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May 16-31, 2011

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Hainanese Community Woos Youth Through Social Networks . . .



Qiong Hai Association House.



May 2011. Qiong Hai 57th Anniversary with members from KL, Penang and Perak.

The Perak Qiong Hai Association, one of four Hainan Associations in Ipoh, is updating its image by creating an account on popular social networking site Facebook, garnering over 300 friends in a record two months. "Actually there were so many enquiries, we were overwhelmed. We did not anticipate the response," said Alice Chim the media officer for the association who created the page.

Continued on page 2

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Flurry of Interest for All Things Hainanese



The enquiries posed online were looking for other Hainanese acquaintances from the same village, where to learn to speak Hainanese and sharing of Hainanese recipes. Chim also realised that suddenly a lot of Hainanese wanted to visit Hainan.

Ipo Echo met up with the President of the Perak Qiong Hai Association, Mr Ho Koon Kan to understand the background of the community and its association.

Four Hainan Associations in Ipoh

The parent body is the Perak Hainan Association. Apart from the Perak Qiong Hai Association, there are Perak Heng Seng Association whose members were involved in opera and Chinese music culture, and Perak Kheng Khiau Shin Hau.

“Qiong Hai is actually a province in Hainan but had a substantial number of members located in Ipoh. Hence they decided to have their own association.”

According to Ho, the Hainanese were the last community from China to migrate to Nanyang (Southeast Asia) to escape the turmoil in mainland China. Arriving last from the island of Hainan to Malaya at the beginning of the 20th century they initially settled along the coast and Hainanese communities are noted in Johore, Malacca, Klang and Langkawi, though some have been diluted due to migration.

Arriving late meant that much of the larger economic pie, such as tin and plantations, had been penetrated by the other Chinese communities like the Hakka, Cantonese and Hokkien.

Making a Living/Cari Makan

Hence the community ventured into operating coffee shops. Although at that time it could not be compared to working in the tin mines, one could still make a few cents from each cup of coffee, an area the other communities were not keen to explore.

In Ipoh the community concentrated their presence at Old Town especially along Leech Street (now Jalan Bandar Timah) from where began the spread of the Kopi Tiam breakfast or traditional breakfast of our infamous Ipoh white coffee complete with toast with egg or *kaya*.

Many Ipohites will be familiar with the coffee shop names of Nam Heong, Sin Yoon Loong and Sun Yuan Foong, all popular Hainanese Kopi Tiam outlets along Jalan Bandar Timah for over 70 years while a block away is Nam Wah & Co, a Hainanese coffee bean roaster that has been supplying coffee powder to Ipoh for over 50 years.

Another area where the early Hainanese ventured into was to become housekeepers for the Colonial British Administrators, where they picked up tips on western cuisine. In later years these housekeepers were recommended to look after the rest houses around the



Qiong Hai President with students of education incentives

May 2011.
Acknowledging B.Sc graduate Ngan Loe Wah



K.M. Wong from Sin Yoon Loong coffee shop Old Town. The family has been serving breakfast for over 70 years

country. One such Hainanese Lim Tock Hee operated Ipoh Railway Station Hotel providing quality service for decades.

Eventually these ‘cookies’ (as they were known in those days) found other employment at clubs and establishments like the FMS and YMCA in Ipoh. Eventually the name Hainanese became synonymous with good oriental food.

One Hainanese recipe that found its way from Hainan Island to Malaya was the Hainanese Chicken Rice. In Malaya it was originally a dish served during Chinese New Year but it subsequently made its way to coffee shops nationwide.

Focus on Education

Once the communities had established themselves they set out to ensure their communities became educated “in order to be prepared to take advantage of economic opportunities when available,” said Ho.

In the 50s the Qiong Hai association initiated a fund raising effort for their community and 50 years ago started handing out education incentives to the young in their community and subsequently assisted with examination fees. In 1976, the association started their loans for tertiary education and to date “close to 100 graduates have benefited from the assistance”.

The Perak Qiong Hai Association has maintained this practice of acknowledging the educational talent of its young members for 50 of its 57 years as an association and it is still reaching out but with more efforts now to bond its members. Hence the setting up of the Facebook account.

