

The New Eurasian

APRIL – JUNE 2021

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EMPOWERING EURASIAN WOMEN

2021 — the Year of Celebrating SG Women

A Eurasian's learning journey in London

Dialogues to connect with youth

Sehbak recipe that rocks



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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, ministries, statutory boards, community organisations and self-help groups.

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Dear fellow members of the EA,

I hope you are staying safe during this difficult period, under on-going Covid-19 conditions. The EA will always be here to support and enrich the Eurasian community, and to contribute to the betterment of Singapore. During the EA's recent Annual General Meeting, our members resolved to continue helping Eurasians and the Singapore society through these difficult times.

In this aspect, the EA has the Empathy Package which is designed to help Eurasians affected by the pandemic. If you need help, or know someone who does, please contact the EA immediately.

The EA is supporting the Ministry of Social and Family Development's move to dedicate 2021 as the Year of Celebrating SG Women. In this issue of The New Eurasian, we are proud to feature Ms Rachel Raeburn, Ms Natalie Lazaroo and Ms Cheryl Marie Codeiro, who have bravely followed their dreams and passion to become successful in their own fields. We hope their stories inspire not just other women, but everyone else as well.

In the past quarter, we were honoured to receive Minister for Culture, Community and Youth Edwin Tong at the EA. He was introduced to Eurasian cuisine and taken on a tour of the Eurasian Heritage Gallery. We are happy to call him a friend of the Association and he is welcome to visit us again anytime.

The Youth Sub-committee organised several online dialogues on racial and religious issues in Singapore. The last session held on April 27 was attended by Minister of State for Home Affairs and National Development Associate Professor Muhammad Faishal Ibrahim. He was encouraged that we had this discussion involving youth from various self-help groups and came up with recommendations to make improvements in Singapore.

Lastly, it appears that the pandemic may not go away soon. So I do urge everyone to stay safe and follow government guidelines. Together, all of us can bring normalcy back to Singapore.

Dr Alexius Pereira

President



HIGHLIGHTS

● A Hearty Celebration

The Self Help Groups Student Care Limited celebrated its fifth anniversary with the opening of its 30th Big Heart Student Care at Zhangde Primary School on February 18. In attendance representing the Eurasian Association (EA) were President, Dr Alexius Pereira, and First Vice-President and Education Chairperson, Mr Vincent Schoon.

During the walkabout, they met Ethan Sarig, a Eurasian student, as well as sisters Stephanie and Stacey Sanchez, who work at Big Heart. You can read more about the Eurasian sisters in the next issue. Big Heart Student Care centres cater to students of all races and they currently have 4,200 students enrolled at these centres which were set up five years ago to help children from less-privileged backgrounds. Run by self-help groups, they are located in various primary schools to provide educational and developmental support to students. To date, close to 1,400 students are receiving financial help from these centres.

Visit bigheartstudentcare.com for more information.



● New Trustees Of The EA

The EA held its trustees appointment ceremony with EA Patron, Mr George Yeo as guest-of-honour on January 30.

The EA expressed appreciation and gratitude to four retiring trustees, Mr Barry Desker, Mr Gerard De Silva, Mr Timothy de Souza and Mr Gerald Minjoot for their commitment in the past years. It also welcomed new trustees, Ms Carla Barker and Mr Benett Theseira. Justice Judith Prakash and Mr Edward D'Silva remain on the Board of Trustees.



(From top left) Ms Carla Barker, Mr Edward D'Silva, EA Patron Mr George Yeo, EA President Dr Alexius Pereira, Justice Judith Prakash and Mr Benett Theseira. (From bottom left) Mr Gerald Minjoot, Mr Barry Desker, Mr Timothy de Souza and Mr Gerard De Silva. **Individuals featured removed their masks briefly for photography.*

● A Minister's Visit To The Eurasian Association

The EA's President Dr Alexius Pereira hosted Minister for Culture, Community and Youth Edwin Tong for an informal lunch at Quentin's Singapore on April 15. Mr Tong, who is also Second Minister for Law, toured the Eurasian Heritage Gallery and shared his thoughts on rediscovering the Eurasian heritage in the Gallery's guest book.



"Thank you for hosting me to such a lovely visit, which I thoroughly enjoyed. I am so glad to learn about the Eurasian history and heritage, to see how much the Eurasian Community has given to so many facets of Singapore society. You must be very proud of all the achievements. Please continue to protect and promote Eurasian culture and heritage, and remain a strong pillar of society in Singapore!"

Edwin Tong
15 April 2021

● Annual General Meeting 2021

During the EA's 2021 Annual General Meeting on April 24, its President, Dr Alexius Pereira reviewed key events over the past year, highlighting the introduction of the Empathy Package which was initiated to support Eurasians affected by the pandemic. He also shared how the EA adapted to the pandemic by ensuring the Youth, Community Development and Heritage committees continued to engage members via different virtual programmes and activities.

He concluded the AGM by thanking the dedicated patrons, trustees, management committee members, secretariat, donors and volunteers for their unwavering dedication and support.



Chingay 2021

The Eurasian community was out in full force at the annual Chingay on February 20. The event's live broadcast online and on television enabled viewers to be treated to a full suite of Eurasian culture and traditions.

Some of the participants included:

- Trevor and Jared Martens Wong, who submitted a video of their performance of their own song "I found my heart (Hoopla)". The song, which was released on October 29, 2019, is about overcoming hardships and finding one's self again. Trevor played a guitar which he made from a teh tarik powder can which he found from a coffee shop near their home.
- Florabelle Beins and Rio Beins-Au, who were featured in a mini-series. The mother-and-son duo showcased the dance steps to a folk dance called Jinkli-Nona, followed by an explanation of its traditions.



