THE NEW EURASIAN

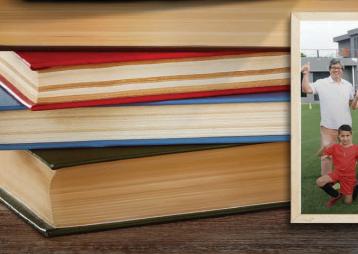
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STANDING the **TEST** TIME

Launch of the Eurasian Association's 100th Anniversary Book 'Standing the Test of Time'

Eurasian Association's **KIDS FOOTBALL CAMP** to unite Self-Help Groups

CULTURAL EXHIBITION @ NLB: Taking visitors through the Eurasian community's journey and story







The New Eurasian

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In Touch

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The new term brings opportunities for us to do more, and we stand ready for challenges ahead as we step up our community bonding efforts.

Dear EA members

I am humbled to have been elected President of the EA for the term 2022-2024. Thank you to our Patrons, Trustees and previous Management Committees (MCs) for your support and good work. I would also like to thank Dr Alexius Pereira for leading the team to success in many areas over the last two terms, one of which was the centenary celebration events in 2019.

We are extremely appreciative of our hardworking secretariat, led by General Manager Lester Low, who has done a tremendous job in supporting so many MCs over the years.

Our MC this term comprises a mix of experienced hands and two new faces who served in previous MCs. I thank Vincent Schoon, Yvonne Pereira, Angelina Fernandez, Martin Marini, Christopher Gordon, Melanie Rodrigues Smith, Danni Jay Luke Danis, Edmund Rodrigues, Percival Shepherdson and Ion Danker for continuing to serve, and welcome Jason Dendroff and Christian Eber on board.

The EA believes in nurturing a vibrant community that facilitates engagement with our fellow Singaporeans from different cultures. In April 2021, the previous MC led by Dr Alexius kickstarted deeper collaborations between Self-Help Groups (SHGs) by holding the first SHG discussion forum via Zoom. I am happy to say that MCCY has taken up EA's suggestion to hold such meetings more regularly, and set up a formal platform this year to hold annual meetings involving both MCCY and SHG leaders. We continued this momentum by organising a football camp in June with participants from EA, MENDAKI and SINDA, to bring kids from different races together through sport. It was heartening to

Share Your Stories With Us!



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

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



see all the kids enjoying themselves and at the same time, making friends.

We were happy to welcome members back to the Eurasian Community House, with several events including the launch of the EA's 100th Anniversary book Standing the Test of Time on 28 May, our Performing Arts Chapter's "Rock the Night Away" concert on 25 June, and hosting more visitors at the Eurasian Heritage Gallery. You can read about these and other events in this issue of the NewEurasian.

The new term brings opportunities for us to do more, and we stand ready for challenges ahead as we step up our community bonding efforts. We have resumed our youth outreach engagement sessions while the Family Support Services' (FSS) Home sprucing-up campaign will continue to improve the house interiors of those living in one or two room flats. We will also be hosting the second edition of our Family Tree exhibition later this year, with more Eurasian families tracing their roots. We will continue to focus on EA's key pillars of Education, FSS and Community Development, and also look at ways to raise funds to expand our programmes. I am thankful that much progress has been made in these areas by the previous committees.

There is much work to be done, to preserve, strengthen and advance the Eurasian community. We need more volunteers and I encourage all of you keen to play a part, to come forward and join us. Together, we can achieve much more.

Sandra Theseira President

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The New Eurasian

Magazine of the Eurasian Association, Singapore

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

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VOLUNTEERING WITH VERVE

While many of us have heard that 'volunteers are the backbone of any organisation', it is far less common to hear of the same volunteer serving an organisation over five decades.

Sandra Vishin Chan – with a Eurasian mother of Portuguese-German descent and a North Indian father – is one good example for any volunteer to emulate. In April, she received a Long Service Award and medal from the Scouting Chief Commissioner Desmond Chong, for 50 years of service to the Singapore Scout Association. She was an educator for over 43 years, and has written both assessment books and Primary school readers.

The NewEurasian spoke to her to find out about her years as an educator, inspiration to write books, dedication to volunteer, and if she thinks there is a key formula to keep volunteers engaged.



Sandra Vishin Chan with Dr William Wan, Vice-President of the Singapore Scouts Association.

MORE THAN 40 YEARS' DEDICATION TO TEACHING AND LEARNING

1966-1981 – Sandra joined teaching at age 17 and became a Cadet Scout Leader, Science Coordinator and the Singapore Teachers' Union representative for Changkat Changi Primary School.

"I enjoyed taking 'my boys' as I called them, for hikes, organising camps and campfires and engaging in other Scouting and charitable activities, like the annual Job Week, collection of provisions for Old Folks' Homes and toys for underprivileged children.

I organised a Mini-Zoo with the assistance of a Mandai Zoo officer, who arranged for a young orangutan and snake to be brought to our school. The teachers and pupils enjoyed taking photos with them and the other pets brought by some of the pupils, which included chickens, birds, cats, dogs etc. It was a great success and was featured in the Straits Times."

1992 – While at CHIJ Katong Primary school, she was in charge of a Slow Readers' Programme, later forming the first Red Cross unit there, while still serving in the scouts' movement. To emphasise the scouts' qualities of duty to God and country, she included the word *steadfast* on the Tampines Scouts' district badge, which she designed.

1996 – At MOE's Specialised Pupils Programmes Branch (SPPB), she and her multi-skilled team members helped schools maximise the potential of pupils with learning difficulties. **1997-2000** – In the Psychological Guidance and Services Branch (PGSB), she was a Guidance Specialist and worked with Reading Specialists and Educational Psychologists, to assist lower primary teachers in more than 12 schools. Although she had a Bachelor's degree in Education Studies, she felt a need to improve her knowledge and obtained a Master's degree in Social Science with the University of South Australia in 2000.

2001-2004 – She retired to spend more time with family, but continued in Scouting as an Assistant

District Commissioner, Assistant Public Relations Commissioner and helped out in the National Training Team at the Sarimbun Camp for a year. As she missed teaching, she returned to teach in Canossian Convent Primary School in 2002 and in the Canossian School for the Hearing Impaired in 2004.