For Ho the most exciting part of the Facebook action was that they had connected with the portion of the community that was computer savvy, youthful and more importantly, young. “The young people today cannot relate their feelings and ideas during a face to face meeting but will easily say a lot more on Facebook,” said Ho excitedly.

In early May, the Perak Qiong Hai Association, held a dinner to mark their 57th anniversary. Besides the association officials and members, their invited guests included the 8 young graduates who had returned from outstation and overseas.

A fortnight earlier at their association house along Jalan Theatre, Ipoh, 60 young students were presented education incentives in the form of token monetary rewards for getting good results in their school examinations. The students were given extra if they excelled in Chinese studies.

A lot of the Hainanese in Malaysia now are 2nd generation residents said Ho, an engineering consultant by profession and admitted that he is one of them.

The positive fact about education is that a lot of the Hainanese children are now professionals in a wide variety of fields from engineers and doctors to successful business persons. However there is a drawback as the educated children are “not bothered to take over” the coffee shop outlets from their parents.

Community Bond

An aspect of the Qiong Hai Association constitution allows the girls from the community who marry another dialect to still be entitled to the education incentives for their children. Another amendment to their constitution 2 years ago even allows affiliation to the association despite marrying someone from another race. All these initiatives “enables the members to maintain their link to their community,” explained Ho.

Of more concern to Ho is the loss of their dialect. He explained that 30 years ago when Mandarin was being promoted, “it unwittingly eliminated the bond in the community, its dialect. Now every community speaks Mandarin but when you mention *Suukee* a Hainanese word which means ‘same clan’ to another Hainanese the meeting becomes “more warm and meaningful”.

During the presentation of education incentives this month, Ho, instead of giving advice to his young audience posed a question to them for a change: “what is it that You want from the association?”

Ho apparently got his answer when several of the children logged into the Facebook account that same morning to be “friends” with the association.

Footnote: Controversial Malaysian Rapper Namewee is Hainanese and has come out with a Hainanese song appropriately titled “*Suukee suukee*”.



Chan Chuen Seng 2nd generation Hainanese serving Hainanese chicken rice since the 50s at Rasa Sayang Restaurant Theatre Street

IPOH **echo**

From the Editor's Desk

● by Fathol Zaman Bukhari

Storm in an Ipoh Tea Cup

There seemed to be a strong resentment among members against the committee for a multitude of reasons. The one which had everyone up in arms was the issue of CCTV within the club's premises...

I have never considered annual general meetings of clubs and non-governmental organisations of significance unless it warrants my presence for a specific reason. However, the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Royal Ipoh Club on Sunday, April 17 was something else. I had felt the undercurrent of discontent building up among the members who were piqued by the way the management committee, helmed by Stewart Hoo, managed Ipoh's iconic club.

As I had precious little to do that fateful Sunday, I drove up to the club to see the action first-hand. I was forewarned by my good friend, Rajeindram (Raj) that "sparks would fly". Curiosity kills the cat. My presence at the meeting that Sunday was not for reason of expedience but to see sparks fly.

I had been to a couple of the club's AGMs in the past but had never anticipated such a huge crowd. The car park was filled. I parked my car in front of the old Town Hall and had to walk some distance to the club.

When I signed in there were 125 members ahead of me. I collected my voting card



and proceeded to Idris Bar for a drink. Raj was already there. He had a file in his hand and wasted no time to explain what it was all about. "I want to raise this issue about ISO9001/2008. Why must the club be so graded when they can't even quote the right by-laws when issuing warning letters to members?" Letters to debtors, according to Raj, had alluded to a regulation concerning pets in the club. "It's ridiculous," Raj protested. I saw a few more members with ominous-looking files in their hands. They must have similar problems with the management, I assumed.

The President called the meeting to order as the time crept past 12 noon. Members began to trickle into Azlan Shah Hall, where the meeting was held. As soon as Stewart finished his opening remarks, senior member, Jerry Francis, questioned the management's choice of date for the AGM. "This is Easter Sunday. Why pick this day to hold the AGM? Doesn't the committee realise it is an important religious festival for the Christians?" he asked.

Before Stewart could reply, past president, Ramanathan, enquired why no mention was made of members who had passed away? "The meeting should begin with a minute's silence for the departed. That's the norm," he reminded. Stewart acceded. A minute's silence was observed.