Chingay mini-series hosts Auntie Rose and Naomi Yeo visited the EA to learn more about the Eurasian culture and dance from Florabelle and her son, Rio Beins-Au. *Individuals featured removed their masks briefly for photography.

- Shanice Hedger, Camille Lesslar and Trevor Nerva, who submitted videos of themselves singing along to the Chingay 2021 theme song "As I Believe".
- Saskia Ong-Webb, who is seven years old, was part of the filming for the theme song, along with President Halimah Yacob and Mr Mohammed Abdullah Alhabshee.

The EA would like to thank and acknowledge these individuals for their contributions.



Mr Daniel Chander from MOH shared with the participants on stories shared by the participants.



Participants shared their experiences on ageing in focus group sessions.

Discussion On Successful Ageing

The Ministry of Health facilitated a focus group session on February 26 to discuss its "Successful Ageing" action plan. 28 members from the EA attended the event and shared feedback and ideas on how they could play a part in shaping community-based support systems to meet the needs of the ageing population, creating meaningful opportunities for them to stay active and building strong social connections.



EA members listened attentively during a presentation on 'Active Ageing'.



Season's Goodwill In 2020

The annual Christmas Lunch has been the highlight of the Christmas season for many years. Families supported by the Family Support Services (FSS), the welfare branch of the EA, always look forward to the open buffet lunches and community get-together.

However, the usual festivities were shelved due to social distancing rules during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Nevertheless, Ms Christine Pereira and Ms Carol Shepherdson from the FSS team managed to bring some Christmas cheer to families to wrap up an otherwise challenging year.

Instead of lunch, they delivered Christmas hampers to families. Decorated with festive decals and ribbons, the hampers were delivered to 84 families by FSS Befrienders.

With Mr Rene Shepherdson Jr's manpower and transport support, the delicately decorated hampers were safely delivered to all recipients.

All the hard work paid off as the hampers containing traditional Christmas Eurasian goodies such as salt fish pickles, pineapple tarts and sugée



SUPPORTING EURASIANS



FSS Chairperson Edmund Rodrigues, Mr Peter Rodrigues and Ms Martha Fernandez were involved in the distribution of the Christmas hampers.

cakes put together by Mr Quentin Pereira were well received. We thank him for supporting this initiative to ensure that the annual tradition continues to bring joy to these families in an otherwise dreary year end.

Volunteers from Lighting Hearts Lighting Homes, another ground-up social initiative that reaches out to underprivileged individuals and families in Singapore, also made special deliveries to another 99 families. Each family received a \$120 cash donation too.

Christmas in 2020 was different, but the love and care from the FSS and its supporters remained the same.



Our FSS clients were delighted with the Christmas hampers and the EA would like to thank everyone who made this possible!





Better Homes For A Better Future

Is social mobility a reality or an unattainable dream?

Many will opine that the only way out of poverty is getting a good education that will lead to professional development that comes with financial rewards.

This works only if members of the younger generation appreciate that the key to unlocking the door to greater prosperity lies in education. When there is an understanding of this, more will find themselves richer with each succeeding generation. From that point, poverty would become a matter of choice.

This opinion is simplistic at best, and it does not bring into focus the problems that naturally accompany poverty.

Because one is poor, everything becomes valuable and is never discarded, resulting in hoarding and clutter. Some of the homes visited by the FSS teams reported that some children live in such cluttered mess that they cannot even find space to sit and do their schoolwork. Not even on the floor.

Donation For A Cause

Last year, the FSS received a very generous corporate donation of \$25,000 to help residents staying in one- and two-room government rental flats to improve their

living conditions. This was also aimed at making the learning environment at home conducive to those with school-going children.

Although there is significant concern regarding their academic progress, we concede that the lack of a conducive learning environment is only one facet affecting their academic performances. Nevertheless, we hope to change the grim educational statistics of children staying in these rental flats by taking baby steps.

A Worthy Effort

The repainting of 20 one-room and seven two-room flats started in February, and we have been making progress on approximately four flats per month.

Despite our best intentions, some clients have declined the offer to spruce up and repaint their flats, and we respect their choices. For the rest who have had their flats spruced up and repainted, we are heartened to receive positive responses that motivate us in our cause to make a difference to others for a better future.

Edmund Rodrigues

Chairperson

Family Support Services

Empowering Eurasian Women

With 2021 dedicated by the Ministry for Social and Family Development (MSF) as the Year of Celebrating SG Women, the EA invites three inspiring women to share their views on being empowered to live their best lives.

The EA recognises the immense contributions of women in our society and supports this initiative by MSF. In this feature, we reached out to Ms Cheryl Cordeiro, Ms Rachel Raeburn and Ms Natalie Lazaroo who shared their aspirations for a more equitable and progressive society.

Q: Could you tell us about your career?

CHERYL: My work focuses on food research and I'm based at Nofima in Northern Norway. I analyse data in European Union projects that look at the entire food supply chain from breeding and genetics, food safety and quality, marine biotechnology, production biology, process technology, consumer and sensory sciences, and marketing research. My colleagues come from different disciplines and we work with local and international industry partners. One of my efforts is to bridge knowledge and network from Norway, with interested industry-academic stakeholders in Singapore.

I enjoy travelling and I've always been curious about what the Nordic lights and polar ice caps look like in reality. But it's not just work that brought me to Europe. In my case, love and life chose Sweden for me, and I've migrated there.