2005-2010 – She returned to MOE as Teacher Mentor for Lower Primary teachers in about seven Primary Schools in MOE's STELLAR programme (Strategies for English Language Learning and Reading). In 2010, she left for health reasons, after more than 43 years of dedicated service.



Association.



Sandra pictured with a snake and orangutan at Changkat Changi Primary School back in 1981, as part of the Mini-Zoo she initiated with the help of a Mandai Zoo officer.

(Photos: Sandra Vishin Chan)

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HER PASSION FOR WRITING

My love for reading and writing was instilled in me from young. I was awarded the First Prize for Literature in the Teachers' Training College final exams. In the late 80's, I attended a short writing course organised by MOE for teachers.

I wrote about 20 English Language Primary 1 to 6 Assessment books and eight Primary 1 and 2 School Supplementary Readers, which were printed by Shinglee and EPB respectively. Two other books; collections of my original short stories, were also published. I intend to add more stories to them and hopefully publish these in future, and am hoping to get my short stories translated into other languages.

What inspires you to write?

I get inspired by visuals such as photographs, book illustrations, adverts, and interesting words in the newspapers or books.

LOOKING BACK, AND WHAT SHE IS DOING NOW

How often do you volunteer now?

I have been a Volunteer Adult Leader at a Primary school in Toa Payoh since 2018, where I assist a Scouter for two hours each week. I am a Life member of the Scout Guild and a scout group called Seniors in Scouting. I am a Safe Parish Ambassador at Our Lady of Perpetual Succour Church and a member of the Society of St Vincent de Paul, which supports poor and needy families. Besides that, I am also a member of the Legion of Mary and the St Joseph's Prayer Group.

What are some of your most fondly remembered moments?

I still remember the joy I felt when I received a Commendation medal from Dr Ee Peng Liang and later a Long Service medal for Scouting from President Wee Kim Wee. I also received a Long Service National Day award and medal from then-Minister for Education Teo Chee Hean. I praise the Lord that I am still fit enough to do some volunteer work at my age. It keeps me mentally alert, physically active, cheerful and purposefully occupied.



Primary School Supplementary Readers written by Sandra for Primary One and Two students.

HER ADVICE AS A WRITER AND VOLUNTEER

Advice for aspiring children's book writers?

Don't write such books if you don't love children, as that might make your job a difficult or boring one. Go to the Children's Section of your local library. Browse through the books there and borrow a few that you would find interesting, if you were a child again. Hopefully, you will be inspired to write even better stories after reading them. I wish you all the best!

Is there a key "recipe" to keep volunteers engaged in the long term?

I don't think there is a simple "recipe" for this, as we are all different in our views and expectations, but I think if volunteers are clear about, and believe in the mission and vision of an organisation, they will want to continue serving it as long as possible.

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I praise the Lord that I am still fit enough to do some volunteer work at my age. It keeps me mentally alert, physically active, cheerful and purposefully occupied.

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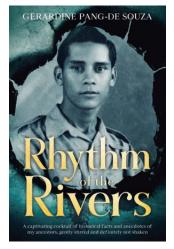
'RHYTHM OF THE RIVERS' CANCER

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Just like the Europeans have a rich and intriguing history as to how they made their way to Singapore back in the 1800s, 65-year-old Gerardine Pang nee de Souza's family has an interesting story to tell. Her family has a networked web of Eurasian heritage on both her parents' sides, including the L'angellier, Bateman, St John, and McIntyre surnames. She recently published Rhythm of the Rivers, a book that traces her family's Eurasian lineage between eight to 12 generations.



Author Gerardine Pang.



Rhythm of the Rivers costs \$35 inclusive of postage.

BOOK SYNOPSIS

This is a story of the rivers that flow in my Eurasian veins. A story of ordinary people from Europe venturing to the Far East to work, start a business and have families; of local women who married the "orang puteh" at the risk of being ostracized by their families; of Eurasian professionals who suffered discrimination in colonial Singapore yet stood tall; of loyal subjects who readily volunteered and ultimately gave the ultimate sacrifice for "King and country"; of ordinary men and women who emerged as extraordinary athletes and coaches.

A 20th century doctor who might have been murdered, a 19th century mariner braving the high seas from Portugal aboard his own ship, an 18th century beauty who married a political activist forced to change his name to escape arrest, an Assistant Colonial Secretary, a war casualty on the infamous Siam railway, traders, doctors, journalists, authors, jurors... my family.

Speaking to the NewEurasian, Geraldine shared that she experienced a number of challenges while working on the book.

"Cancer was one of them," said the mother of five sons and a daughter. "When I was told I had cancer, I realised that if I didn't make a determined effort then it would be more difficult for my children to pick up the thread in years ahead," she added.

With that in mind, she pushed on with her research, relying on anecdotes of present generation family members and verifying facts not within her knowledge or recollection before having the sources cited in the book.

"For starters, the members of the immediate generations above me had already passed on so it was down to the present generation. Apart from that, my immunity was compromised during my six-month chemotherapy treatment so I had to avoid crowds. This meant I had to do most of the research via the internet," she said.

To purchase the book, contact Gerardine at gmpang@yahoo.com or via Whatsapp at 9825 4703. Looking back at all the time, effort and some stressful moments in researching and putting together the book, Geraldine felt that it was a priceless journey and hopes to share her experience with other Eurasians who are keen to trace their lineage.

"You cannot spill all the facts that you find. You must seek wisdom as to what facts should not be revealed so as to protect the memory of those who have passed on," she said, before sharing this advice, "Most Eurasians would have relatives from the 1800s and therefore a fair chance that they might have been mentioned in the press. It needs persistent and sustained checking through maybe thousands of newspaper reports on your laptop or, in my case, on my mobile phone."