No sooner had this been done, Ramanathan was on the floor microphone again. "Is this AGM valid?" he asked. "I am told that the ROS has initiated actions to deregister the club due to non-compliance of members' request for an extra-ordinary meeting," he retorted. Stewart took time to explain the exchanges he had had with the Registrar of Society official over the infraction. "The matter has been resolved. I've replied to the ROS," he answered. "Why were members not told?" Ramanathan interjected.

Judging from the questions raised that afternoon, there seemed to be a strong resentment among members against the management committee for a multitude of reasons. The one which had everyone up in arms was the issue of CCTV (close-circuit television) within the club's premises. Ramanathan voiced his objections and alluded to the extra-ordinary meeting which was turned down by the President for some flimsy reasons.

The existence of hidden cameras, located at points known only to the committee, was central to members' dissatisfaction. When a show of hands was made almost all voted for the cameras' removal.

The other major grouse was the president's inaction over a fracas involving a member of his committee. Before the situation could turn ugly the said member resigned and walked away. It saved him from future embarrassment as said member was returned unopposed to the committee.

Democratic values need to be upheld, especially in a social club which carries a "Royal" tag. The erosion of these values, either by commission or omission, will impact members the way it had affected those at the AGM that Sunday. In spite of all the rumblings, grumblings and swearing, good sense eventually prevailed.

I wish newly elected President, Doctor Kanagasabai and his committee, a fruitful term ahead. The pitfalls of the past should be avoided. Members' interests must be protected not dismissed under very dubious circumstances. The past committee had undoubtedly done a wonderful job but in doing so it had overstepped the boundary. Its "success" had got the better of the committee members and that was their undoing.

Jom! Let's Do a 'Wasiat'

● by Peter Lee

Jalil passed away without a 'Wasiat' or Muslim Will 5 years ago. He leaves behind his wife, two sons and two daughters who are in their thirties. When he died, his estate, which included money in a bank account, unit trusts, share investments in Bursa Malaysia, company shares and properties, was worth RM6 million. Just before his death, he informed his wife and children, except for one son who was away overseas, that it was his intention to distribute his entire estate to the wife and children equally. Unfortunately, when he died the son who was away, disputed the distribution no matter how the rest of the family members explained to him his father's wishes. He subsequently laid claim to his entitlement by filing to the Syariah court employing the faraid provision. Faraid is Islamic law of estate distribution according to Al-Quran and Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad S.A.W. Therefore, in Jalil's case according to faraid distribution, his wife's entitlement will be 1/8 and the balance will go to the two sons and two daughters in the ratio of 2:1. Before the distribution commences, the family must first apply for the Letter of Administration (LA) and then to the Syariah court for the faraid certificate. However, when the family applied for LA, the son who filed for faraid provision wanted to be administrator but was rejected by other family members and that's when the application could not begin because the appointment of administrator/s must have consent of all the beneficiaries. Presuming that this appointment is settled, the family must further appoint two guarantors who have a gross value equivalent to the value of the estate.



If Jalil was alive, he could have prevented his estate from such a problem with his 'Wasiat'. By doing a 'Wasiat', he could first appoint at least two executors of his choice or a corporate trustee like a Salihin Trustee Bhd. to execute his estate. If he was worried that his family members are not capable of carrying out this responsibility, then it is better for him to appoint Salihin Trustee Bhd. as the sole Executor/Trustee because it provides expertise, impartiality, professionalism and perpetual existence. With this appointment, the execution of his estate would be safely carried out because it does not require the consent of beneficiaries and the appointment of guarantors. Since it is his intention to distribute his entire estate to his wife and children, then it is important for him to know the practicality of his distribution between the movable and immovable assets. For example, it is easier to distribute the movable assets such as money in the bank account and investment in shares equally. But when it involves properties such as a house, he has to seriously consider giving it to the wife first as she would have a basic shelter when he dies. Upon his demise, the Executors of his estate must apply for the Grant of Probate with the civil court and subsequently or simultaneously his family members apply to the Syariah court for the faraid certificate. These are the keys to unlocking and distributing Jalil's estate. With unanimous consent from all beneficiaries, his entire estate can be distributed according to his wishes in his 'Wasiat'. But in the event of a dispute, then the disputing family member will receive their entitlement according to the faraid provision and the balance will be distributed to the rest of the family members according to the 'Wasiat'.