RACHEL: I've always had an interest in the English language and I enjoy interacting and working with people. Over the years, my selected vocations have been in these two areas, and my current profession in public relations (PR) consultancy marries both aspects.



Part of Ms Cordeiro's work involves bridging knowledge and network from Norway with interested industry-academic stakeholders in Singapore.

While fulfilling my dream to travel the world, I worked as a flight attendant with Singapore Airlines and simultaneously obtained a Bachelor of Arts in Communications, majoring in Public Relations and Journalism. Thereafter, I worked at local PR agencies and explored journalism with a magazine at Singapore Press Holdings for over two years.

The decision to start my own PR agency was an organic one. After leaving a local PR agency, referrals for PR work came my way and so I decided to register my agency, Relish PR.

NATALIE: I'm currently a university lecturer in Queensland, Australia, where I've chosen as my new home. I'm also part of a women's circus act called the Sisters of Sia and I perform on the triple trapeze.

When I was still living in Singapore, I taught in a secondary school for about four years before I decided to follow my childhood dream to study overseas. I



Ms Raeburn worked as a flight attendant, ventured into PR work and explored journalism before setting up her own PR agency.

eventually pursued a Master of Philosophy in Drama in Australia, and then went on to do my PhD.

Q: Could you tell us about your Eurasian heritage?

CHERYL: I was born in the mid-1970s and grew up in Singapore. My paternal heritage is Spanish and Portuguese, and my maternal heritage is Chinese. Our heritage is important to us — we even have a genealogy website (www.cordeiros.net). The Cordeiro family has a Coat of Arms, granted to “Cordero de Castille”.

In our household, we celebrate Christmas, New Year’s Eve and Easter, so I tend to identify more with my Spanish and Portuguese heritage than the Chinese side.

RACHEL: My paternal side is a mix of Eurasian, Scottish and Chinese. As for my maternal side, both my late grandparents are of French and Asian heritage.

NATALIE: I used to struggle with my identity as a Singaporean Eurasian. I think it was partly due to common perceptions of how a Eurasian should look—light-skinned, have light features and be “distinctively Caucasian-mixed”.

I remember some people looking at me sceptically when I told them I’m Eurasian, as if I was intentionally falsifying my identity. Anyway, I like to acknowledge



Ms Lazaroo, a university lecturer and a member of a circus act, is proud to be a Kristang of Malaccan-Portuguese descent.

that I’m Kristang, of Malaccan-Portuguese descent. I’ve also discovered that I’ve Thai, Filipino, Goan and Spanish roots.

Q: Could you share how you overcame some of the challenges in your career?

CHERYL: I think human “biases” or “assumptions” necessarily arise out of our own experiences. Siblings living together in the same household can express diverse world views as they grow up because of their different childhood experiences.

I was fortunate to study in a girls’ school, the Convent of the Holy Infant Jesus (CHIJ). I was free, if not encouraged, by my parents and my teachers, to pursue subjects of interest (academic or otherwise) with diligence and perseverance. So I grew up in an environment where girls were unafraid to be themselves and develop as individuals. We were boisterous, curious and highly competitive in various sports.

This belief in self, independence of spirit and determination is what I bear in mind when pursuing my career.

RACHEL: I’m glad to say that I have not faced any challenges as a female in my career. It is probably because the communications industry is dominated

by females. In particular, for PR, being female is more of an advantage as we tend to have a higher level of emotional quotient and are thus more effective at our jobs, which require excellent people skills.

NATALIE: I think there is a pervasive sense of imposter syndrome that women sometimes feel. This is especially so in my case as a woman in academia.

Once, I shared with a highly esteemed professor who is internationally renowned in her field that I felt like I didn't know what I was doing. To my surprise, she confided that she sometimes felt the same way about herself!

I also think that women don't always ask for what they want, and that assertion can sometimes be deemed as a negative trait in women, but celebrated as an admirable trait in men.

Recently, I approached my Head of School to make a request and she was glad that I was direct and assertive to have spoken up instead of keeping quiet. Although I didn't get what I asked for, at least I tried.

Q: Could you name a woman who has inspired you the most, and why?

CHERYL: Because I grew up in a convent, most of my teachers and mentors in my childhood and teen years were women and they were all great.

The greatest influencer in my life when I was a child was my mother, and in many ways, she still is. In the field of housekeeping, I think Julia Child (1912 – 2004) had a wonderful way of inspiring others to cook. In the fashion industry, the life story of Coco Chanel (1883 – 1971) inspires me.

RACHEL: Madam Kwa Geok Choo, the late wife of Mr Lee Kuan Yew, inspires me because she was respected as an intelligent and capable individual while being a supportive wife to her husband and loving mother to her children.

I admire the love and respect they had for each other. She was also poised and had a dignified presence.

As a mom and business owner, I strive to be the best that I can be at home and at work.



Being self-employed enabled Ms Raeburn to decide the amount of work to take on in order to achieve work-life balance.

NATALIE: There are two women who continue to inspire me to this day. They are Celia, the artistic director of a women's circus (that I've joined) in Australia, and Izzaty, a community worker and applied theatre practitioner in Singapore. Both women are unapologetically feminist and passionate about how the arts can transform communities and bring about social change.

Q: For ladies who are entering the workforce, what advice would you give them?

CHERYL: Entering a workforce marks the start of a journey that gives you an opportunity to grow and to contribute to a larger community. Your first job is only your first step on a long journey.