FASCINATING DISCOVERIES

- Geraldine's dad Derrick A. de Souza was Singapore's first National Race Walking coach and International Race Walking Judge appointed by the International Amateur Athletic Federation. He was conferred the Public Service Star for donating blood 50 times. By the time he had to stop donating at the age of 65 years, he had done so 218 times!
- When her dad walked her down the aisle at the Cathedral of the Good Shepherd, she was also following in the footsteps of her grandparents and both sets of great-great grandparents.
- St John's Peak in Sabah, Malaysia was named after her great-great grand uncle, Sir Spenser Buckingham St John.

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PEOPLE IN THE COMMUNITY

ARTISTRY IN HAIRSTYLING

Some call it an obsession, others might describe it an addiction. For Eurasian hairstylist Joshua Garnell, it is all about the artistry of understanding the needs of each customer when they visit one of his three hair salons in Lucky Plaza.

"I have been looking at other people's faces and hair since I was a teenager," said Joshua, 37, who owns and runs J Classic Beauty Salon, Art HairWorks Studio, and Classic Cut.

Speaking to the NewEurasian, he shared what sparked his interest in becoming a hairstylist. "As a child, I enjoyed browsing through magazines, checking out the various creative hair styles and visualising how I would style and cut a person's hair."

It was natural for him to take the next step when he turned 18 - to train professionally as a hairstylist. Joshua, who has Portuguese and Peranakan heritage, highlighted that it was a steep learning curve for him to get to where he is today as a business owner.

"There isn't a business school to teach you how to run a hair salon, there are employees to take care of and you have to keep up with the latest trends," added Joshua, who holds a black belt 2nd Dan in Taekwondo and spends his free time working out at the gym.

This is why he makes it a point to understand his customers better by getting to know them before making recommendations on the latest fashion trends, as well as suggest hairstyles to match their face shape. "Every customer is different and we do our best to meet their expectations. They will be spoilt for choice on what we can offer; haircuts, soft rebonding, hair tattoos, Brazilian Keratin, hair loss treatment, manicures, pedicures, eyelash extensions and many others," said Joshua.

With normalcy returning after a challenging two years during the Covid-19 pandemic, he feels there is finally some light at the end of the tunnel. "The Covid-19 restrictions disrupted a lot of businesses and livelihoods, and I am glad we can put that episode behind us and move forward."

If you're planning to get your hair or nails done, flash your EA membership card at any of Joshua's salons to get a 10% discount on hair and nail services.



Some of the celebrities served by Joshua (left) include local actor Bobby Tonelli (right).

Don't ever give up on your passion. There will always be challenging times to overcome.

"

Do visit J Classic Beauty Salon (#02-61), Art HairWorks Studio (#04-93), or Classic Cut (#04-33) at Lucky Plaza. Call 9871 5276 to make an appointment.



Just name the hairstyle or hair colour you'd like, and consider it done!







NUMERACY PILOT ENRICHMENT PROGRAMME

EA Education launched its first Numeracy Pilot Enrichment Programme in May this year, for students between six to eight years old. The programme was led by four EA University Scholarship recipients; Chloe Ann Stewart, Devina Krystel Ravichadran Beins, Mikael Keith Nunis, and Ian Pereira.

Through eight online sessions and two physical sessions at the Eurasian Community House, the children had the chance to make friends, and learnt how to solve simple math problems through fun games and quizzes.







Students enjoying their physical lessons at the Eurasian Community House.

66

I enjoy playing games with numbers. – Elril bin Muhammad Hairil Nonis

Students being taught math concepts through fun visuals.

SINGAPORE PRISON REINTEGRATION PROGRAMME

EA Education, in collaboration with SINDA and the Singapore Prison Service Team, held a Women's Prison Reintegration Programme in June. Through a one-day workshop for mothers conducted by Nanchiau High School Principal Siau Fong Fui, participants received information on the latest education pathways for students graduating from secondary school.

It has been my privilege to speak to the mothers and to be able to update them on the latest education developments to which they do not have access to. Hopefully, my input helps in their communication and guidance to their kids.

- Principal Siau Fong Fui



EXTERNAL GEOGRAPHIC WORKSHOP

Through a virtual external Geographic workshop on 22 June, secondary school students learnt about polar bear habitats and global warming, and how it has affected the living conditions of polar bears.

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My brother Eshton is fascinated by science. He enjoys learning about the importance of science in our daily lives. – Faith Kaitlyn Teo



Students learning about the effects of global warming online.

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A Game of Dice

Balut, a dice game, was invented by an American soldier towards the end of the second World War. The game is played with players throwing effective dice combinations to earn points, where bonus points are granted for each successful *balut* - a five-of-a-kind die throw. The aim of the game is to collect the largest number of points over six rounds of play, with the player collecting the highest overall points winning the game.



Participants enjoying their game of Balut.

36th Inter-Club Balut Competition

The first round of the 36th Inter-Club Balut Competition, returning after a two-year hiatus, was hosted by Singapore Recreation Club (SRC) on 25 May, with 17 participating teams (68 players) from six clubs. The Champion Team was Singapore Cricket Club (SCC) Team 3. SCC's Vashi Sajnani won the Highest Aggregate Scorer prize with 657 points.

EA hosted the second competition round on 29 June at the SRC Esplanade Grand Ballroom, with 60 participating players from six clubs. Jag Gill won the month of June's Highest Aggregate Scorer with 671 points. The Champion Team was NUSS Team 1.



Interclub Round one Top Team, SCC Team 3.



36th Inter club Balut Top Team, NUSS Team 1.



Balut Convenor Yvonne Pereira addressing the crowd at the 36th Inter Club Balut competition.



36th Inter Balut Top Scorer Jag Gill with Yvonne Pereira, EA's MC 2nd Vice-President.



Interclub Round one individual champion Vashi from SCC with SRC's VP Eric Tan and SRC Balut Convenor Yvonne Pereira, who is also the EA's MC 2nd Vice-President.





3rd In-House Balut Tournament

The third round of the in-house Balut tournament was held on 11 May, with Philip Cordeiro clinching the champion title for May, with 676 points. S K John claimed second prize with 663 points.

Yvonne Pereira, EA's MC 2nd Vice-President and Balut Convenor and 3rd In-house Balut champion, Philip Cordeiro.

