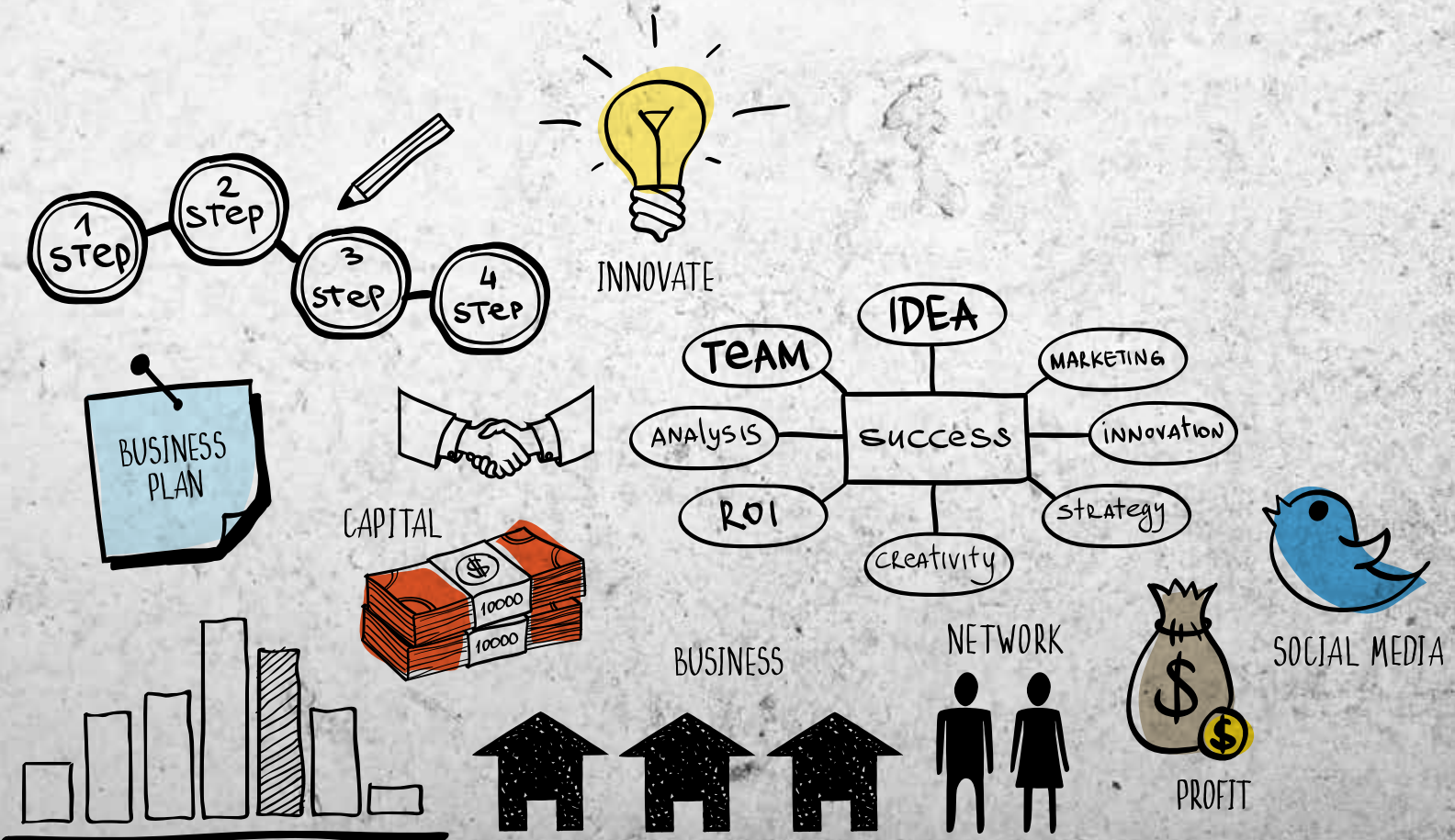
The joys and challenges of
being your own boss

PLUS

NATIONAL DAY AWARDS
Honours for Eurasians

BUNKERS AND BIRDIES
The EA Charity Golf Tournament

A FAMILY OF ANIMALS
Tanja Kahrs' life as a vet



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MCI (P) 168/04/2014

CONTENTS

AT THE HELM

03 President's message

NEWS

- 04 National Day awards
VIP visitors to the ECH
Foot-tapping fun
- 05 Contributing more to the Eurasian
community
International Balut tournament



- 06 Golfing for charity
Celebrating Singapore's birthday
Joining forces for community harmony
Sunday Lunch at the ECH
New quiz nights at the EA

EDUCATION

- 07 ECF Education Awards
- 08 Joint Tuition Awards
A day out with
dinosaurs



COVER STORY

- 09 When you're the boss

FSS

- 13 Pioneer package at Tea With Neighbours
Getting by with dialysis
Simon de Cruz's new role



YOUTH AND SPORTS

- 14 Joseph brings home three swimming medals
Alexandra's net results
Overcoming hurdles

CULTURE AND HERITAGE

- 15 Maurice Baker's life in diplomacy
- 16 Finding one's roots in Malacca
Dancing Eurasians
- 17 Street-wise in Francis Thomas Drive
Kristang Corner



PEOPLE IN THE COMMUNITY

- 18 Creature comforts
- 19 Giving a voice to people with disabilities



On the Cover

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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Deadline

Copy must be submitted two
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(Established July 1919)

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President's Message

This has been a significant quarter for the EA. In addition to two major events, the Eurasian Community Fund award ceremony and the EA Charity Golf Tournament that were held in September, we were pleased to learn that the Government has agreed with our request and will be increasing the matching grant for contributions to the ECF from \$200,000 to \$400,000 per annum starting from 1 January 2015. This is extremely good news and I would like to thank Minister S Iswaran for his assistance in helping us to secure approval for this increase.

Together with the increase in ECF contribution rates, details of which we provide in our story on page 5, the increased grant puts the EA on a much firmer financial footing to plan and grow our community assistance programmes. I would also like to thank all Eurasians who have been contributing to the ECF via the CPF check-off scheme every month and I hope all of you will continue to contribute to the ECF and support our community assistance initiatives.

A total of 302 bursary and merit awards were given out to deserving students at primary, secondary and tertiary levels at the ECF award ceremony (see page 7). Since 1996, the ECF awards have provided Eurasian students with bursaries, study grants, excellence and distinction awards. From inception, the amount of awards given out has grown from \$9,850 to more than \$60,000 this year.

It was a privilege to welcome our guest of honour, Indranee Rajah, Senior Minister of State, Ministry of Education and Ministry of Law, who spoke to the students about the importance of education, giving back

to society and learning more about their culture and heritage. It was heartening to hear Keren Ann Henry, top A-level student, share similar views in her vote of thanks on how people should stop focusing on what society can give us, and start focusing on what we can give to society in order to create a happier nation.

We were honoured to have the Chairman of Temasek Holdings and former Minister Lim Boon Heng as our guest of honour at the golf tournament. The event a great success and raised close to \$250,000 for EA's community programmes and operations (see page 6). Through the golf tournament, we were able to increase awareness of the EA and our community programmes among many of the corporate executives and firms who participated. I would also like to thank the many generous sponsors, in particular NTUC Fairprice, for their generous support as well as the organising committee from our golf society, EAGS, led by Quentin Pereira, and everyone else who helped to make it a splendid day.

Last, but not least, our congratulations go out to Joseph Schooling and his family for his tremendous success in both the Commonwealth Games and Asian Games (see page 14). While we celebrated Joseph's success, there were a few regrettable comments about Joseph not being a "true Singaporean", despite being a third generation Singaporean. This is an unfortunate situation Eurasians sometime face: being mistaken for foreigners. In our response to the press, we expressed our unhappiness about this misconception and that, despite the small size of our community, Eurasians have been a part of the Singapore

fabric for generations and many Eurasians played a significant role in building modern day Singapore (such as Benjamin Sheares, Edmund W Barker, Stanley Stewart and George Edwin Bogaars to name a few). It is heartening that many other Singaporeans also stepped up to speak against such critics for their inaccurate perception and lack of grace when they should instead be celebrating Joseph's fantastic achievement for Singapore.