Always do your best and make your professional competence matter, and don't be afraid to seek greater challenges when you feel you are ready.

RACHEL: Appreciate each day for the opportunity to learn from your colleagues and seniors. Being female is not to be seen as a disadvantage as you are blessed with the soft skills on top of the hard skills that anyone can acquire.

Learn how to work as a team but also know when to stand up and take the lead when the opportunity presents itself.

Above all, have a positive attitude as it will see you through not only in your career but also in life's journey.

NATALIE: Seek mentors who will guide and support you. Ask for what you want — the worst that can happen is that they'll say no. Then ask again.

Q: How do you manage self-doubt?

CHERYL: Very often, doubts arise from miscommunication when you fail to make yourself understood. Personally, I am lucky to have mentors who are willing to lend a listening ear, help me put things in perspective and sort out where the problem lies.

Also, make time for self-care. Taking time to listen to yourself breathe can also help ease your worries. And never underestimate the soothing power of an Epsom salt bath.



Ms Cordeiro believes that companies can become more competitive if the strengths and skills of their employees are considered fairly, regardless of gender.

RACHEL: My husband is my voice of reason. Somehow, talking to him about the challenges that I'm going through make them all seem manageable. I also read about topics to improve on areas I'm feeling doubtful about.

NATALIE: Just a few months ago, I was devising and directing two performances simultaneously and my mind was filled with thoughts like "I'm a fraud, I have no idea what I'm doing". Then I gave myself a pep talk to stop those undermining thoughts, recognise my worth, and



Ms Lazaroo feels that society places higher expectations on working mothers as not many people talk about "working fathers" in the same way.

have faith in the process.

Sometimes I just have to remember that I don't always have to cope with everything on my own because I have friends and colleagues that I can depend on to seek advice and brainstorm ideas with. I know not

everybody has that privilege, but it's something that has often helped me overcome my doubts.

Q: From your observation, what do you think is important for everyone to understand about women in terms of inclusivity and diversity in organisations?

CHERYL: I think gender awareness is part of the broader spectrum of human diversity awareness that any organisation can cultivate and incorporate in their business environment. A company can become more competitive if they consider the strengths, skills, knowledge and expertise of their employees — both women and men.

RACHEL: Women are simply amazing and we have big hearts. We have the ability to do things well, and at the same time, show care and concern for others. Treat us right and we will go over and above the call of duty. Women like to excel as a team but it doesn't mean that we cannot lead when the opportunity calls for it.

NATALIE: Although there are some things that affect women broadly, one thing to remember is that "woman" is not a singular identity. Intersectionality plays a huge part in how we view ourselves and experience the world as women — as women of colour, as women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, as disabled women, as mature women, and so on.

Organisations that aim to be truly inclusive need to take these into consideration and provide opportunities and access to all women.

Youth Dialogue With DPM On Moving Singapore Ahead Post-Covid 19



On January 16, the EA hosted a Pre-Budget Engagement Session for Youth led by the its Youth Committee’s Chairperson Christopher Gordon. A total of 55 people attended the session with Singapore’s Deputy Prime Minister Heng Swee Keat as the guest-of-honour.

The objective of the event was to engage youth from four self-help groups (CDAC, Mendaki, SINDA and EA) and seek their views on the impending Budget Statement on February 16. It kicked off with a sharing by four youth representatives on these topics:

- Reflections: 1 Year Since the 1st Covid-19 Case in Singapore
- What Did Self-Help Groups Do to Support the Community?
- Emerging From Covid-19: The Crisis of a Generation
- Youth Hopes for Budget 2021

The EA’s youth representative, Mr Noel Longue spoke about how the lives of Singaporeans changed dramatically when Covid-19 hit a year ago and having to

live life in a new normal. While some sectors of the economy were hit quite badly and many businesses had to pivot to survive during the pandemic, it was heartening to witness many Singaporeans from all walks of life stepping up to support their fellow countrymen in this time of need.

Following that, DPM Heng engaged the audience in a discussion about the kind of Singapore we want to build as we emerge from the crisis. Some responses included the desire to build a more compassionate society with greater efforts to reduce inequality, a more sustainable and green country, a forward-looking and future-ready economy, and how the Budget 2021 could be shaped to support this vision.

DPM Heng also commended the four self-help groups for their commitment to create a platform for youth leaders from other similar groups to network, develop leadership capabilities and collaborate with one another to drive meaningful ground-up initiatives to support the community.