Rocking the Night Away

Live music made a comeback on 25 June, with the Performing Arts Chapter's 'Rock the Night Away' concert. It was a night to remember, with performers The Rangers and Romito Mendoza & Ridzuan bringing the house down with participants singing along and grooving to the music.



Romito Mendoza & Ridzuan entertaining the audience with a couple of rock classics.



The Rangers had everyone on their feet.



Attendees enjoying live music and dancing to the beat.

Helping to Heal: Transforming the Mental Wellness Space

'People with mental health conditions are rare and those with such conditions are violent and dangerous.'

25-year-old Viaano Spruyt, one of the pioneer members of the EA Youth Committee and EA volunteer, seeks to debunk this and other myths about mental health. He is the founder of Huddlehumans – a global, community-based mental health start-up launched back in 2017.



25-year-old Viaano Spruyt, the founder of Huddlehumans.

Eurasian heritage?

Viaano's surname Spruyt is of Dutch origin, and his mother's side is Peranakan Chinese. His paternal greatgrandfather was a sailor dispatched to Singapore from the Netherlands, taking his son (Viaano's grandfather) with him. While his great-grandfather sadly passed on in Singapore, his grandfather stayed on and later became an official Registrar of Marriage.

Did you give up a full-time profession to start Huddlehumans and why?

I graduated in Australia with a bachelor's degree in social work and started pursuing my ambitions to become a clinical psychologist, but decided to return home to Singapore. I was one of the lucky few to have found my passion at a young age: To drive social change on a global scale, with the vision of a world where it is normal for one to have their own mental health experiences. You could say that my current full-time profession is an entrepreneur.

Two main reasons spurred me to establish Huddlehumans: Firstly, I personally experienced the trauma of trying to seek mental health support for my anxiety episodes as a teenager. When I finally mustered the courage to seek support, I was rejected by the doctor as my story was not deemed valid enough, and my parents weren't there. I can only imagine how devastating the experiences are for other youths struggling with depression, anxiety, or other mental health conditions who are trying to access mental health support in Singapore. I did not want anyone else to go through a similar experience.

Secondly, while growing up in Singapore, I had always noticed the stigma surrounding mental health. I remember hearing the stories of Woodbridge Hospital (now Institute of Mental Health) being the "home for all the crazies" and "mentally challenged" people. I was warned by others to stay away as the "deafening screams of the 'mental' patients would also cause me to be mentally unsound". People also told me that all mentally ill people belonged to either a world of crime, moral failings, poor upbringing, or all the above. This inspired me to change the mindset to one where people are supportive of one another's mental health instead of looking down on them.

How does Huddlehumans operate and is it anonymous?

Huddlehumans is currently free-to-use and operates through two community platforms; Discord and Telegram, to provide a safe, affirming, and nonjudgemental portal for those with mental health experiences to share their experiences round-the-clock and receive relevant support and resources from other users. Huddlehumans is currently raising funding with interested investors aligned with our core values in creating a revolutionary mental health app.

Anyone with an interest in mental health is welcome to join our communities fully anonymously, with just nicknames or aliases. We consider that mentally distressed people do not like to be identified or pigeonholed, and we are here to address their issues and support them in mental health struggles.

What are some challenges you have faced in running Huddlehumans?

The beginnings of a start-up are not easy. One challenge I faced was addressing the technical aspects of mental health. I adopted the strategy of getting mentors by initiating an advisory panel to give my team expert mental health guidance. On my advisory panel sits a qualified multi-disciplinary team, including eminent psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, and counsellors around the world. It was also a group I could reach out to for help should I encounter any roadblocks in the mental health space, and to help keep up with the latest industry developments.

Another significant challenge was handling the volatility of a start-up. You never know what to do right at the start, so I just did everything - from graphic designing, to coding, to holding workshops – just about everything within my ability to get Huddlehumans recognised. This also meant venturing into unfamiliar fields to develop skills and elevate the start-up. I guess deep down if you really want something, you will do everything in your power to make it work.

How experienced are the team and moderators?

On top of our highly qualified advisory panel, most of our team are certified in psychiatry, psychology, counselling, and social work. While some of our moderators are qualified in these areas, it is not a criterion to join the team, as they were chosen due to their values and peer-support skills. That said, our moderators from all over the world moderate our community activities round-the-clock. They were chosen through a stringent selection process, as mental health is a very sensitive space. We also have trainings, standard operating procedures, and other processes to make sure they are well-equipped to deal with trolls, suicidal ideations, dissent, or disharmony that may arise. We also have ground rules, disclaimers, and a gentle structure to remind our users not to stray from the main discourse of mental health.

Do you oversee your international Huddlehumans team?

Yes, but I would like to emphasise that I work very closely with the heads of each continent to adapt our mental health initiatives to the different traditions and cultures of this world, as different cultures can interpret and approach mental health very differently.

How do you see Huddlehumans making a difference in society?

From day one, Huddlehumans has always been mental health focused as we incorporate a unique sociocultural, familial, and holistic approach towards mental health care. Our vision has always been to reach a world where mental health experiences are not looked down on but normalised as a part of life's journey. We strive to uphold our mission by providing a safe, affirming, and non-judgemental platform for people to share their mental health experiences; breaking stigma surrounding mental health and raising awareness on the importance of taking care of our mental wellness.

What is your vision for Huddlehumans in the next decade?

My vision is for Huddlehumans to be the largest, yet most meaningful mental health community in the world where people with mental health experiences can easily find support, connect with others, and build strong social support systems in their lives without feeling the fear of being judged. I am confident Huddlehumans will play a leading role in enacting much-needed social change on a global scale by restructuring the perception of mental health within the next decade.

Viaano with HuddleHumans international team members from Japan and Morocco.

What do you think are five misconceptions about mental illness?

- Mental health issues are permanent. Recovery means different things to different people. Recovering from mental illness may include not only getting better, but also achieving a full and satisfying life. Hence, there are ups and downs, new discoveries, and sometimes even setbacks. This is all part and parcel of recovery.
- People with mental health conditions are rare and those with such conditions are violent and dangerous.

This is a harmful myth. Violence attracts attention in the media and has been over-sensationalised, ultimately increasing and deepening the stigma attached to mental health.