As we come to the close of another year, I would like to extend my thanks and gratitude to the hardworking members of the Management Committee, Secretariat, volunteers, donors and the Board of Trustees for all their tireless efforts and support. In advance, I would also like to wish all Eurasians a very Happy and Blessed Christmas. We hope that together with your friends and family you will join us to enjoy the line-up of events organised for the Christmas seasons, such as the Children's Christmas Treat and Family Christmas Carnival, Social Circle Christmas Party and the New Year's Eve Dinner and Dance at the Concorde Hotel.

With your continued support, we look forward to even greater achievements in the coming year.



Bennett Theseira
President



The EA Plays *Host to VIPs*



Chief Justice Mr Sundaresh Menon (centre) with the EA management committee



Benett Theseira presents Mrs Rosa Daniel with a book



Mr Alfonso Malheiro with EA President Benett Theseira and vice presidents Yvonne Pereira (left) and Carla Barker

The EA welcomed three VIPs to the Eurasian Community House on separate visits in July and August.

Mr Alfonso Malheiro, Ambassador of Portugal, the Chief Justice, Mr Sundaresh Menon, and The National Heritage Board's CEO, Mrs Rosa Huey Daniel, each met with the EA's

management committee for lunch at Quentin's restaurant and were given a tour of the Eurasian Heritage Centre. Mr Alfonso and Mr Sundaresh were given a copy of the book *The Eurasian Face* by Kirsteen Zimmern and Mrs Daniel received Quentin Pereira's book *Eurasian Heritage Cooking* as a token of appreciation.

Get in Line – and Dance!



Moving to the beat

More than a 100 people attired in red and white took part in a pre-National Day tea dance at the ECH in July organised by the EA's Social Circle, and professional champion dancers Triena and Steven Ong put on a spectacular display of romantic rumba and cheeky cha cha.

On 31 August, the Country Line Dance Association held a sell-out dancing session at the ECH. For more information about dance sessions at the EA, visit <http://www.eurasians.org.sg/events/>

Eurasians Receive National Day Awards

More than a dozen Eurasians have been honoured with National Day awards this year.

Among them are architect Edward D'Silva JP, 63, chairman of the Publications Consultative Panel and a former president of the EA, who has been awarded The Public Service Medal. He says of the award: "It was a pleasant surprise and I am very honoured to have been recognised for my contributions."

He has been a part of MDA's Publications Consultative Panel for nine years and works with members across the whole spectrum of Singapore society.

As a member of The Public Service Commission for eight years, he has gained deep insights into grooming the nation's public servants and believes that success comes in understanding the concerns of members of the public and making a conscious decision to make a difference to their lives.

For the past 11 years, Edward has also served on the Board of Trustees for the National University of Singapore and has played a role in institutionalising mandatory modules on Creative Thinking and Communication Skills for undergraduates. Serving for six years on the Presidential Council of Advisors for Religious Harmony also gave him a better insight into sensitive religious issues within Singapore's multiracial society, and as the Central CDC's Councillor he has played a key role in promoting racial integration and



Edward D'Silva

Noelene De Foe

empathy for the less privileged. As a member of the Public Hygiene Council, he hopes that the younger generation will become more civic-conscious too. His ongoing position as a Council member on the National Institute of Education has also seen the importance for teachers to be trained with skills to address the complex educational landscape.

As a Eurasian, he wishes to see the younger generation stepping forward to become stakeholders of the community and taking on leadership roles.

Noelene De Foe, BBM, who chairs the Teck Ghee Community Club Management Committee (CCMC) received The Public Service Star (Bar) Award. She also juggles her time as the chair of Teck Ghee Active Ageing Committee and the vice-chair of Teck Ghee Citizens' Consultative Committee (CCC).

The rewards of volunteering, she says, are that "you will experience something beyond the satisfaction of monetary gains".

The Eurasian Honours List

The full list of Eurasian recipients of National Day Awards 2014 is:

Dr Robert B R T M De Souza, executive director of The Logistics Institute, Asia Pacific National University of Singapore – The Public Administration Medal (Bronze)

Joseph Stanley Peterson, vice-principal of St. Patrick's School – The Commendation Medal (Ministry of Education)

Noelene De Foe, BBM, chair of Teck Ghee Community Club Management Committee – The Public Service Star (Bar) Award

Eugene De Rozario, auditor of Cashew NC (Holland-Bukit Timah GRC) and **Edward D'Silva**, chairman of the Publications Consultative Panel – The Public Service Medal

Ignatius Bartholomew Shepherdson, specialist associate at the Office of Campus Security, National University of Singapore – The Efficiency Medal (Ministry of Education)

Bernard William Baker, High Commissioner, Singapore High Commission in Pretoria (Ministry of Foreign Affairs); **Dr Jeffery Lawrence Cutter**, director, Communicable Diseases Division (Ministry of Health); **Veronica Sully**, deputy director, Employee Communications, Corporate Development Group (Housing & Development Board) – The Long Service Medal

Denise Allison Pereira, a teacher at Canberra Secondary School; **Joy Ann-Marie Rodrigues**, a senior teacher at CHIJ Primary School; Toa Payoh; **Cherlyn Frances Raeburn**, a senior teacher at Fengshan Primary School; **Paul Francis De Souza**, a teacher at St. Gabriel's Secondary School – The Long Service Medal (Ministry of Education)

Revised contributions for the *Eurasian Community Fund*

In the last issue of *The New Eurasian*, we outlined ways in which the EA uses contributions to the ECF to reach out to disadvantaged fellow Eurasians. To recognise efforts by the self-help groups to raise more funds from within their communities to help their less privileged members, the Government announced that it is to increase its matching grant for these groups from January. For the ECF, this would mean an increase from the government to \$400,000 a year from the present \$200,000. This is a significant increase, which allows us to plan and grow our community assistance programmes.

Since the ECF's inception in 1995, contribution rates have not been raised. Nevertheless, over the last 19 years, operating costs have risen and our work has expanded. Our programmes for our key strategic pillars of Education, Family Support Services and Community Development have helped hundreds of students and families as well as strengthened the community in areas of preservation of heritage and increasing opportunities to build ties through the various EA events.

Education

Over the years the EA has held numerous education events and award ceremonies, the largest being the annual Eurasian Community Fund (ECF) Awards. This year, a record number of 300 merit awards and bursaries were given out to deserving students from primary to tertiary levels. The EA also offers subsidised tuition classes and financial assistance for uniforms, books and transport for more than

100 disadvantaged students. Last year, more than \$250,000 was spent in our Education programmes to enable talented young Eurasians to reach the highest academic standards and secure a brighter future for the Eurasian community.

Family Support Services (FSS)

The FSS helps numerous families experiencing personal, work, marital and family related difficulties. In 1993, 65 people received financial help from the EA; today we assist an average of 110 disadvantaged people a month through schemes including food ration deliveries, financial assistance counselling and befriender programmes.

More recently, we have stepped up our efforts in active ageing with various social programmes and activities, including the educational 'Tea with the Neighbours' programme conducted in conjunction with the Council for the Third Age and various other organisations.

We believe that there's a need to increase our outreach to underprivileged families, especially those who face challenges such as caring for an ill parent or child, coping as a single parent or who simply struggle to provide adequate food or shelter for their families. The help we provide ensures that they receive comfort from the community in times of need and encourages many of the recipients to work their way out of the poverty cycle. In total, we spent close to \$200,000 on our FSS programmes last year.

Community Development

The EA holds numerous activities, including Sunday lunches, especially during the festive seasons, to strengthen engagement within the Eurasian community. We also conduct various community studies and dialogue sessions such as The Eurasian Singapore Conversation and Eurasian Identity dialogues last year as well as the pilot Community Survey project and EA Strategic Planning workshop this year.