Youth Focus On Race And Religion

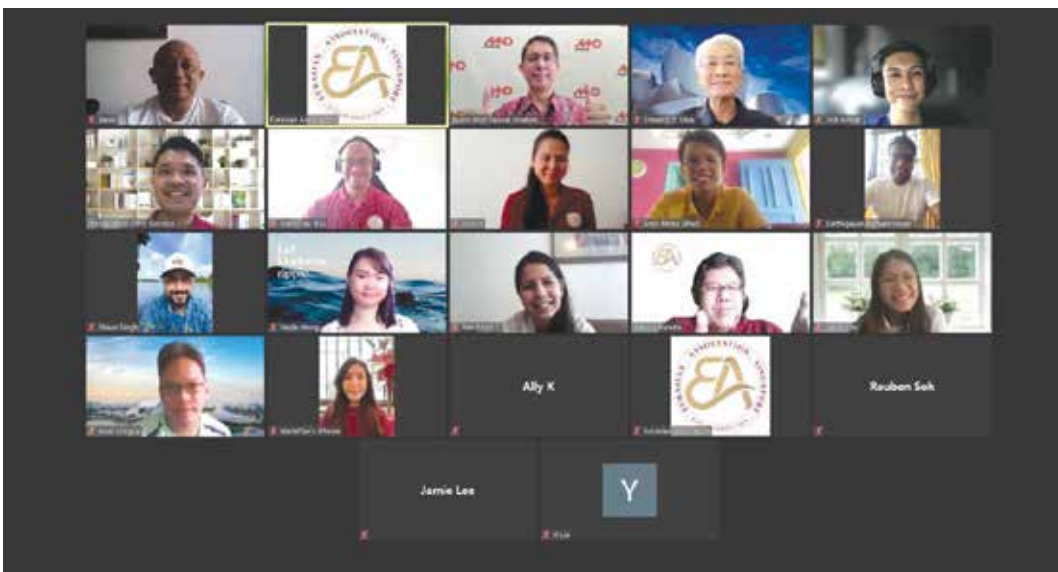
A two-part dialogue series on providing youth with a safe space to talk about sensitive issues relating to race and religion in Singapore was held online via Zoom on February 20 and 27.

Both sessions, organised by the EA’s Youth Committee, saw the participation of more than 30 youth, including those from partner self-help groups CDAC, Mendaki and SINDA, as well as partner organisations such as OnePeople.SG and Young NTUC.

The four panellists in the first session were the founder of NGO Roses of Peace, Mohamad Irshad;

president of the Young Sikh Association, Sarabjeet Singh; youth advocate from OnePeople.SG, Leonard Sim; and vice-chairman of the EA’s Youth Committee, Danni Jay Luke Danis.

The second session featured a keynote speech and dialogue with Minister of State for Home Affairs and National Development, Muhammad Faishal Ibrahim. During the two sessions, the young attendees gathered in small groups to share personal experiences, common issues and challenges relating to race and religion, and discuss sensitive topics such as casual racism and cultural appropriation.



About “Let’s Talk Race And Religion In Singapore” Forum
 As citizens of the world and multi-cultural Singaporeans, it is our duty to respect one another regardless of race, language or religion as our pledge emphasises.
 However, globally, racism still continues to pose a serious threat to social cohesion. While we enjoy relatively stable and peaceful racial and religious relations in Singapore, we cannot take this for granted.
 Let’s Talk Race and Religion in Singapore is a no-filter forum where youth from different races and religions could come together in a safe and respectful space to share their views on issues relating to race and religion, and brainstorm to address the problems at hand.



#YOUthGotThis Mentorship Programme

A one-stop shop for youths to reach out to industry professionals from various sectors to find out more about the industries that they are keen to join, seek advice on career paths, and get help on reviewing resumes.

Always "on"

Our new mentorship programme is a platform where youth can reach out to us anytime for mentorship and growth support

Need-based

We'll assess your needs and find a suitable mentor who can help you best

Tailored for you

A programme that's customised to meet different needs

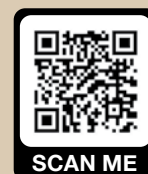
1-on-1

You'll receive undivided attention during each session

Flexible

Mentorship sessions can be done virtually or offsite

Sponsored by the Eurasian Association



SCAN ME





DO YOU HAVE THE EURASIAN ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP?

If you have been contributing to the Eurasian Community Fund (ECF), you can receive a complimentary life membership (valued at \$60) at the EA. The membership fee is waived for all ECF contributors if they can provide copies of their latest payslips over the past three months indicating their ECF contributions.

The EA offers discounts on its events and facilities to its members throughout the year. It also collaborates with external organisations to provide exclusive benefits.

Scan the QR code to find out more about membership benefits and visit www.eurasians.sg/membership to download the membership form.

Kindly e-mail **Bridget** at bridget@eurasians.org for further queries or to update your membership details!



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Life Of A Eurasian Student Abroad

Ms Eliana Sarah Balasubramaniam, a recipient of the 2017 Excellence Award (International Baccalaureate) and 2015 Excellence Award (Secondary), shares her overseas learning journey in England.

After completing the International Baccalaureate (IB) at St Joseph Institution, Eliana Sarah Balasubramaniam enrolled in King's College London in England to pursue higher education in Philosophy, Politics and Economics in 2017. She specialised in Politics and Economics after her second year.

Although much of her time was focused on keeping up with her demanding academic schedule, she felt the need to socialise and develop new friendships as she was new to the city.

Eliana started by joining the Debate society as she had enjoyed speaking about sustainable development goals at Model United Nations at the United Nation Headquarters in New York, the United States in 2018.

She became a member of the Hot Chocolate society to help the homeless in London. After noticing how much more severe and blatant the city's state of homelessness was compared to Singapore, she led student volunteers to provide hot beverages and food to those in need and set up opportunities for socialisation one night a week.

In addition, Eliana was elected Subject Ambassador for the Faculty for Social Science and Public Policy during her second year in the university. Still, she managed to find time to conduct guided tours to visitors and liaise between the staff and students.

Then just as she was close to completing her course, the Covid-19 pandemic struck and she had to press on with her work online. Despite the disruptions, she managed to graduate last year with first class honours.

Eliana continued to stay in London as she had secured a job during her final year of her course. She is currently working as a consultant in the Forensic and Litigation Department at FTI Consulting. Her main responsibilities include working with financial institutions, regulators and central banks to combat a broad range of financial crimes such as money laundering, terrorist financing, market manipulation and fraud.