Peter Lee is an Associate Estate Planning Practitioner (Wills & Trust) with Rockwills International Group. He is also an Islamic Estate Planner providing Wills & Trust services for Muslims. He is based in Ipoh and can be reached at: 012-5078825/05-2554853 or excelsec@streamyx.com. Website: <http://www.wills-trust.com.my>.

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Thinking ALLOWED • by Mariam Mokhtar**Are We Doing Enough To Protect Our Limestone Hills?**

The limestone hills of the Kinta Valley come in all shapes and sizes and Ipoh is home to imposing karst outcrops and craggy jungle-topped limestone monoliths. Some hills are cloaked in virgin jungle but all are rich in flora and fauna – serows, monkeys, birds, orchids and ferns. These hills have a unique natural beauty and are appreciated by many people.

Why are quarry operators exploiting Ipoh's impressive natural backdrop to extract limestone, marble, lime and aggregate for use in road-building and the construction of houses?

Why are the few allowed to destroy what remains one of Ipoh's last natural heritage which have stood for millions of years but have fallen prey to man's greed and folly?

Millions of Years Old

According to scientists, the limestone in Peninsular Malaysia may have originated from various geological periods between the Silurian/Ordovician times (505-410 million years ago) and the Triassic period (245-208 million years ago).

The oldest limestone massifs, formed about 450 million years ago, appear to be located in the Klang Valley, north-eastern section of the Kinta Valley, parts of Langkawi and the Perak-Thai border whilst the youngest (about 220 million years ago) straddles the Pahang-Kelantan border.

The Kinta Valley is the largest limestone massif, stretching from Tapah in the south to Lintang in the north with Ipoh right in the middle.

Authorities date the Kinta limestone from Devonian to Permian (410-245 million years ago), a history of close to half a billion years.

When these rocks were formed, there was no life on land – all life being contained in the sea in the most primitive form.

The hills witnessed and possibly contributed to the colonisation and evolution of life on land and also bore witness to several cataclysmic events that almost annihilated life on earth about 255 million years ago.

People's Lament Rising

Lately, various people have been writing to the national newspapers, or contacted this paper and even started a campaign on Facebook, lamenting the loss of Ipoh's limestone hills.

One reader wrote, "Lately, I have noticed that quarries in Ipoh are slowly but surely pounding away at the limestone hills. It is dramatically visible to anyone on the North-South Expressway in the vicinity of the Tambun toll plaza.

"I remember when I was a primary school pupil, I used to be fascinated by the various shapes of the numerous limestone hills in Ipoh. Some looked like the belly of a fat person, some resembled a dragon's curved body, one had a large tree growing on it that resembled a horse rider with a cape ala Zorro!"

Other Ipohites, even those who reside outside of Ipoh and who return from time to time, share similar concerns.

"I am not sure if any government department or environmental body is monitoring these quarries as I believe within a few years the landscape of Ipoh will be changed forever, with all limestone hills within sight destroyed, all for the sake of limestone extraction, pure profit-driven motives.

"If you were to drive past the huge quarry on the southern part of the Tambun toll plaza, it resembles a war zone with hills that look like they had



been bombed indiscriminately.

Preservation Efforts Lacking

Many people are unsure if the limestone hills are preserved and gazetted as 'Protected areas under the National Park Act 1980 and Wildlife Protection Act 1972'. If they are, then the lack of conservation efforts have resulted in the hills being destroyed by uncontrolled or poorly managed excavations by developers. Who enforces these laws?

The importance of preserving the hills for recreational and educational purposes has been acknowledged in the Draft Structure Plan (Amendment) of the Ipoh City Council 1998-2000. Quarry lease locations in the Kramat Pulai areas cover Gunung Rapat, Gunung Terendum, Gunung Lanno and other small hills.

Many people are increasingly worried that the limestone hills are being demolished indiscriminately: "Why hasn't anyone complained about this matter? Is it because they are used to the unsightly scenery and just couldn't care less about it?"

One former Ipohite, Idris said, "I can only assume that limestone hills which house temples or have cave paintings will be saved. I hope the relevant bodies can put a stop to the blatant destruction of the limestone hills around Ipoh.

Profit from Destruction of Legacy?