In addition, the EA has developed a Eurasian Heritage Centre, which preserves and raises awareness about Eurasian culture and heritage. The centre, in the Eurasian Community House, welcomed nearly 2,700 Eurasian and non-Eurasian visitors last year. Understanding the past and how Eurasians have contributed to the growth of Singapore promotes a sense of identity and strengthens our ties and bonds with Eurasians and other communities. In addition, the EA participates in various external community events to promote greater understanding of the Eurasian community and build strong inter-community ties.

With increased funds, the EA will be able to introduce new workshops and events to build an active Eurasian community and to bring our rich history and culture to other Singaporeans, especially the younger generation.

From January, the monthly contribution automatically deducted from the wages of working Singaporeans earning more than \$2,500 per month will be as follows:

Total amount of an employee's wages per calendar month	Current minimum contribution	Total amount of an employee's wages per calendar month	Revised minimum contribution
Not exceeding \$1,000	\$2.00	Not exceeding \$1,000	\$2.00
Exceeding \$1,000 but not exceeding \$1,500	\$4.00	Exceeding \$1,000 but not exceeding \$1,500	\$4.00
Exceeding \$1,500 but not exceeding \$2,500	\$6.00	Exceeding \$1,500 but not exceeding \$2,500	\$6.00
Exceeding \$2,500 but not exceeding \$4,000	\$8.00	Exceeding \$2,500 but not exceeding \$4,000	\$9.00
Exceeding \$4,000	\$10.00	Exceeding \$4,000 but not exceeding \$7,000	\$12.00
		Exceeding \$7,000 but not exceeding \$10,000	\$16.00
		Exceeding \$10,000	\$20.00

As we move into 2015, we ask all Eurasians to support the revision of ECF contributions. We appreciate your many years of support, which have made the running of our community assistance programmes possible. With your continued assistance, we will be able to reach out to many in need and make a meaningful and positive impact on their lives.

EA Baluteers Crowned Champions in Kuching

The EA's baluteers cast their dice further afield in August when they competed in the inaugural Invitational Balut Competition hosted by The Sarawak Club in Kuching.

Among the 48 players were teams from the EA, Singapore Cricket Club, Kinabalu Yacht Club, Sabah Golf and Country Club, The Kinabalu Club and The Sarawak Club. The EA fielded two teams: EA balut convenor Yvonne Pereira, Nancy Fobrogo, Joyce Cordeiro

and The Ban Khi (Yang) comprised the EA's victorious Team 1; Philip Cordeiro, Dorothy Tessensohn, Eddie Tessensohn and SK John represented Team 2.

Team I received the challenge trophy from George Lo, Sarawak Club President. The EA members also met the Sarawak Eurasian Association's President, Dona Dury-Wee, also a balut player, who presented Yvonne with a copy of the association's award-winning book, *Legacy*.



The winning team: Joyce Cordeiro, The Ban Khi (Yang), Yvonne Pereira and Nancy Fobrogo

Chari-Tee *Day Out*

More than 100 golfers made their way to the Serapong Court at Sentosa Golf Club on 17 September for a day of golf, camaraderie, fresh air and, most importantly, a chance to play their part in raising funds at the EA's Charity Golf Tournament.

This year, the event was organised by the newly formed EA Golf Society (EAGS) and the association was honoured to have Lim Boon Heng, chairman of Temasek Holdings and former Minister in the Prime Minister's Office, as guest of honour.

The enthusiastic golfers arrived punctually on a sunny day to enjoy lunch (and a goody bag) before setting off for the greens. After an amicable but hard-fought tournament, they returned

for dinner at Sentosa Golf Club, which included two Eurasian dishes courtesy of Quentin's restaurant, owned by chef and golfing contestant Quentin Pereira.

A fund-raising auction concluded the evening and, thanks to all the generous sponsors and donors, the EA raised the outstanding sum of nearly \$250,000, which will support the EA's work in education, Family Support Services and community development.



A contestant takes a shot at raising funds for the EA

Q: What's New at the EA? A: Team Quiz Nights!



Dorothy Tessensohn, Yvonne Pereira and Zoe Lazaroo applaud the winner of a spot prize

When watching TV quiz shows, have you already shouted out the answer while the contestant is still struggling to think? Then come and pit your wits at the ECH's latest social event – the monthly EA Quiz Night.

You don't need the brains of Einstein, just a lively interest in the world about you and a sociable nature. Individuals are welcome – we'll fit you into a team – or bring your own team of three or four contestants.

It's a boisterous, competitive evening and there are small individual and team prizes – mostly of an edible nature – to be won. Oh, and you might even learn something. For more details, contact Mervyn at mervyn@eurasians.org



Blues and greens – contestants at the EA Charity Golf Tournament



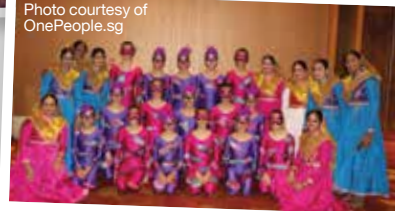
Kenneth Victor, Quentin Pereira, EA President Benett Theseira and guest-of-honour Lim Boon Heng take a moment to relax

Dancing *for Harmony*

As part of OnePeople.sg's annual Orange Ribbon Celebration in August, which included fun walks and competitive runs on the theme of 'Race Against Racism', The Eurasian Dancers (*right*) performed Portuguese folk dances at the Marina Bay Sands Event Plaza.



Photo courtesy of OnePeople.sg



And in July, at the Inter-Racial Inter Religious (IRIR) Harmony Nite at Marina Bay Sands dedicated to 'Our Pioneer Generation', the School of Dance, representing the EA (*pictured above with Sinda's Dance Troupe*), performed a piece called *Mystique*.

A Social *Sunday*

The Social Circle's September Sunday Lunch was its second event in collaboration with The Peranakan Association. Guests enjoyed a lavish buffet at Quentin's restaurant and the entertainment included music by Chato & Qamal of D'Highlights and a singalong with The Peranakan Voices.



Guests enjoy a Eurasian-Peranakan themed lunch

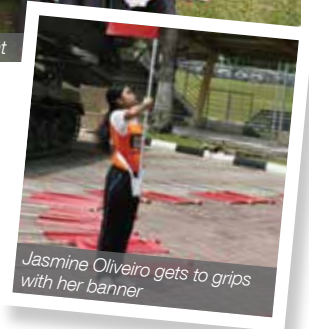
Raising *the Standard*



The OnePeople.sg National Day Parade contingent

Behind the polished performances at this year's National Day celebrations at The Float @ Marina Bay were months of long hours practising in the unrelenting heat.

But Eurasian students Jasmine Oliveira and Oliveira Nelson, who were among the 3,000 participants, agree they wouldn't have missed it for the world.



Jasmine Oliveira gets to grips with her banner

The teenagers, part of the OnePeople.sg contingent, started their training in April. Jasmine admitted she found it challenging to learn the foot drills and commands. Nicholas describes the training as tough but summed up the experience: "You will not be able to get such an awesome experience and opportunity anywhere else!"



EA President Bennett Theseira and Indranee Rajah with Bursary Award primary school recipients

Succeeding In and Out of School

The EA's annual ECF Education Awards ceremony honoured students who are achieving academic success and contributing to the community

The ECF Education Awards ceremony, the EA's annual keynote event to recognise young Eurasians' academic success, was held on 6 September at St Patrick's School.

Following a guitar ensemble performance by students from the school, more than 300 recipients, comprising students from primary, secondary and tertiary levels, were given awards in four different categories. The Merit Award is for students from all levels who have performed well in their final year examinations. The Excellence Award recognises the top 25 per cent nationally at PSLE, 'N', 'O' and 'A' levels. The most prestigious Distinction Award is awarded to the top student in the national examinations and tertiary students who have achieved outstanding academic results. In addition, the Bursary Award assists to defray education costs for students from lower-income families.

The guest of honour, Indranee Rajah, Senior Minister of State, Ministry of Law and Ministry of Education, told the gathering: "I am pleased to hear that more youth are coming forward to learn about their culture and heritage. It's heartening that they have the inquisitive desire to explore their roots and feel a sense of belonging and responsibility towards their community."

She highlighted the achievements of two students: Chloe Roberts and Dean Hunt.