Eliana, who will turn 23 in July, hopes to return to Singapore in future and use her skills, experience and knowledge to help ensure the country's financial system is protected from exploitation.

Q&A with Eliana on what matters greatly to her — her overseas education, Eurasian heritage, questions about her ethnicity and a balanced lifestyle.

Q: Why did you choose King's College to further your studies?

A: The campus, which is centrally located along the River Thames in London, England, is close to some of the best cultural and food options in the city. I knew my studies would take up the majority of my time and energy, so the proximity to these options offers convenience and helps me save time to travel there.

There are great spots near the campus to hang out too. They include Covent Garden, the Royal Opera House, various museums and my favourite – Chinatown where I would go whenever I missed food from Singapore.

King's College also has a great alumni network, which offered opportunities to meet people from various professions and help me get a better idea of how to secure a job after graduating.

Most of all, I value its highly international student population as I wish to connect with people from all over the world.

Q: Can you share more about your Eurasian Heritage?

I have a Ceylonese father and a Chinese-British mother.

My maternal grandfather was British, although he grew up in Kirkee, India where he was a major in the British Army. My maternal grandmother is a Hokkien Chinese from Ipoh, Malaysia.

Both my paternal great-grandparents were from Jaffna, Sri Lanka. Their work with the Indian colonial service led to a new posting in Singapore.

I embrace English, Chinese and Ceylonese traditions and observe festivities during Chinese New Year and Deepavali.



Q: How do you explain your ethnicity to the locals in London?

They often think I am a Latin American or Filipino. Once, someone thought I was Vietnamese. I normally explain that I'm of mixed parentage and if probed further, I would share my family's heritage. I sense that people view me as an Asian because I have the qualities, values and beliefs typically associated with Asians.

Q: Do you have any advice for students on balancing their studies and personal lives?

A: Create moments that incorporate both. I scheduled study dates with friends at the library so I could still enjoy their company whenever we took breaks or grabbed lunch together.

Or have a planner and set both study and personal goals throughout the week to help you find some sense of balance between them.

Happenings @ The Eurasian Heritage Gallery

Relive some of the recent events at the gallery and mark your calendar for upcoming ones.



Mr Edwin Thompson sharing war stories at the EHG.

Remembering The Fallen

As part of the National Heritage Board's (NHB) Battle for Singapore programme which ran from February 20 to March 14, the Eurasian Heritage Gallery (EHG) curated a WWII-themed tour, "To Defend And Protect – The Eurasian Experience".

Three tours, each attended by about 10 visitors, were held on February 20 and 27, and March 13. Before each tour began, visitors took part in an activity facilitated by Yarn@EA members to craft red poppy brooches to symbolise the fallen. Each poppy was made by sewing felt petals, a black button and a safety pin together.

The visitors then wore their own self-made poppies for the tour where they discovered how the Eurasian community survived the trials and tribulations of the war, as well as stories of war heroes like Halford Boudewyn and the Eurasian soldiers who fought to defend Singapore. The tour ended with a riveting sharing session by Eurasian war survivor Edwin Thompson, who was 11 years old when he went through the ordeal in 1942.

EHG Goes Virtual

You can now view the EHG via www.eurasians.sg from the comfort of your home.

Simply click on the EHG logo banner at the homepage or the link on the EHG page to view the gallery in a snap.

The page also features a link to three online games which promote Eurasian culture. Students can play Eurasian Cultural Quiz and attempt to answer at least half of the questions correctly to redeem a souvenir at the EHG. The other two games, Memory and Matching the Pictures, are more suitable for pre-schoolers



Scan the QR Code to visit the EHG!