"Yes, quarries need to operate and the Perak government needs the income from taxes derived from these quarries, but if done at the expense of destroying the venerable charisma of Ipoh's landscape, one needs to stop and ask where this detrimental action will eventually lead us," said Idris, a businessman who frequently travels to and from Ipoh.

So are we Ipohites going to sit around and watch how a few people profit from the destruction of our legacy?

When will the state administration acknowledge that these limestone hills are our natural heritage? When will the state actively promote the conservation and preservation of these outcrops and the diverse ecosystems they support?

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Musings on Food
seefoon@ipohecho.com.my

By See Foon Chan-Koppen

Photos by Christian DiGiovanna

SeeFoon Gets Souped Up

I don't know how my friend Ginla Foo finds all these little tucked away eating places but find them she does. And naturally she'll call me excitedly to give me the 'low-down'.

So her recent discovery of a coffee shop specialising in home-made soups brought five of us to Kedai Makanan Wong Ngok Far in Jalan Theatre. It is tucked away behind the now extinct Yau Tet Shin market which has become a car park, next to a well-known hair salon Team Florence but the big sign emblazoned across the front is difficult to miss once you're on Jalan Theatre (see pic).

Forty Years in the Business

The lone stall serving in this coffee shop is operated by the eponymous proprietor Ah Yee whose Ah Yee Restaurant has moved around and been around for many years (40 to be exact) and has fans in many places in Ipoh. Originally located near the famous Nga Choi Kai shops around Jalan Yau Tet Shin, Ah Yee has been in operation for two years in these relatively new premises for this renowned eatery. Six months ago, he opened a new outlet on Jalan Raja Musa Azis (Anderson Road) which operates in the evening, run by his son, although Ah Yee is always around to supervise.

Large Choice of Soups

All of Ah Yee's soups are made fresh daily and in fact the day I was there (we were there by noon) some of them were not ready and we had to wait for about an hour for some of them to be tasted.

The **Chicken Soup** with herbs consisting of *Dong Kwai* (Angelica sinensis), *Tong Sum* (codonopsis pilosula), *Ge Ji* (Goji Berries), *Wei San* (Pyrrosia Leaf) and red dates was well-rounded, clear (*Tsing* – as in the way Chinese judge their soups) and the *Dong Kwai* not too overbearing which it can be when the chef is heavy-handed – RM8.

The next soup may not be everyone's cup of tea or soup but certainly one of my favourites; the **Pig's Stomach Soup**, with another mixture of herbs and the addition of pork slices was scrumptious, the stomach having been simmered till tender – RM10.

Post Partum Favourite

We next had that favourite of post partum Chinese mothers, the **Braised Pork Knuckle** in black vinegar, tender morsels of knuckle braised to the right degree of doneness and unlike a lot of other places, not too sweet



nor too sour – RM8. Following on this came the **Tung Gu Mun Gai Geok** (braised mushrooms with chicken feet), the chicken feet tender and redolent with the fragrance of the dried shitake mushrooms – RM8; and the **Ham Yu Mun Tao Foo** (bean curd braised with salted fish) the salted fish imparting their characteristic pungency to the bland tofu – RM5.

By this time, the **Mutton Soup** was ready to be savoured having spent sufficient time on the burner and we tucked into succulent chunks of mutton ribs in



a rich thick broth flavoured with hints of star anise and cinnamon RM10.

For vegetables (all Chinese meals must be accompanied by the *de rigueur* greens), we settled for the bitter melon sautéed with roast pork. This was robustly tasty, the bitter melon at the right consistency and the roast pork with black beans lending the touch of richness to mask any after taste of bitterness in the melon – RM12. Not satisfied with one green, we then ordered a plate of **Fried Kangkong** (convulvulus) with belacan – RM6.

Our meal for 5 persons came to a total of RM70.

Ah Yee Restaurant

- 81 Jalan Theatre 11.00 a.m.-5.00 p.m.
H/P: 016-5607072
- 40 Jalan Anderson 5.30-9.00 p.m.



HAWKER FOOD

Soybean Milk (Tau Cheng) & Curd (Tau Foo Fah)

Soybean milk (*tau cheng*) and soybean curd (*tau foo fah*) have become so popular these days, there are now different varieties. One can have soybean drink with added grass jelly (cincau) and melt-in-the-mouth soybean curd flavoured with gula Melaka instead of the traditional ginger sugar syrup. Another variant is black soybean drink and curd.