“It's heartening that young people feel a sense of belonging and responsibility towards their community”

Chloe, 14, received the Bursary Award for Secondary level. During the past year, she has not only been an active volunteer at the EA but also performed in the National Heritage Board's annual Heritage Fest, the Chingay Parade organised by People's Association and the Orange Ribbon Celebrations held at Marina Bay Sands, organised by OnePeople.sg.

Dean, 21, is a grassroots leader and was recently appointed as an executive member of the Punggol Coral Residents' Committee. He is currently setting up a youth chapter to increase youth participation in neighbourhood activities. Dean was awarded the Oscar da Silva University Scholarship for his outstanding achievements.



Charles Alliston receives the Fredric Fox Award for the Meritorious Eurasian Sports Student 2013



Hans Van Huizen presents a token of appreciation to Ms Indranee



Top A-Level Student Keren Ann Henry gives the vote of thanks

The Rewards of **Hard Work**

The Joint Tuition Awards ceremony recognises pupils who have made major improvements in their schoolwork



Indranee Rajah with EA President Benett Theseira, Alyssa De Conceicao and Wesley Lincoln

More than 570 recipients from the four ethnic groups received awards for significant improvement in their performance in the national examinations at the 11th Joint Tuition Awards ceremony held at Nanyang Polytechnic Auditorium on 23 August.

Recipients are students in the Collaborative Tuition Programme, run by the self-help groups, who have been recognised for their success in examinations including PSLE, N-levels and O-levels. There are now nearly

70 centres island-wide, making tuition affordable and convenient for students, with an enrolment of approximately 8,700 students.

The guest of honour at the event was Indranee Rajah, Senior Minister of State, Ministry of Law and Ministry of Education. Ms Indranee told the students and parents: “Singapore, being a multi-racial society, truly epitomises unity in diversity. The self-help groups work closely to maximise the potential of every child and improve social mobility.”

The EA encourages Eurasian students to register for the CTP programme, which provides excellent academic support.

Thirteen Eurasian students received awards at this year’s ceremony. They were:

PSLE

- Alyssa Victoria De Conceicao
- Chiara-ann Yuan-Qi Spruyt
- Joshua Ignatius Misson

N-Level

- Rory Michael Krusemann
- Andrea Amor J Dias
- Brandon Christopher De Kretser
- Alecia Angelica Stewart
- Muhammad Juwaidi Bin Muhammad Johari Apps
- Tiffany Ursula Morier
- Muhammad Rasul Lee

O-Level

- Wesley Mark Lincoln
- Sean Michel Frois
- Ayesha Lee Binte Mohd Irwan

A Huge **Adventure**

A group of schoolchildren enjoyed a day out with dinosaurs, thanks to a creative and educational event organised by the Tan Chin Tuan Foundation

EA Tan Chin Tuan Education Award recipients Chanel Roberts, Angeline Peter and Doris Marsh, along with other Eurasian award recipients Chloe Roberts and Mohd Feroz, joined fellow recipients from other TCTF-supported charities on a tour of the *Dinosaurs: Dawn to Extinction* exhibition, which was held at the ArtScience Museum, Marina Bay Sands.

The fascinated schoolchildren spent the time marvelling at the exhibits, asking countless questions and snapping photographs of the dinosaurs.

Mohd Feroz, 11, says: “It was a new experience for me. I couldn’t believe that some of the things came from real dinosaurs!” Following the tour, the schoolchildren enjoyed a creative learning session during which they shared their thoughts on ‘Singapore 2114: Our Dream, Our Vision’. Imaginations skyrocketed as they imagined what Singapore would be like 100 years from now.



Chanel, Feroz, Chloe, Doris and Angeline with a prehistoric friend

LABOURS OF *Love*



Eurasians have traditionally favoured steady government jobs rather than risky go-it-alone ventures. But is today's workforce bucking the trend? We look at why some of Singapore's Eurasians have decided to become their own boss

Do you dream of generating something new in the marketplace? If so, you're not alone. According to the 2012 Singapore Report¹ of the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, which assesses entrepreneurial activity, more than a fifth of the some 2,000 adults surveyed said they intended to start a business within the next three years.

Singapore's entrepreneurs now include a fair share of Eurasians, but this is perhaps surprising given that traditionally the community's influence has been seen more in the sedate ranks of the senior civil service and other areas of public life than the cut and thrust of business. Two Eurasians have headed the civil service: Stanley Toft Stewart (1910-1992), a long-serving public official in Malaya and Singapore who achieved many firsts; and George Bogaars (1926-1992), a prominent Dutch-Eurasian, who headed independent Singapore's civil service and helped to set up a new intelligence unit and a credible army.

Edwin Tessensohn (1855-1926) was the first Eurasian to be appointed a member of the prestigious Singapore Legislative Council. Sir George Oehlers (1908-1968) held the post of Speaker of Parliament. Dr Benjamin Sheares (1907-1981) headed the nation as President. The nation's past – and present – is imbued with Eurasian influence in public life.

So why the change? And do Eurasians have innate skills that lend themselves to entrepreneurial success?



EA management committee member Gerard Theseira, who works as Senior Commercial & Operations Manager, Technology Development & Solutions, Sembawang Shipyard Pte Ltd, thinks that they do. His own father was a civil servant and he agrees that there is something in the maxim that 'all children grow up to be a little like their parents'. He believes that he inherited the characteristics for public service and might instinctively have been raised to be averse to risk – "not the most encouraging environment for developing entrepreneurs".

Notwithstanding that, he says, "most Eurasians are blessed with excellent communication skills and display strong emotional intelligence (EQ) to do well at business. Generally speaking, the warmth and approachability Eurasians exhibit often place us in the front line in business relationship management, which explains how I got to where I am career-wise. Anyway, the future looks promising for the current and future generations of Eurasian entrepreneurs, who will benefit from the variety of educational and training opportunities to choose from; they'll have market research and risk management information at their fingertips and banks which are ever ready to listen to a business proposal."

He adds: "Separately, I think the increase of interracial marriages has an influence on our business risk appetite too!"

“Get ready for a rare sense of accomplishment and ownership that you might not get working for someone else!”

With the obsession for good food which unites Singapore, it not surprising that ventures are often in the F&B industry and Eurasian Kimberly Ong, 18, who is currently pursuing Western Culinary Arts at ITE West College plans to add her own restaurant to the mix and is preparing for the hard graft ahead.

"I feel having my own business is a good idea, yet I know it's going to be a challenging road. I've been learning closely from my mentor, taking notes, and I'm currently doing an internship so it's a great way to learn new skills, knowledge and get a feel for working and maintaining a business."

¹ Olexander S. Chernyshenko, Marilyn A. Uy, David Gomulya, Francis L. K. Wong, Moon-ho R. Ho, Yoke Yong Lai, Kim Yin Chan & Olwen Bedford. (2013) Global Entrepreneurship Monitor 2012 Singapore Report. Singapore: Nanyang Technological University.



Colleen Francisca-Mason with her most important project to date:

For some people, the joy of entrepreneurship is the chance to give expression to numerous different ideas. Colleen Francisca-Mason admits she has a handful of business ideas that she would like to pursue and she is a successful entrepreneur with a diverse portfolio. Entrepreneurs, she says, need to show initiative, chart their own course and possess tenacity – a key quality needed to deal with failure and begin again.

A former beauty queen (winner of Miss Singapore World 2006 and Mrs World Singapore 2008), she has been the national director of Ford Super Model Singapore, founder of The Cupcake Boutique and owner and designer of the Francisca Boutique.

Her most recent ventures are the Francisca Dessert Parlour and MerLuxe, an online collection of resort fashion. In addition, Colleen supports the Singapore Committee for UN Women and last year sponsored its gala dinner called 'S.N.O.W – Say No to the Oppression of Women'. She also participated in Hawker Fest 2013 in Millenia Walk, which supported more than 28,000 beneficiaries of TOUCH Community Services.