3. Mental Health problems are a sign of weakness. Only people who are mentally or physically weak will develop mental health issues. Mental health disorders are illnesses that can arise from multiple, complex



Viaano on HuddleHumans Time Mental Health Podcast.



The Huddlehumans Team (from left): Tayla, Clifford, Wilson, Viaano & Nicholas.

factors, and are not signs of poor character. In fact, fighting a mental health condition takes a great deal of strength.

 People with mental health problems can just "get over it" if they stop feeling sorry for themselves or if they just work hard.

> There are many reasons mental illnesses develop and a person cannot necessarily control all the risk factors involved. Once a person has a mental health condition, it's not a matter of just "talking themselves out of it". Everyone has an individualised experience to mental health.

5. Children and younger people don't have to face mental health issues. This is a myth. In a report by World Health Organisation (WHO), around one in five of the world's children and adolescents have a mental disorder. WHO has also reported that about half of mental disorders begin before the age of 14.

Viaano at the Time for Mental Health podcast started by Huddlehumans, where friends and occasional guests open up on topics surrounding mental health.





Family Support Services ready to serve the community

Family Support Services (FSS) is excited to re-engage its clients and improve their lives, as it prepares to resume its social programmes in the second half of 2022.

Here is a run-down of their plans:

'HOME SPRUCING-UP CAMPAIGN'

What is it?

A home improvement programme initiated by a well-wisher who made a generous donation to the FSS seeking to improve the homes of the underprivileged. The FSS remains deeply indebted to the generous donors who made this project possible and welcomes those who would like to step forward to contribute to this cause.

Who benefits?

20 one and two room HDB rental flat homes were identified for improvement. 10 homes were completed before the Covid-19 pandemic, with the target to complete all homes by September.

What works will be done?

Full interior painting works, replacement of cracked toilet bowls, cracked electrical plugs and faulty electrical trunking. Occupants may also opt to have a ceiling-suspended laundry drying frame installed, to eliminate the dangerous practice of hanging laundry on wooden poles outside the window.

The contractors will also look out for potential safety hazards within the home such as slippery floors and unstable tenant-installed structures which could collapse and injure occupants.

'BEFRIENDERS' HOME VISITS

What is it?

A group of FSS volunteers who make house-to-house visits to check on the well-being of occupants and update the FSS committee on hardships that these people might be facing. They then make recommendations to provide support to alleviate the existing situation.

Who benefits?

Each FSS client is assigned a befriender. On average, the FSS volunteers will make approximately 50 home visits a month.

ANNUAL CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION

What is it?

A joyous celebratory Christmas lunch for FSS clients, including Eurasian families with children. There is much excitement about the revival of this annual lunch, which has not taken place for two years. This year, the FSS plans to hold the function in the EA Multipurpose Hall in early December with 100 FSS clients.



Heritage Spotlight

Members of the **Australian High Commission** visited the Eurasian Heritage Gallery (EHG) on 6 May. First Secretary Lauren Williams and Second Secretary Dharini Velummylum were given a tour by EHG docent Melanie Rodrigues Smith, who shared the history of the Eurasian community in Singapore and their contributions.



From left: Jacqueline Peeris (EA Secretariat), Yvette Smith, Lauren Williams (First Secretary) and Dharini Velummylum (Second Secretary) from the Australian High Commission, with EA Management Committee member and EHG docent Melanie Rodrigues Smith.

Over 80 **Yishun Secondary School** students also dropped by the Eurasian Community House over two days as part of their learning journey, and experienced a guided EHG tour by docents Melanie Rodrigues Smith, Henry Cordeiro, Nancy Fobrogo, Richard Ong and Sharon Miller.



Students enjoying their learning journey.



The students captivated by docent Henry Cordeiro's WWII stories.



Students having fun learning the Jinkli Nona.

A third session of the CultuRediscover Tour kicked off as part of a pilot run in collaboration with the EA and the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth (National Integration Council), with participants guided by the ladies from Yarn@EA to create personalised totebags. This was followed by a guided tour of the Eurasian Heritage Gallery (EHG) and a dialogue session facilitated by EHG docents Gerardine Donough-Tan and Richard Ong, for participants to reflect on ways to contribute to Singapore's multi-cultural fabric.



Participants with their personalised totebags.



Gerardine Donough-Tan (second from left) sharing details on Bahau.

HERITAGE & CULTURE

60 participants attended three sold out sessions of the specially curated '**For Gold, Glory and God'** tours, as part of the National Heritage Board's (NHB) Singapore Heritage Festival organised by the EHG, where they learned about the journey of the Portuguese, Dutch and British to Asia. Led by docents Hafiz Rashid and Tan Hui Kheng, participants embarked on a 'Passport to Discovery' quiz with answers found within the EHG, before appreciating some sugee cake and tea.



Participants were surprised to learn from docent Tan Hui Kheng (far left) that the Kebaya Kumpridu (long blouse) worn by Eurasian women in the 1500s was influenced from the Kebaya worn by the Malay women in Malacca.



Docent Hafiz Rashid (far left) sharing details on Eurasians' European ancestry.

EHG docents Henry Cordeiro and Nancy Fobrogo hosted 31 **Anglo-Chinese School (ACS) Independent** students who were doing a project on Regional Studies, which covered the history and culture of the Eurasian community in Singapore.



Docent Nancy Fobrogo (far right) talking about the commonalities between Eurasian and Peranakan food, both being very Singaporean.

NHB's Children's Season in June at the EHG welcomed children 12 years and below for some fun activities such as storytelling and games, followed by sugee cake and fruit punch. Each child received a Eurasian Fun Pack and magnetic bookmark souvenir.



Adj Asst Prof Leo Wei Qiang from Singapore General Hospital and his wife and children with the Eurasian Fun Pack during their visit to the EHG on 8 June.



Children excitedly waiting their turn to emboss their stickers at one of the EHG's embossing stations.

Other guests over the quarter included various families with **persons living with dementia** and over 120 foreign students from **Trinity International College** doing their diploma in hospitality.





Foreign students from Trinity International College.