Here are a few places to try:

Funny Mountain Soya Bean

49 Jalan Theatre, New Town (GPS: N4 35.683 E101 5.064), opens 10.30 a.m. (Ben Tan 012-5886167 or Cliff Tan 01205161607)

Well-known and very popular.

RM1.90 each for take-away bottle of soybean drink and curd – also available soybean cincau drink and drive-through service.

Bean Delights

Main: 20 Jalan Horley, New Town; Branch: 190-3 Jalan Sultan Idris Shah, New Town (behind Kraf Anyaman) (Alan Chin 016-5971177)

Soybean curd has a smooth texture.

Soybean milk RM1.50 for take-away; soybean curd RM1.30 and RM1.80 for take-away. Also available: *cendol tau foo fah*, *emerald tau fu fah*, *mango tau fu fah* & *garland chrysanthemum soy*.

Lai Kee Soya

38 Jalan Theatre, New Town (Chan Wen Heng 016-5311118)

The soybean curd syrup has a nice gingery taste.

Soybean milk RM1.40 for take-away; soybean curd – RM0.90 and RM1.60 for take-away; black soybean curd – RM1.40 and RM1.70 for take-away.

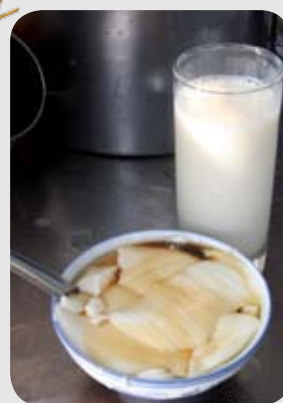
Jelapang

In front of Master Colour Photo Studio, No. 1, Jalan Jelapang, Jelapang (Beh Chun Chai 016-5671119), from 10.00 a.m.

The soybean curd is firmer than usual – nice and thick.

Soybean milk: RM1.30 & RM1.70 (black bean) take-away. Soybean curd: regular or with *gula Melaka* – RM1.40.

For those worried about genetically modified soya beans, the **stall next to Public Bank Ipoh Garden** uses 100% Non-GMO Canadian beans – RM1.30 and RM1.60 (take-away) – opens lunchtime everyday except Sundays.



By Margarita Lee

Assam Laksa

Ingredients:
1kg. fish (Parang, Tenggiri or Kembong)
1 large can Sardines
2 litres water
Laksa noodles

Ingredients (B) to be ground:

20 dried chillies
20 fresh chillies
2 pieces of *belacan*
4" pieces of *kunyit* (turmeric)
300g shallots

Ingredients (C):

5 bunches of *daun kesum* (Vietnamese mint – leaves only)
5 sticks of *bunga kantan* (torch ginger) – cut into half lengthwise
Tamarind juice and 10 dried *asam* pieces (*asam keping*)
10 sticks of *serai* (lemon

grass) – lightly smashed
50 gm *lengkuas* (galangal) – sliced thinly

Garnishing (D):

Mint, sliced onion, cucumber strips, pineapple strips, chillies strips and *Heko* (dark prawn paste).

Seasoning:

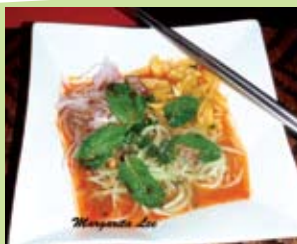
2 tbsp sugar or to taste
Salt to taste

Method:

1. Steam fish for about 10-15 minutes.
2. Remove fish, let it cool, remove and discard bones, flake the fish meat, set aside for later use.
3. Boil (B) and (C) with water. Add tamarind juice and *asam*.
4. Add in fish and

sardines. Simmer for another 10 minutes.

5. Add salt & sugar to taste.
6. To serve, put a handful of *laksa* noodles in a metal strainer and immerse in a pot of boiling water to scald the noodles.
7. Drain and put into a bowl. Pour a ladleful of *laksa* soup or gravy over the noodles and top with Garnishing (D).
8. Drizzle a little prawn paste over and serve hot.



heritage

Gopeng's Heritage House

Gopeng has another attraction, Heritage House, a restored shop lot located at No. 6 Jalan Sungai Itek, a stone's throw away from Museum Gopeng on Jalan Eu Kong, 2.