She started The Cupcake Boutique in 2003 and sold it six years later, describing the business as a learning journey which allowed her to build a database of customers. She discovered that cupcakes were not something that people indulged in only on special occasions and says: "I believe that dessert should be a daily indulgence and began to conceptualise the idea of a dessert parlour."

Ideas alone are not enough to sustain a business, of course, and Colleen researched her new project thoroughly, ensuring that the marketing strategies, menu and publicity plan were all in sync with the slogan for her new business: 'Happiness Delivered'. The menu created for Francisca Dessert Parlour includes cupcakes, gelato, waffles and hand-made Swiss truffles.



daughter Aludra



Colleen has bags of ideas

She revamped the store into a dreamy and whimsical ambience featuring David Delamare's Alice in Wonderland Tea Party paintings. She says: "Being detail oriented is crucial for an entrepreneur." She was also keen to cater for various dietary requirements and a selling point became desserts that were offered free of gluten, egg and dairy products.

She warns that entrepreneurship means taking on responsibilities that you might not want: "You must be prepared not only to be the leader of the company but to also be the sales team, the marketing department, the receptionist, the billing and collections team and essentially every other aspect of the business 'til you can afford to hire others."

Taking an idea and turning into a viable business is no easy feat, but the rewards are worth it, she says. "Get ready for a rare sense of accomplishment and ownership that you might not get working for someone else!"



Colleen's baking tip
Choose your ingredients wisely. Using only the best quality butter, eggs, chocolates, vanilla and spices make all the difference!

Gregory Swyny, founder of The WoodWork Initiative, calls himself a carpenter, an unusually traditional term for a modern artisan. The common stereotype of carpenters is of older men or contractors who help with renovations. But Greg sees carpentry as a form of artistic expression – and this was his gateway to entrepreneurship.

After earning a Diploma in Fine Arts at LaSalle, Greg's passion for culture, design and aesthetics grew. In his early 20s, he realised that he was able to design things and make them out of wood, which fuelled his interest further.

Having learnt these skills from his father who taught him carpentry when he was younger, he says: "I hated it at that time as all I wanted to do was play football and go out with my friends. It took me some time to realise that it was a valuable skill that I was good at. I am extremely grateful to him for teaching me."



Gregory Swyny with his wife, Coral

The toughest decision that Greg had to make was to quit his job as a theatre technician and start his fledgling business. Although he worried about the lack of stability, he took the plunge at the end of last year, starting with small custom-made projects. Soon, the business grew and he began getting requests for bigger projects through word of mouth and he now has a busy schedule.

Greg also wants to revive the carpentry trade by teaching it to the current generation and has conducted workshops that have attracted people in their 20s and 30s. He was pleasantly surprised by the large turnout and, not least of all, that "a large percentage of the participants were females".

"There will always be obstacles and you need to believe that you can overcome them."

Where does he get his ideas from? "Anywhere and everywhere," he laughs. He likes looking at things and visualising how they can be made better or reworked into something unique. Greg advises entrepreneurs who have just started out to be determined, driven – and to set realistic goals. He adds: "There will always be obstacles and you need to believe that you can overcome them." And his biggest motivation is the satisfaction he gains after overcoming a challenge.

Greg's carpentry tip

Start with making a square box as it's the easiest. It can be used as a table, container, shelf or anything else that you want it to be.



Bottle openers in Greg's workshop



A barstool made by Greg in his workshop



Stirring up the past – Damian is on a mission to preserve our old recipes

Damian D'Silva is the celebrated owner and chef of the Singapore Immigrants Gastrobar. The former proprietor of the Soul Kitchen and Big D's Grill started Immigrants Gastrobar in September 2012 with the sole purpose of preserving Singapore's ethnic heritage, which he feels is disappearing: "Nasi kerabu, loh kai yik and seh bak were dishes cooked by different ethnic communities; I don't think people today even know what they are," he says. It is important to him to ensure that younger generations know what their forefathers ate. His current menu consists of dishes from the five main ethnic groups (Chinese, Eurasian, Indian, Malay and Peranakan) and changes biannually.

With this passion to revive ethnic dishes, Damian knew instantly that each dish in his restaurant had to have its own story. One of his favourites is singgang, which is similar to the Kerala/Indian moolie, brought to Malacca by the Portuguese from India. Singgang is an adaptation of fish moolie with a Eurasian touch. At Immigrants, Singgang is cooked using wolf herring, a very bony fish. The cooking process takes about two hours but the removal of the bones require double the time. It is commonly eaten as a snack with chilled cucumbers.

Damian's grandfather taught him to cook. He says: "My grandfather was a patient man, who passed me the methodology and technique to not just cook but also appreciate the heritage behind each dish." Damian also attributes his success to his father, whose advice to him was simply to put his heart and soul into anything he pursued.

But he believes the food and beverage industry is one of the most challenging to be in: "You work 18 hours a day, seven days a week and yet might not be able to bring a smile to all of your customers." Starting the business was no easy feat and even now he says he never sleeps for more than six hours a night and doesn't see as much of his family as he would like.

“If we as Singaporeans don't preserve our culture and heritage, then what are we going to pass on to the future generations?”

His two golden rules for entrepreneurial success are: fail with pride; and never take no for an answer.

His belief in reviving Singapore's heritage has certainly been to his commercial advantage, but more importantly he asks: "If we as Singaporeans don't preserve our culture and heritage, then what are we going to pass on to the future generations?" It is in this community spirit that during festive periods he cooks for residents in homes for the elderly, and also serves them and clears the dishes. "The experience is humbling and satisfying as it provides us with an opportunity to bring a smile to the needy," he says.



Damian's cooking tip

I don't cook when I am unhappy. Always cook when you are happy as it will show in your food.



Tea with Health Benefits

The recent Tea with Neighbours at the ECH gave guests a taste of good things to come in the government's new Pioneer Generation Package

The EA's Tea With Neighbours was more than just an opportunity to get out for an afternoon and socialise. Speakers updated guests on what's happening in Singapore and on the EA's Active Ageing programmes that could directly affect their lives.

At the event on 20 September, supported by the Council for Third Age, guest of honour Mr Christopher de Souza MP informed the 60 guests about some recently implemented government initiatives – the Pioneer Generation Package, MediShield Life and HDB Lease Buy Back before taking an hour-long question and answer session.

Many of the guests were pleased to discover that the new packages were a benefit for life and would reduce their healthcare costs. In answer to a question, about Community Health Assist Scheme (CHAS) cards, Mr de

Souza explained that as from January next year, those eligible for CHAS cards would be able to use them for Accident and Emergency and hospitalisation charges. MediShield Life is due for implementation in late 2015, when seniors will be able to use their Pioneer Generation cards at hospitals to cover up to B2 ward charges.

“ Speakers updated guests on what's happening in Singapore ”

We all know that a cuppa is good for us – but guests were delighted to find that the tea at this event came with unexpected extra health perks.



Christopher de Souza MP outlines the benefits of the Government's new initiatives for the pioneer generation



Tea for Two: Mr & Mrs H Berlee enjoy a Eurasian tea

Life on Dialysis

Becoming chronically ill can not only affect your health but can lead to loneliness. The FSS gives support and comfort to vulnerable Eurasians

Michael Nonis, 61, has always been passionate about technology and used to work as a security firm analyst in a multinational corporation. He fondly recalls the first Apple computer he played with.

But he has seen a lot of tough times. He was widowed in his early thirties; and at the age of 46, he suffered his first stroke and his life and health became a serious struggle. He now undergoes dialysis treatment three times a week. “When I return home from dialysis, I just collapse on the bed. It's a painful and exhausting process that nobody should go through”, he says.

Michael faces further challenges. He can't go out without assistance as he is wheelchair bound and says: “I feel that cabs do not stop for me as I am in a wheelchair.” But, undeterred, he tries to go to the library at least once a week to indulge his love of Marvel comics. He laughs as he recalls: “I remember hiding comic books from my family when I was a small kid!”

He has been out of work for the past 10 years, but currently receives help from both the EA and the National Kidney Foundation. The EA provides him with NTUC vouchers and food rations. Although Michael does not like to ask people for help, he has no option.