Docent Samantha Santa Maria animatedly telling the story of The Marvellous Sugee Cake, a book by Quek Hona Shin. to the 10 children.

Meet the People Behind the Scenes

The EA would like to thank the Heritage Committee and the EHG docents for their contributions and efforts in creating more awareness about the Eurasian community.



From left: Tejas Hirah, Sharon Miller, Cedric Pereira, Alyssa Minjoot, Percival Shepherdson (chairperson), Samantha Santa Maria, Gerardine Donough-Tan, Jacqueline Peeris (EA Secretariat), Misha Monteiro. Not in photo: Christian Eber, Geoffrey Morris.



Front from left: Misha Monteiro, Hafiz Rashid, Alyssa Minjoot, Samantha Santa Maria, Nancy Fobrogo, Percival Shepherdson, Tan Hui Kheng, Sharon Miller, Melanie Rodrigues Smith. Back from left: Ramesh Shahdadpuri, Richard Ong, Long Chin Peng, Tay Siew Khim, Trevor Nerva, Gerardine Donough-Tan, Cedric Pereira, Alison Dragon, Vincent Schoon, Jacqueline Peeris. Docents not in photo: Cecilia Martin, Henry Cordeiro, Geraldine Gomes, Petrina Edema, Valerie Scully.

Virtual Tour of the 2021 Singapore Eurasian Family History Exhibition

The 2021 Singapore Eurasian Family History Exhibition virtual tour featuring the stories and family trees of more than 20 Singapore Eurasian families is up on the EA website.



Flipbook at the Eurasian Heritage Gallery showing the family trees and other panels from the exhibition.

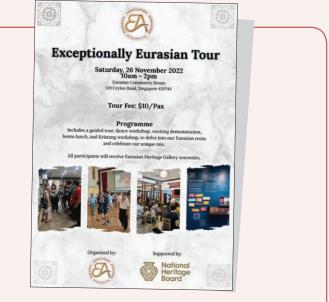


Scan the QR code to visit the virtual gallery.



Singapore Eurasian Family History Exhibition

More than 25 family trees of different surnames will be featured at the second instalment of the Singapore Eurasian Family History Exhibition, to be held at the Eurasian Community House multi-purpose hall from 24 September to 23 October 2022.



Exceptionally Eurasian Tour

EA members, students and families can look forward to going on an *exceptionally Eurasian tour* organised by the Heritage committee during the year-end holidays on 26 November, Saturday, from 10am to 2pm.

The programme will include a guided tour, dance workshop, cooking demonstration, bento lunch and Kristang workshop, to delve into Eurasian roots and celebrate our unique mix.

EA Cultural Exhibition@NLB

The EA Cultural Exhibition@NLB was launched on 16 June by NLB Assistant Chief Executive Gene Tan.

The exhibition which was held over four weeks, was specially curated into two sections to take visitors through the Eurasian community's journey and story.

10 panels detailed the Eurasian history and culture, such as attire, traditions, weddings, cuisine, prominent Eurasians, a typical Eurasian home, a wooden puzzle of St Joseph's Church, and an interactive cookbook with details on Eurasian cuisine and spices. The other section showcased 26 family tree panels and six other panels featuring the history of the EA, how Eurasians were forced to relocate to Bahau during WWII, a tribute to the late Dr Barry Pereira, as well as a showcase of Eurasian couples celebrating their 50-year golden wedding anniversary, and Eurasians above 90-years-old.

Over the four weekends of the month-long exhibition, visitors were also entertained with live music performances by talented Eurasian musicians and friends; Shanice Hedger and Inez Yuen, Aliff Sharil, Peter Diaz, Trevor and Jared Martens Wong, Jill and Glenn, and The Drawing Board.



EA President Sandra Theseira (far left) presenting a copy of the EA100 book to Mr Gene Tan (centre) together with EA Heritage Committee Chairperson Percival Shepherdson (far right).



EA President Sandra Theseira giving her welcome address.



Performances at the opening of the EA Exhibition@NLB on 16 June.



Gerardine Donough-Tan (far right) sharing interesting details on the Clarke family tree.



Visitors could peep into an interactive exhibit showing the interior of a typical Eurasian house.



Sharon Miller (far right) sharing stories on the Eurasian culture panels.



Puzzle of St Joseph's Church.



Visitors could flip the interactive cookbook to find different Eurasian spices and recipes.



All smiles following the opening of the EA Exhibition@NLB on 16 June.

Launch of the Eurasian Association's 100th Anniversary Book **Standing the Test of Time'**

The EA launched its 100th Anniversary Book "Standing the Test of Time" at the Eurasian Community House on 28 May. Transport Minister S. Iswaran, the Minister representing Eurasians in the Cabinet, was the Guest-of-Honour. EA Patron George Yeo, who represented the Eurasians in Cabinet from 1992 to 2011, also attended.

Over its 100 years of service to the community, the EA has survived difficult times but returned stronger and with a clearer vision and purpose. The book tells the story of the EA's journey since inception in 1919; focusing on key events such as how it served as a voice for the community through the war years, struggles through independence, nation building efforts in the 1970s and 80s, becoming a Self-Help group in 1994 and how it has worked to nurture community bonds and help the less fortunate, until its centenary celebrations in 2019. The book also highlights the vital role that the EA's volunteers have played in helping the less privileged throughout the years.

Prominent Singaporeans such as President Halimah Yacob and Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong are also quoted in the book, sharing their thoughts on the key role EA has played in nation building as part of Singapore's multiracial society.

In his book message, Minister Iswaran paid tribute to the Eurasians for their contributions to Singapore over the years. He said, "Our Eurasian community is quintessentially Singaporean, the embodiment of a diverse heritage that is integral to the vibrant tapestry of our society. Though small in number, Eurasians have left an indelible mark on many aspects of Singapore life. So it is fitting that as we commemorated Singapore's bicentennial, we also recognised the significant contributions of the Eurasian community to the growth and development of Singapore."

Giving his advice for the EA as it charts its journey forward, EA Patron George Yeo said: "The Eurasian community was one of the four interlocking arms which symbolised the founding of independent Singapore. If we are not to be progressively subsumed under 'Others', we must continuously improve ourselves and contribute to Singapore's well-being. And be seen doing so."