Minister for Tourism, Dato' Sri Dr Ng Yen Yen, by gracing the opening ceremony, is testimony to the fact that Gopeng has caught the attention of the Tourism Ministry.

The opening ceremony also coincided with Museum Gopeng's second anniversary, World Heritage Day and the book launch of "The Osborne and Chappel Story: Tin Mining in Malaysia" a book depicting O&C's involvement in the tin mining industry in the Kinta Valley. The book was written by former employees of O&C David Palmer and Michael Joll.

Heritage House is owned by the treasurer of Museum Gopeng and is being managed by Museum Gopeng.

Ng Yen Yen in her speech praised the organisers "for being visionaries first by opening the Museum and now Heritage House".

However, she advised that for Gopeng to be a successful tour-



David Palmer

ist town "all the town's residents must participate. Keeping the town clean, planting plants outside their homes, having good food and shopping will attract tourists because tourism is a people interactive industry. Tour guides are necessary otherwise tourists will come not knowing about Gopeng. All of these must be in place otherwise Gopeng will not reap the benefits that come with tourism."

Museum Gopeng's president, Bernard Yaw, acknowledged the advice by Ng and responded that Museum Gopeng on its part has created "awareness of the town" with the opening of the Museum two years ago and had also come out with its own Heritage Trail map despite

its very limited budget.

"Heritage House will further complement the tourism attraction of

Gopeng," he added. For the future Bernard indicated that he planned to engage students, possibly

from UTAR to be tourist guides and envisaged the possibility of Gopeng becoming an "art village".

Meanwhile, visitors will be able to appreciate the heritage feel of Heritage House which has been decorated with furniture from 100 years ago.

Heritage House also has three bedrooms upstairs which will be available for rent. According to Yaw these are to be used as "Boutique Heritage Stays" and themed to that period with four poster beds and similar bedroom furniture. "It would be suitable for whole families or wedding shoots," he said.

For the time being Heritage House is only open during Saturdays and Sundays. However visitors intending to visit during the weekdays may contact Mr Phang, Curator of Museum Gopeng in advance at 05-3597828 for entry.

JAG



business

Taiwan to Explore Investment Opportunities in Perak

InvestPerak, the Investment arm of the state government organised a business luncheon at Tower Regency Ipoh recently to welcome delegates of the SME Inter-Industry Association of Taiwan. Present at the event were Director of SME Corporation Perak, Mohd Faiz Mohd Yunus and Perak Malaysian Industrial Development Authority (MIDA) Director, Nor'Aini Mat Talha. InvestPerak, whose task is to provide information and advisory services to current and potential investors in Perak, normally works with federal agencies only. This, however, was an exception.

During the luncheon, a video show on business opportunities in Perak was shown. Dr Wu Chin Pao, head of the delegation, said that the people in Perak are very warm. He was pleasantly surprised that many could converse in Chinese. He said that Taiwan is very interested in collaborating with Perak and is looking for investment opportunities.

Aquaculture has the potential to attract Taiwanese investors, especially in the farming of grouper. According



to CEO of InvestPerak, Dato' Ir. Muhd Hafni Ibrahim, the Perak Menteri Besar is keen in looking into this area.

The International Small and Medium Enterprise Symposium, comprising of Taiwan, South Korea and Japan, will be held in Japan in October. Dr Wu felt that Malaysia should be invited to participate in the symposium. If Taiwan were to invest, Wu hoped the government would provide land and incentives to enhance the collaboration.

LYW

LETTERS

We reprint some of our reader's comments from our online paper. Go to <http://www.ipohecho.com.my/> to read more. The views expressed in these letters are not necessarily shared by the Editorial Board. We reserve the right to refuse or modify the letters we publish.

MBI's Response to "Eyesores" In the City

All "decrepit and dilapidated" buildings throughout the city have been identified, especially those along Jalan Sultan Idris Shah and Jalan Sultan Iskandar Shah.

Ipoh city council's director of corporate affairs, Hj Musa bin Dun, said this in a statement responding to a column "Eyesores in the City" published in the Ipoh Echo on April 16.