With more volunteers and more contributions, the FSS can provide far greater assistance for those in need. If you can help with donations or your time, please contact Ram, tel: 6447 1578 or email ram@eurasians.org for more information.



Michael Nonis at his home in Serangoon

A Life in Public Service



Simon de Cruz (right) at an event with Tan Chuan-Jin, Minister of Manpower

Simon de Cruz, non-resident ambassador to Ukraine, who sits on the FSS Sub-Committee, has been appointed a member of the South East Community Development Council.

Jumping for Joy

Teenage athlete Tia Rozario has her sights set on the Olympics



Tia in full flight as the sun sets

“ Each session counts; they help me to shave down that one split second or gain that extra centimetre ”



Tia gets off to a headstart to win the Western Australia Little Athletics (WALAA) 80m hurdle title in Perth

Thirteen-year-old Tia Louise Rozario discovered a passion for sports in primary school, where she became actively involved in tennis, long jump, hurdles and track and field events. Since then, her spare time has been dedicated to training, competing – and breaking a few records along the way.

Tia, who now attends Singapore Sports School, says success is about discipline and proper time management: “It’s all possible

when you are passionate about something and decide to excel in it. During challenging times, I tell myself that I am working towards the Olympics!”

She treats every training session with the utmost importance, believing each one is a stepping stone to her next achievement. “Each session counts; they are helping me to shave down that one split second or gain that extra centimetre that is significant in races or when trying to break a record,” she says.

She adds: “I make sure I have balanced meals and get a good night’s rest. With the right attitude and determination, you can make any of your dreams come true.”

Overcoming Life’s Hurdles

Tia Rozario has already notched up an impressive list of sporting achievements which include:

2014: National Schools Track and Field Championships – 2 Golds and 2 new national schools records (long jump and hurdles); under-15 national record in hurdles

2014: Western Australia Little Athletics Association (WALAA) in Singapore – 2 Golds (long jump and hurdles)

2013: Received the Outstanding Eurasian Sports Student award at the ECF Award Ceremony.

2013: Bukit Jalil Sports School International Combined Events (BJSS ICE) – Individual and Team Champion award. This competition includes scores for 80m hurdles, 800m track and field, shot putt, long jump and high jump

2012: Nanyang Primary School’s (NYPS) Outstanding Sportsgirl of the year in Primary Six.

2010–2012: NYPS Outstanding Individual Award for Track and Field – Gold for 100M and Long Jump at the yearly NYPS Track Meet

It’s Bronze, Silver – and Gold!



Photo courtesy of Hugh Lim

Joseph’s silver butterfly strokes during the Commonwealth Games

Singapore’s swimming sensation Joseph Schooling won the first swimming medal for the nation at the 2014 Commonwealth Games in Glasgow, Scotland, in July. Having been allowed to defer National Service to train in the US, he said that proving himself with a Commonwealth Games medal was “pure relief”.

Then, having just enrolled at the University of Texas, in September he picked up a bronze for the 200m butterfly before winning the big prize – Singapore’s first ever gold medal at the Asian Games – for the 100m butterfly, with a new games’ record of 51.76 seconds.

Calling the Shots

Netballer Alexandra Stewart on how she mixes school work with sport – and the joys of team victory

Bubbly teenager Alexandra Stewart enjoys the regular hobbies of a youngster – singing and playing the guitar, taking part in community events and a good movie night out with her family.

Time with the family – mum, dad, grandma, three sisters and brother – is especially precious as both she and one of her sisters Alysson, also a netballer, board during the week at the Singapore Sports School. Alexandra also captains the National Under-14 Netball Team.

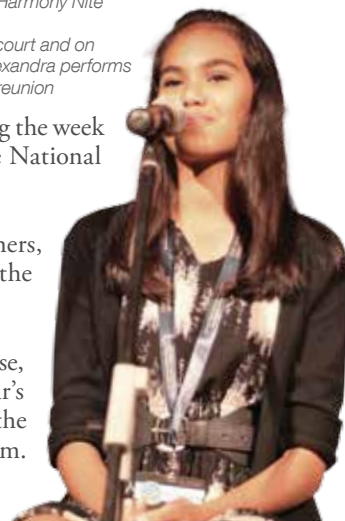
While she aims to do well academically, she says the teachers, coaches and mentors in the school are more flexible with the study schedule when there are competitions.

The teenager, who is part Scottish, Italian and Dutch Portuguese, is still basking in the achievement her team winning this year’s North Zone Netball competition and being runner-up in the national competition – their first official competition as a team. Not only that, she was also recently nominated for the TNP School Sports Star Award.



Above: Alexandra (in yellow) at an IRIR Harmony Nite

Right: Off court and on stage – Alexandra performs at an IRIR reunion



Diplomatic Characters

Life often doesn't turn out quite as we planned, as Singapore ambassador and academic Professor Maurice Baker explains in his newly launched memoir, *The Accidental Diplomat*



Right: A display of photographs at the book launch

Far right: Professor Maurice Baker with his wife, Barbara, and sons Bernard (left) and Edmund

Photos courtesy of National University of Singapore Society



Growing up in colonial Malaya and Singapore, Maurice Baker discovered a profound love of English literature and looked forward to a career in academia. He studied at Kings College, London, graduating in 1951 with an honours degree in English, and returned as an English lecturer at the then University of Singapore.

But when Singapore gained independence, the new government recognised further talents in him, and the father-of-two was asked to become the ambassador to India in 1967 where, perhaps surprisingly, he discovered his literary knowledge had a role to play. His elder son Edmund says: "My father's love for literature helped to break the ice with many foreign government dignitaries who shared the same passion."

Baker's skills in diplomacy proved every bit as impressive as his academic talents and the friendship and respect he earned in diplomatic circles led to further postings to Malaysia (in 1969 and again in 1980) and the Philippines (1977) before he retired from his career as a diplomat in 1988. Between his diplomatic missions, he returned to Singapore in 1972 to head the department of English at the University of Singapore for five years.

Bernard, Baker's younger son, who is now also a diplomat, describes his father as a kind and caring man; someone who never believed in corporal punishment and always acted as the 'rescuer' whenever he and his brother got into trouble. His patient nature was well suited to the world of diplomacy. Bernard believes that his father's kindness stems from his love of animals and nature. "I never quite appreciated his passion for birds as he would feed the pigeons in our garden irrespective of the mess they created!" he laughs.

Edmund spent a short stint in New Delhi during one of his father's postings. The school system was an eye-opener and he experienced the end of the rotan for the first time. He says: "The school believed in corporal punishment – not just for disciplinary offences but also when you failed a test or forgot your textbooks."

The author, now 94, has captured his illustrious life in his autobiography, *The Accidental Diplomat: The Autobiography of Maurice Baker*, which was launched at the NUS Guild House on 19 August.

The book details his experiences during the Japanese Occupation, his teaching stints at several educational institutes and his admiration for great leaders. He records meeting the ambassador of Saudi Arabia, who had bought him the customary gift of welcome for a good neighbour: a goat.

Edmund says he personally found the early part of the book most interesting; this describes his father's life in the Cameron Highlands and includes excerpts from his diary that outline events during the Japanese Occupation. He adds: "My father was a charming man, who was willing to listen and was open to accepting advice from others; these qualities are exemplified in his autobiography."

“ *The ambassador had bought him the customary gift of welcome for a good neighbour: a goat* ”

Bernard says the book describes how Singapore shaped its foreign policies during the early days of independence, but in addition to learning about Singapore's history, he advises readers to "enjoy the book as it was intended to be. It's about a man with a simple outlook to life who became, by circumstances and a sense to serve the country, a pioneer diplomat".

The autobiography, published by World Scientific, is available at major bookstores, priced \$48 (hardcover) and \$28 (paperback). Paperback copies are available at the EA.

At Home with the Ancestors

A two-day trip to Malacca provided visitors with an intriguing glimpse into the past



Left: The EA and Peranakan Association members in Malacca

Top: The event ended with an enjoyable dinner

Members of the EA and the Peranakan Association got together in August for a two-day trip to Malacca, which for many is their ancestral home.