The hardcover commemorative book can be purchased at \$50, or a PDF e-book downloaded for free at **https://www.eurasians.sg/books**.

BOOK FACTSHEET

Donors: Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth through the 'Care and Share' Fund National Heritage Board

Book Committee: Chairperson: Benett Theseira Timothy de Souza Gerry de Silva Edward D'Silva Alexius A. Pereira Julia D'Silva Writers: Melody Zaccheus and Janice Tai

Published by: Straits Times Press

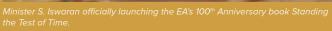


EA President Sandra Theseira giving her opening address at the EA 100th Anniversary book launch



Guest-of-Honour Minister S. Iswaran addressing the community at the EA 100th Anniversary book launch







Guest-of-Honour Minister S. Iswaran being presented with the EA 100th Anniversary book and sugee cake as a token of appreciation. From left: EA President Sandra Theseira, Minister S. Iswaran, EA100 Book Committee Chair Benett Theseira.



The Book Committee and former and current EA Trustees with GOH Minister Iswaran at the EA100th Anniversary book launch. From left: Gerry de Silva, Dr Alexius Pereira, Julia D'Silva, EA President Sandra Theseira, Minister S. Iswaran, Benett Theseira, Timothy de Souza, Edward D'Silva.



Emcees Tejas Hirah and Alyssa Minjoot at the EA 100th Anniversarv book launch.



Transport Minister S. Iswaran (centre) with (from left) EA General Manager Lester Low, EA President Sandra Theseira, EA Trustee and EA100 Book Committee Chair Benett Theseira, and EA Management Committee member Percival Shepherdson.



Guests enjoying the buffet lunch at the EA 100th



Standing from left: People's Association Group Director of Engagement Chia Tze Yee, EA Trustee & EA100 Book Committee Chair Benett Theseira, Minister S. Iswaran, Portuguese Ambassador Mario Duarte, EA Potron George Yeo, Member-of-Parliament Christopher de Souza. Seated from left: Juthika Ramanathan (Family of the late S R Nathan; EA Patron), EA President Sandra Theseira, Dutch Ambassador Margriet Vonno, Member of Parliament Joan Pereira



An In-Depth look into 'The Awakening'

"Standing the Test of Time" provides insights into the events that ignited renewed drive among the Eurasian community that they held a stake in Singaporean life and on the national level, and that the Eurasian community, while small, was passionate enough to speak up for the greater good.

In this NewEurasian issue, we delve deeper into these events with information from personal first-hand accounts from the people behind the scenes of the actions that led to this defining breakthrough in the EA's journey.

These excerpts from the book set the scene:

[From page 42] "In 1980, Dr Catherine Lim published a collection of short stories in a volume entitled Or Else, the Lightning God and Other Stories. One of the stories, called "Kenneth Jerome Rozario", portrayed Eurasian characters as being pleasure-loving, good-time Charlies. The story went relatively unnoticed until 1988, when it was selected as a text for the O-Level literature examinations. Mr Victor Olsen (EA President 1989–1991) recalled that his son, Chad, had come home from school one day, saying that he was being taught in literature class that Singaporeans viewed Eurasians as "lazy, good-for-nothings".

"Kenneth Jerome Rozario" would go on to become the lightning rod that revitalised both the Eurasian community and the Eurasian Association, Singapore (EA). This was because Eurasians were deeply unhappy that they had been stereotyped negatively in this story. They were also upset by the manner in which the text was being taught to students.

Mrs Evelyn Rodrigues, an experienced literature teacher of 28 years, was initially eager to teach the book to her class. The events that were to come were from a spark ignited by Evelyn, inspiring many others from the Eurasian community to take action. To Evelyn, the depiction of a schoolboy from a broken home, with negative characteristics attributed not to one individual, but taken as representative of all the Eurasian community with offensive generalisations and racial stereotypes, was unacceptable. Evelyn helped her students understand the racist elements within the text, while encouraging them to use other mandated texts in their exams. She also took further steps to share her concerns with other Eurasian community members – including Victor and Joy Olsen, John and Ann Oehlers, Burton and Maureen Westahout, and a few other friends. Not surprisingly, the group was appalled that Eurasians had been parodied as 'pleasure-loving' and 'lazy' to the exclusion of all else, with the general theme that Eurasians were addicted to vice with no sense of responsibility.

This group took action to raise this officially, with a letter from Ann Oehlers to the then Minister for Education, stating the unsuitability of the book.

Victor Olsen and Gerry de Silva also approached the education minister, seeking to discuss whether the book should continue being used in the curriculum. Some 1988 EA MC members felt their "hands were tied" to get involved due to their then government employment, but eventually gave support to the cause. These members included Kenny Eber, Willy Fox, Ronnie Barth, Austin Pereira, Aloysius D' Rozario, Horace Pinto and David Grosse, who later also became mentors to their younger successors.

Meeting with the Ministry

The Ministry called a meeting which was attended by John and Ann Oehlers, Victor and Joy Olsen, Mr Kenny Eber (then EA President), several EA MC members, and MOE officers. The Eurasian representatives provided reasons why the book was inappropriate as prescribed O-level text. Directly following the meeting, no decision was made regarding the removal of the book from O-level text.

Revitalised Recruitment drive

The controversy set in motion a passionate drive among this diverse group who banded together to form a team with a mission, to revive and untap the potential of the Eurasian community and elect a management committee who could bring the EA to the next level. In a concerted effort, Burton Westerhout and Evelyn Rodrigues led a membership enrolment drive by canvassing the Eurasian community through house visits throughout Eurasian dominated neighbourhoods, raising awareness and enrolling new members.

That same year in 1989, the EA Annual General Meeting was held at the Phoenix Hotel with an expected attendance of 10 to 12 members. Instead, thanks to the team's efforts, nearly 100 new members turned up in a wave of enthusiasm, to vote for the new management committee. 36-yearold Victor Olsen became the youngest EA president elected to lead the team and usher in a new era for EA to be the steadfast, committed representative of all Eurasians. EA membership later increased from just over 100 in 1989 to nearly 800 in the same year, rising to 1,245 members by 1991.