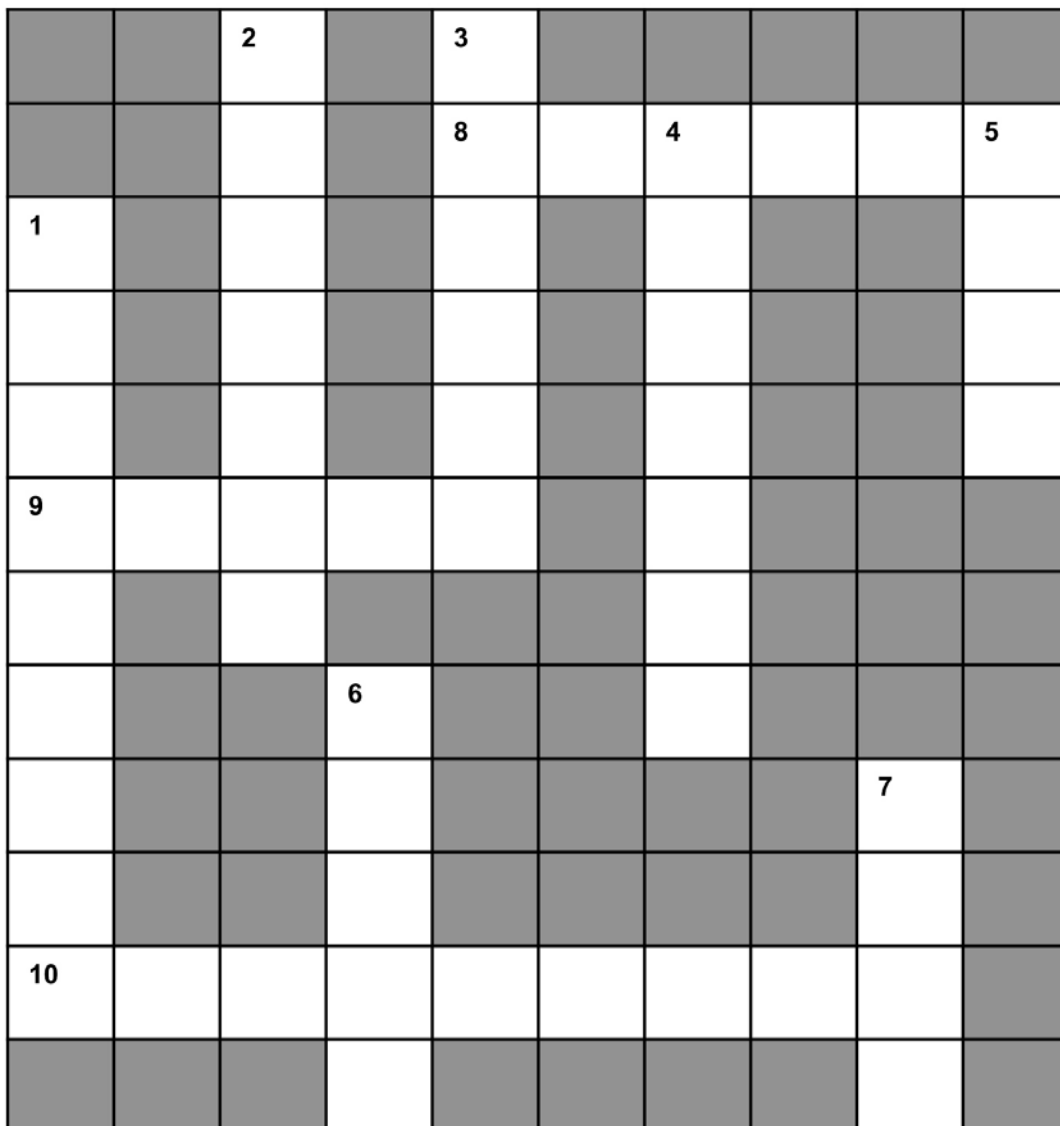
The Eurasian Community House remains open during the Phase 2 (Heightened Alert) period. Please note that appointments are required.

All other programmes and services will be held virtually till further notice.



Contact Us

Test Your Knowledge: Eurasian Heritage

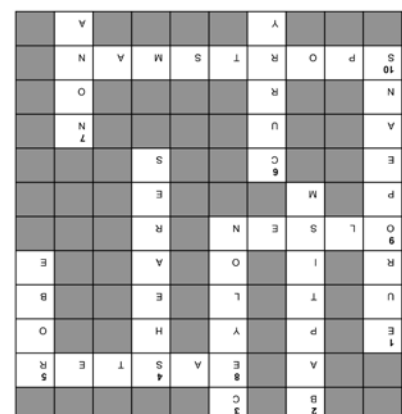


DOWN

1. Eurasians are people of mixed marriages between Asians and E_____.
2. Another word for Christening is B_____.
3. The Eurasian Community House is at C_____ Road.
4. The former President of Singapore was Benjamin H S_____.
5. The Christening R_____ is used for Baptism.
6. C_____ Debal (or Devil) is a popular Eurasian dish.
7. Jinkli N_____ is a famous Eurasian dance.

ACROSS

8. E_____ is celebrated after Lent.
9. Eunice O_____ was one of Singapore's nominated Member of Parliament in 2005.
10. Lloyd Valberg was Singapore's first S_____ Olympian in 1948.



Ties That Bind

Eurasian heritage matters to Ms Tracy Schelkis and Mr John Tessensohn, who continue to keep their rich culture and traditions alive after migrating overseas.



Keeping Eurasian food culture alive

Ms Tracy Schelkis was seven years old when her family migrated to Australia. She lives alone with two dogs in Darwin in the Northern Territory, while her grown-up children live in Perth in Western Australia.



Q: Tell us about your occupation and your hobbies.

A: I'm a divisional business manager with the Northern Territory Government (NTG) where I've been working since 1978, pretty much after I left high school.

I enjoy taking daily walks with my dogs, tending to my garden and watching my favourite TV shows. I love travelling too, but it's difficult with the pandemic now.

Q: How do you continue to keep Eurasian traditions alive in Australia?

A: Every Easter and Christmas, my elder sister (who is a stickler for traditions) will get my other sister and I to join her to bake goodies such as pineapple tarts, my grandmother's fruitcake, sugee cake, chocolate cake, Bolu Cocu and Achar.

We have family lunch and dinner gatherings too. Curry Devil, Feng and Achar are time consuming to prepare, but they are well worth the effort.

Q: Have you been asked about your Eurasian roots? How do you explain your heritage to them?

A: I've never faced racial discrimination in Australia. I'm very much accepted by my friends and peers in Darwin, which has always been very multicultural.

I'm often asked where I come from. When I reply that I'm from Singapore, they'd tell me I don't look Chinese. And when I say that I'm not Chinese but Eurasian, I get a reply like "Oh, what's that?". When I explain where my parents came from, and that a Eurasian's parentage is based on a European and Asian heritage, their response is that I look Greek or Italian.

Q: Do you have Eurasian friends in Australia and how have you been able to share the culture, food and history of Eurasians with others?

A: There are only a few Eurasians in Darwin and they are mainly my relatives. But a majority of the Eurasians who know my family live in Perth. I am also a member of the Western Australia Eurasian Association.

I often show photos of my attempts at making signature Eurasian tarts and cakes to my friends at work and share the history of Eurasian cuisine with them.

Q: How do you stay connected with Singapore?