The visit included a tour of Malacca's Portuguese Settlement provided by Michael Singho, President of the Malacca Portuguese-Eurasian Association. During the tour, which EA management committee member Kevin Aeria described as "an eye-opener", the visitors learned about their ancestors' lifestyle and many of the group were even able to see the houses where past family members used to live.

Many of the visitors were surprised to discover that Eurasians and Peranakans shared many traditions – including cooking styles – and

the two associations look forward to collaborating on future projects. The most memorable experience for the group was exploring the village and seeing the friendly locals and their beautiful homes.

“Many were surprised to discover that Eurasians and Peranakans shared many traditions”

The group stayed at the new Kings Green Hotel, where on the second night they enjoyed the sounds of the local band at The Melodians Charity Outreach Dinner and Dance.

Kick Up Your Heels

Help to keep the Eurasian culture alive through song and dance

Are you interested in singing, dancing or music? If so, the Eurasian community needs you! Firstly, the Kristang Cultural Troupe is looking for dancers, singers and musicians. No experience is needed and anyone keen to learn about the Portuguese Eurasian culture through song and dance is welcome to join.



Authentic Portuguese folk dance steps and songs were originally taught to the troupe by Portuguese choreographers from Portugal and Macau, and the troupe now performs in public to demonstrate the Portuguese Eurasian culture. These performances have included depictions of Eurasian weddings of yesteryear, christenings, Easter and Christmas celebrations, the evolution of the sarong kebaya and more.

“Let's work together to keep the Eurasian traditions alive”

Group leader Valerie Scully says: "This is a true learning journey and I encourage all parents to sign up their young Eurasians. Let's work together to keep the Eurasian traditions alive."

Classes are held on Mondays from, 7.30pm to 9.30pm at the Siglap South Community Centre, Dance Studio. For more information, contact Valerie Scully, tel: 6241 3510 or 9088 1157.

The EA is also looking for dancers to take part in next year's Chingay Parade, scheduled for 27 and 28 February. As in previous years, the EA contingent will parade with simple mass dance steps from the F1 Pit Building, viewed by thousands of spectators. The event will be graced by the President of Singapore and broadcast on television.

Chloe Roberts, a participant in this year's Chingay Parade says: "Chingay was a fun party! We got to dress up and made so many new friends."

Rehearsals will be held weekly on a weekday in November and December, and twice a week (one weekday and Saturday) in January and February next year. Dancers are already signing but there's room for plenty more.

If you are keen to represent the Eurasian community for this spectacular street parade with colourful costumes and floats, contact Jacqueline, tel: 6447 1578 or email Jacqueline@eurasians.org

A Stroll Down Memory Lane



Singapore street names can hold the key to fascinating stories about the nation's illustrious pioneers

When we're busy rushing from one place to another, we rarely give much thought to the names of the streets we're passing, other than as reference points to get from A to B.

But throughout the world, street names are used to honour illustrious forefathers and the map of Singapore, too, gives of plenty of clues as to the people who have added influence and colour to our Little Red Dot.

Margaret Thomas is proud to walk along Francis Thomas Drive, a small road within the St Andrew's Village in Potong Pasir, which is named after her British-born father, who married her Chinese mother, Catherine Lee Eng Neo. The street has featured in Mediacorp's TV series, *My Grandfather's Road*.

Francis Thomas was born in Westcote, a small village in Gloucestershire in England. After graduating from Cambridge University, he left the country in the 1930s to take up a teaching post in Singapore.

He felt an immediate affinity with the country and its people, and despite being a member of the colonial elite he immersed himself fully in the community. He spent almost all his career at St Andrew's School, rising from his first job as an English teacher to become the school's principal.



The Minister for Communication and Works: Francis Thomas in his government office



Francis Thomas as a small child in England

But there were tough times, too, during the Second World War. In his autobiography, *Memoirs of a Migrant*, he paints a picture of the hardships of life during the war and describes his personal experiences as a prisoner of war.

“Teaching is a job that demands all one can give and that was what I wanted”

After the war, he spent about a year recuperating in the UK before returning to the school. He became housemaster of St Andrew's Boarding House, where Catherine was the matron. He persuaded her to marry him and the wedding took place in 1948. In 1957, Thomas took Singapore citizenship.

Thomas was not only a devoted educator; in 1948, he also became a founding member of the Labour Party of Singapore. In 1955, he was appointed Minister for Communication and Works, a post he held until he resigned in 1958, although he remained in the Legislative Assembly until 1959, working alongside David Marshall and Lim Yew Hock, respectively Singapore's first and second Chief Ministers.

After his time as a politician, he returned to St Andrew's. Of his memories of politics and education, he wrote: “Teaching is a job that demands all one can give and that was what I wanted.” Thomas died in 1977.

His daughter, Margaret Thomas, describes him as a man with a great sense of justice. She says: “My father came here as an expatriate. In those times, he was considered as the ruling elite. However, he never felt that he needed to be any different from anyone else.”

Francis Thomas Drive was opened as a posthumous honour by Catherine in 1980.

Kristang Corner

Our dip into the Kristang language this year concludes with some words and phrases on work and play.



Kristang	English Pronunciation	Meaning
Ondi bos sa bolsa	Ondi bose ser bol-ser	Where is your purse?
Ki isti	Key is-te	What is this?
Keng jah beng	Keng jah beng	Who came?
Klai bos	Klai bose	How are you?
Olotu tudu logu kantah	Olo-to, to-do, lo-gu, kan-tar	They will all sing
Pamiang	Pa-me-ang	Morning

Kristang	English Pronunciation	Meaning
Isti ungua nechis	Is-te ung-were ne-chis	This one is pretty
Nos ta bai kumi bentu	Nose ter by ku-me ben-to	We are going for a holiday
Olotu jah bai sibrisu	Olo-to jah by si-bri-su	They have gone to work
Inteh nada	In-teh na-der	There's nothing
Sestu di floris	Seis-to de flo-ris	Basket of flowers
Antis	Un-tis	Before

With thanks to Valerie Scully and Catherine Zuzarte, authors of the *Eurasian Heritage Dictionary*. Copies of the dictionary are available at the EA, price \$28.00.



Left: A disabled doggy friend
Top: A tiny new life

Reigning Cats and Dogs

Veterinary surgeon Dr Tanja Kahrs describes her life with animals

Tanja Kahrs has been working at The Animal Clinic in Clementi for more than two years. Here she tells us about herself, her passion for animals and her veterinary career.

Tell us more about yourself.

My father is from Germany and moved to Singapore about 40 years ago. He met my mother, a Sri Lankan who grew up in Singapore. I was lucky that both my parents loved animals and I was always surrounded by dogs, cats, rabbits and birds. I remember growing up with my own personal little zoo.

I enjoy cycling, photography, movies and reading. I relish my free time by having coffee with my friends or hanging out at a local pub to listen to music and play pool.

What inspired you to become a vet?

As a child, I always knew that I wanted to become a vet. Being an only child, I considered them as my siblings and a source of companionship. My first dog, Sandy, was a cocker spaniel. She was my protector and best friend. Although I was very young, I remember her being very sick and on the brink of death. I remember the vet who took care of her; and as I grew older, I became curious to understand more about caring for pets.

How did you qualify?

During primary education, I used to volunteer at animal clinics, racing stables and the zoo. After high school, I attained my Bachelor

of Science in Zoology in Bristol in the UK. I came back to Singapore and worked at the Night Safari while waiting to start my Veterinary degree in Sydney, Australia. After six years, I returned to Singapore to be closer to my parents.

I started out as a volunteer at the Animal Clinic at the age of 11. I would clean cages, walk and bathe the dogs and take care of the animals. Over time, the clinic became my second home and the people are like my own family. After graduation, I was fortunate to land my dream job at the Animal Clinic.

“ My first dog,
Sandy, was a cocker spaniel.
She was my protector and
best friend ”

Currently, I am studying Feline Internal Medicine. Most people think that cats are just like small dogs. That is far from the truth; they need to be handled, played with and fed differently. I find their solitary and independent nature fascinating.

Tell us about your first day at work.