The group of Eurasians who played a vital role in revitalising and uplifting the Eurasian community and helping to correct this misrepresentation of the Eurasians, later became known as the Spirit of '89 team. Their drive and leadership helped lead the EA to where it is today - one that embraces and supports the less fortunate, supports young Eurasians in their education journey, preserves Eurasian traditions, and helps Eurasians remember who they are in a changing world. It is also worth a mention that some time after the 1989 EA management team was elected, the Ministry updated that due to a rotation of texts, the book would be withdrawn as prescribed literature text from 1991.



In food paradise Singapore where we love our multi-cultural cuisine, Campur Nasi Padang, a family business which was recently opened in April this year, lives true to its name by offering a mix of Eurasian and Muslim cuisine under one roof. *Campur* is a malay word pronounced 'cham-poh' which means a combination or mix of.

Just like the delicious mix of food it serves, Campur is a family business, set up by a family with mixed Eurasian and Malay heritage.

Do visit Campur and flash your EA membership card to enjoy a complimentary drink or dessert of the day with any meal purchased.







Corned Beef Stew recipe

If you love the salty flavour of corned beef, this dish is perfect for you to try. It can be enjoyed on its own or with staples such as rice and bread.

SERVES 4-6

Recipe and photos from Campur Nasi Padang

INGREDIENTS

- 100g butter
- 2 Tbsp vegetable oil
- 1 large red onion, peeled and finely chopped
- 3 cloves
- 1 stick cinnamon
- 1.5I water
- 2 carrots, peeled and cut into chunks
- 3 potatoes, peeled and cut into chunks
- 5 Tbsp breadcrumbs
- Salt and ground black pepper, to taste
- 1/2 cabbage, rinsed and cut into chunks
- 1 tin corned beef, cut into cubes

GARNISH

- Crisp-fried shallots
- Fresh celery

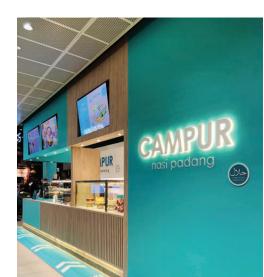
METHOD

- 1. Melt butter in a pot over medium heat then mix with oil.
- 2. Add chopped onions and fry for 10 minutes.
- 3. Add cloves and cinnamon and fry for 5 minutes or until the onion turns golden brown.
- 4. Add water and bring to the boil over high heat.
- 5. Lower heat, then add carrots and potatoes and allow to boil for 5 minutes.
- 6. Add breadcrumbs, salt and ground black pepper to taste.
- 7. Add cabbage and corned beef cubes and boil for another 5 minutes.
- 8. Dish out and garnish stew with fried shallots and fresh celery before serving.

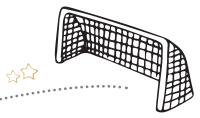
https://www.campursg.com

Djitsun Mall Bedok (beside Bedok Mall)
445 Bedok North Street 1 #01-05
Singapore 469661





Eurasian Association's **KIDS FOOTBALL CAMP** to unite Self-Help Groups



Schoolmates Stefan Danker and Christian Cruz D Penha geared up in their EA red attire and took to the field on 21 June, awaiting the launch of the inaugural three-day EA Football Camp held at the Lion City Sailors (LCS) Football Academy.

The Primary 3 students from St Gabriel's are die-hard football fans, and they were joined by fellow nine-year-old Nathaniel Twohill from St Joseph's Institution Junior, with two objectives any kid can relate to - have lots of fun and make new friends.

Said Nathaniel, who usually plays rugby and is trying out football, "I thought I'd give football a try. My mum told me it's the first time the EA is organising this football camp with other children so it will be great to get to know boys and girls from other races."

He was joined by other young participants from the Eurasian community and fellow Self-Help Groups (SHG) MENDAKI and SINDA for the three-day camp under the watchful eyes of the coaches from LCS Football Academy.

Following an Institute of Policy Studies and racial harmony advocacy group OnePeople.sg survey in 2018 which found that more Singaporeans had close friends of another race than five years earlier in 2013, this initiative by the EA aimed to bring children together to communicate and make friends while playing together as a team, and help them gain a better understanding of one another's race and culture.

With a sign-up total of 33 participants, EA President Sandra Theseira felt it was a good start to more future collaborations with the other SHGs. She said, "The EA has always believed in the importance of nurturing trust and friendships across diverse communities. As developing intercultural understanding starts from a young age, we organised this football camp to bring children from different races together through sports. We hope that this will catalyse more partnerships with our other Self-Help Groups going forward."



Holding blue jersey, from left: MENDAKI Director of Finance Muhammad Fithri Daud, EA President Sandra Theseira, SINDA CEO Anbarasu Rajendran and LCS CEO Chew Chun-Liang at the launch of EA's football camp on 21 June.



EA participants with EA General Manager Lester Low, EA President Sandra Theseira, EA 1st Vice-President Vincent Schoon and EA Management Committee member Ion Danker.

She was joined by SINDA Chief Executive Anbarasu Rajendran, MENDAKI Director of Finance Muhammad Fithri Daud and LCS Chief Executive Chew Chun-Liang at the launch of the camp.

It was non-stop fun for the participants on the pitch, and the EA's Ryan Daniyal Tunbridge hopes there will be more camps in future. "I love football. I wish to have more soccer programmes for the next school holiday. I've made a new friend too and I hope to see him again," said nine-yearold Ryan, who is from Damai Primary.





Participants from the three SHGs were mixed and put through some drills by the LCS Football Academy coaches

Added Mrs Galloyt, mother of 12 and 11-year-olds Jack and Arthur Galloyt from East Spring Primary, "Both Jack and Arthur mentioned the great time they had and getting to make new friends. They are asking when the next session is. It is really a good initiative by the EA to organise this event."

The EA would also like to thank the Education Sub-Committee for sponsoring the participation of nine Eurasian Bursary students.

Parents who are keen to register their children for future football camps can email: **Desmond@eurasians.org**



It's a wrap - participants with their medals at the end of the camp.