A: I make use of social media like Facebook to stay connected. I also keep in touch with my cousins and only remaining uncle who still lives in Singapore. I used to make annual visits before the pandemic.



Taking pride of Eurasian heritage

When Mr John Tessensohn was 27, he yearned to venture abroad to gain overseas working experience for a few years, then take up a study course before returning to Singapore. But he eventually settled down in Osaka, Japan.



Q: Tell us about your occupation and your hobbies.

A: I'm a lawyer specialising in cross-border intellectual property matters like patents and trademarks. I enjoy travelling, reading and swimming.

Q: How do you continue to keep Eurasian traditions alive in Japan?

A: By indulging in Shepherd's pie and suggee cake. My attempts at reproducing my late mum's Shepherd's pie were passable – she would have approved the use of Hokkaido potatoes and minced Kobe beef to her Shepherd's pie recipe.

Her suggee cake was legendary during our extended family makan gatherings. But sadly, attempts to successfully reproduce it here is still a work-in-progress.

Q: What do you think makes you distinctly Eurasian in Japan?

A: Preparing or finding Shepherd's pie and suggee cake to eat.

Q: Do local Japanese find it difficult to understand your Eurasian background?

A: Many mixed heritage entertainers and sports stars are popular in Japan. Well-known figures such as Vogue model Rina Fukushi and tennis star Naomi Osaka have given Japanese of mixed heritage more prominence in the public sphere in Japan, and globally.

Individuals who have a non-Japanese parent are

called "Hafu", a twist on the English word "half". So it has become easier to explain my Eurasian roots to Japanese locals.

Q: Do you have Eurasian friends in Japan and how have you been able to share the culture, food and history of Eurasians with others?

A: I've encountered only one other Singapore Eurasian since moving to Osaka in 1994.

Usually, when I dine at some Asian or ethnic restaurant with my Japanese, American or European colleagues and friends, I'd order a dish that is a close approximate with curry debal, fried okra and babi assam (pig's feet with tamarind-based curry). After that, I'd authoritatively declare that what is served is pretty good but the Eurasian version is far more flavourful.

Q: What do you miss most about Eurasian or Singaporean culture since migrating overseas?

A: Singapore food, although Japanese food is a pretty good substitute when one is in pinch.

Q: How do you stay connected with Singapore?

A: Visiting my family, and attending my school and class reunions. Of course, there's also social media and chat groups so I'm pretty up-to-date with almost every single Singapore-themed viral video. I also tune in and listen to Singapore radio stations on my phone when exercising in the morning.

Savoury and Spicy Sehbak

Whip up this delicious pork dish with a spicy kick by **Ms Stephanie De Silva Holland**, owner of Holz Kitchen which serves authentic Eurasian cuisine.



Ingredients:

- 2 pcs pig's ears, sliced
- 300g pork belly, sliced
- 300g lean pork, sliced
- 4 tbsp black soya sauce
- 1 tbsp sugar
- 2 sticks cinnamon stick
- 4 pcs star anise
- 2 tbsp cooking oil
- 4 pcs galangal, sliced (thumb-sized)

Method:

1. Marinate pig's ears, pork belly and lean pork with soya sauce and sugar for about an hour.
2. Heat cooking oil in a pan, then add a few galangal slices, cinnamon stick and star anise.
3. Add marinated meat and simmer at low heat until it softens. Add water at gradual intervals if it gets too dry. Set aside after 30 to 45 minutes.

For Chilli Chukar (homemade chilli sauce with vinegar)

- 5 pcs fresh chilli
- 8 pcs dried chilli
- 3 pips garlic
- Ginger (half a thumb size)
- 4 tbsp vinegar
- 1 tbsp sugar
- 1 tbsp cooking oil
- Water

Method:

1. Blend both fresh and dried chillies, garlic and ginger.
2. Heat cooking oil in a pan, then add the blended mixture.
3. Add a bit of water if the resulting sauce thickens.
4. Add sugar and vinegar. Then mix and set aside.

For garnish

- Asian lettuce
- Cucumber, sliced
- Tofu, cut and fried

Final step:

Assemble lettuce, tofu and cucumber with the cooked meat. Drizzle chilli chukar on top.



Eurasian Association **FOOTBALL** CAMP 2021

22 – 24 June | 9am – 12pm

Looking for an activity for your kids during the June school holidays? The Eurasian Association is organising a football camp for Eurasian boys and girls from 6 to 11 years old.



\$150 per head

*EA will be subsidising 20% of the cost

Lion City Academy
8 Mattar Road
Singapore 387727

Scan the QR code below to register. Registration closes on 7 June.



eurasians.org.sg

Organised by



In Collaboration with



*EA is closely monitoring the Covid-19 situation and will follow the guidelines issued by the multi-ministry taskforce if this activity can proceed.



EA's EMPATHY PACKAGE

We're here to help!



For Eurasians who have lost their jobs or at least 30% of their income

Financial Assistance Scheme

A monthly cash grant of up to S\$500 (capped at three months) while you find alternative work.

Special Emergency Fund

One-time grant (capped at S\$500) if you have urgent and immediate needs.

Kindly scan the QR code to apply for the **Empathy Package** online. For queries, kindly email **Ram** at Ram@eurasians.org



Empathy Package for Eurasian Students

A cash grant of up to \$60 per month (capped at 9 months) for students who received an EA Bursary Award in 2020 and 2021. (Applicable till January 2022)*

Eligible students can apply and direct their queries to **Ariel De Silva** at Ariel@eurasians.org

*Terms and Conditions apply.