This is an interesting story! I recall sitting in the reading room when one of the nurses rushed in and told me that I was needed for an emergency surgery. I felt my heart leap out

of my body. I ran to the surgical room where my mentor told me to grab a towel quickly as I was in for a “surprise”. Within 30 seconds, she had placed a tiny puppy in my hands and instructed me to “get it breathing”!

Putting what you learnt into practice can be nerve-wrecking. After an initial moment of shock, I proceeded to resuscitate the puppy. I was scared but within a minute I saw his little chest rise up and down. We delivered seven puppies that day and I can proudly say that it was the best first day that I could have ever hoped for.

What are the pros and cons of becoming a vet?

If you love animals, you get to see them every day. The biggest satisfaction is the smile on the owner's face when they feel that you've saved a member of their family.

The downside is that I still get upset when I see a terminally sick animal that I can't save. And there are times where the animals are easier to deal with than their owners...

What is your advice for aspiring veterinarians?

To be a vet requires aptitude in biology, chemistry and physics. There are also the more obvious qualities such as having compassion and being skilled at problem solving. Find time to volunteer at a clinic, stables or even the zoo. This will show the universities that you have something more than grades. It's tough getting into a vet school and the road can be gruelling, but it's an extremely fulfilling job. My advice is: focus on the animals – they are the reason you're joining this profession.

Raising Their Voice

Dr Marissa Lee Medjeral-Mills says that for many people with disabilities, their biggest problem is other people's apathy



Dr Marissa Lee Medjeral-Mills: "People with disabilities should be given an opportunity to express themselves"



Disabled People's Association website can be found at <http://www.dpa.org.sg/>

Nothing should be done for people with disabilities without including their voice

As executive director of the Disabled People's Association (DPA), Marissa Lee Medjeral-Mills isn't looking for sympathy. Simply the opportunity for people with disabilities to make themselves heard.

The mission of the non-profit, cross-disability organisation is to be the voice of people with disabilities and work with them to achieve their full participation and equal status in society through independent living. To this end, she designs advocacy initiatives to integrate disabled people better into Singapore society.

Born to a Peranakan Singaporean and Argentinean father, Marissa grew up in Singapore before attending university in the UK. "I studied public policy and was keen about joining the non-profit sector after volunteering at the Red Cross," she says. She is married to Richard Medjeral-Mills, who's British, and they have an eight-month-old son Otto.

She explains that DPA's motto is a 'voice of our own', which means that nothing should be done for people with disabilities without including their voice: "They should be given an opportunity to express themselves."

Last year, DPA launched a public education campaign, 'Their biggest disability is our apathy'. The campaign consisted of a short video which shows Yip Ping Xiu, a medal-winning swimmer and wheelchair user, who gets through a busy day happily and independently – until she is thwarted by a thoughtless person's lack of consideration. "It had a huge impact on the public and our Prime Minister mentioned it on his Facebook page. It was also covered by the local newspapers," says Marissa. The campaign is supported by posters on a similar theme. The video can be watched here: [www://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8i6T1B_dtDQ](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8i6T1B_dtDQ)

Marissa says DPA also liaises closely with the Building and Construction Authority (BCA) to update its Code on Accessibility in the Built Environment. "We believe that it's important to ensure that all new buildings have minimal barriers for people with disabilities."

“Too often, a person with a disability is identified by their disability. This is wrong”

She adds that DPA also works hard for people to understand the power of language and how it shapes an individual's thinking about disability. "Too often, a person with a disability is identified by their disability. This is wrong. We should not be using race, colour of skin or disability as a person's identifying feature. DPA has a Dictionary of Disability Terminology available for free download on our website, www.dpa.org.sg if you want to learn more about this."

She would also like more volunteers to come forward and provide their professional services or help assist at DPA events. If you wish to help or donate, please visit the website for more information.

THE EURASIAN ASSOCIATION SINGAPORE PRESENTS

New Year Eve's Dinner & Dance 2014

"Nite at the Oscars"

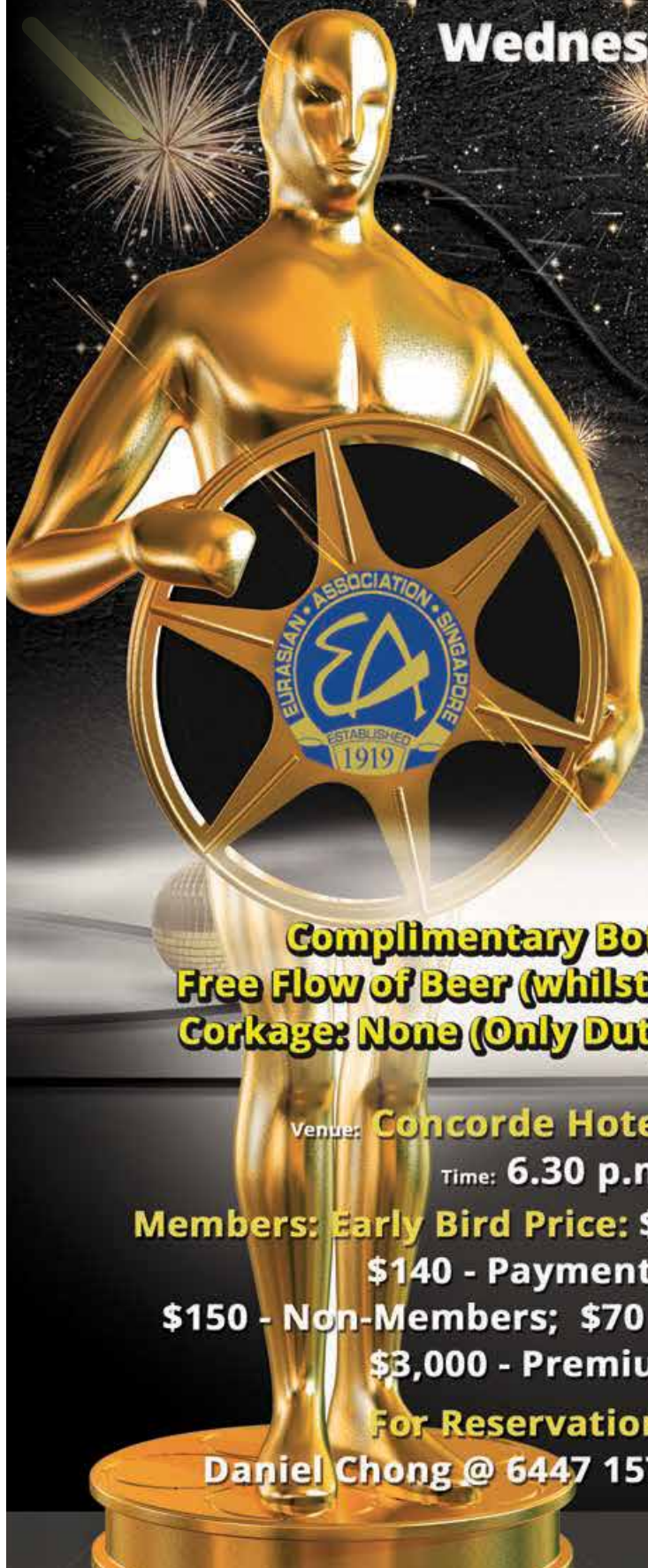
Wednesday, 31 December 2014

Featuring

Gerard Danker
& M.S.G.
Deejay
Bernard Jeremiah

Special Guest Artistes

Riem De Wolff
(Blue Diamonds)
Robert Fernando



Complimentary Bottle of Wine per Table
Free Flow of Beer (whilst stocks last) and soft drinks
Corkage: None (Only Duty-Paid Bottles are allowed)

Venue: **Concorde Hotel, Concorde Ballroom**

Time: **6.30 p.m. to 1.30 a.m.**

Members: Early Bird Price: \$130 - Payment by 15 Nov 2014;
\$140 - Payment after 15 Nov 2014
\$150 - Non-Members; \$70 - Child (Age 8 to 11 years old)
\$3,000 - Premium Donation Table

For Reservations, please contact:

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