The status of these buildings is being classified under three categories: Bangunan Hampir Roboh (Near-dilapidated Building), Bangunan Telah Roboh Sebahagian (Partially-dilapidated building) and Bangunan Kerosakan Minor (Slightly-damaged Building).

"The Council will notify the owners to repair their properties and to ensure that they do not pose a threat to the public and passers-by.

Actions to fence-up the buildings and to remove weeds and plants that have taken root on the buildings will be taken by the Council. "They are aimed at ensuring public safety," he added.

In his regular column, Jerry Francis had written that there are many condemned and dilapidated business premises which have become "eyesores" in the city centre. The city council appears to be helpless, except for putting flimsy partitions around such buildings. Others, though occupied, are seen with their roof tiles and wooden window frames hanging loosely and precariously, just waiting to fall. Wild plants are growing on the walls and roofs giving the impression of a dilapidated "hanging garden."

"I dread the day that debris or parts of the buildings will fall and cause casualties among motorists and pedestrians," he said.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Announcements must be sent by fax: 05-2552181; or email: announcements@ipohecho.com.my, by the 9th or 23rd of every month in order to meet deadlines. Announcements by phone will not be entertained. Ipoh Echo reserves the right to verify any announcement before it is published.

Wesak Day Celebration Vegetarian Lunch at Sinhalese Bar, Tuesday, May 17, 1.00 p.m. at No. 2 Jalan Bijeh Timah (Old Town). All are welcome. Donations in cash or kind are most welcome.

PSPA's 'Shiny Black Gold', from May 20-22, 4.00-8.00 p.m., at Taman Budaya Ipoh. For enquiries or reservation, contact: Witzi - 012-5088818, PSPA - 05-5487814/016-5334757 or email: pspa2011@gmail.com.

Perak Malayalee Association 47th AGM, on Sunday, May 22, at: No. 14 Medan Istana, Bandar Ipoh Raya, Ipoh, at 3.00 p.m. For details, call: 012-5381939/012-5798062/012-4502620.

Dementia Society Perak Therapeutic Garden. Officiate at the garden by planting some 40 types of herbs on Saturday, May 28 from 2.00-4.00 p.m. at 15, Jalan Foo Choong Nyit, Ipoh. Open to those with dementia (memory problem) as a form of a memory-rehabilitating activity. Caregivers are welcome to attend. For details call April Loh 019-5712 738.

National Stroke Association of Malaysia (NASAM) Charity Food & Fun Fair. Sunday, May 29, 9.00 a.m.-2.00 p.m., at 9 Lorong Pinji, Off Jalan Pasir Puteh, 31650 Ipoh. For details, contact: 05-3211089 or email: nasamperak@nasam.org.

National Stroke Association of Malaysia (NASAM) Charity Food & Fun Fair. Sunday, May 29, 9.00 a.m.-2.00 p.m., at 9 Lorong Pinji, Off Jalan Pasir Puteh, 31650 Ipoh. For details, contact: 05-3211089 or email: nasamperak@nasam.org.

Malaysia Nature Society (MNS) Perak Branch - Children Nature Camp for ages between 10 and 12, from May 31 to June 1 (during school holidays) at Tapak Herba, Papan, Perak. Application forms and details are available at: Persatuan Pencinta Alam, Perak, c/o 27, Pesara Pasir Putih, Taman Boon Bak, 31650 Ipoh. Contact Miss Lee Yuat Wah - 05-3210641(H) or 017-5775641, Mr. Lee Ping Kong - 016-5655682 or Pn. Lee Sook Heng - 013-605583. Closing date: May 17. Applications are accepted on first come first serve basis.

Dementia Day Care Centre, Ipoh looking for volunteers, caretaker and day-care assistants to run the centre which will be opened soon. Requirements: Caretaker: Male and live-in with a valid driving licence. Day-care Assistants: retired nurses or anyone with nursing background. For details call April Loh at 019-5712738 or email her: april_lfk@hotmail.com.

MBI Paid Disposal Service. Ipoh City Council will collect and dispose garden waste and old furniture for a fee - RM20 for a half-filled vehicle and RM40 for a full-filled vehicle. For details and bookings call: Bahagian Perkhidmatan Bandar 05-2540096.

Heartiest Congratulations to

Dato' Lim Si Boon

Chairman of Kinta Properties Holdings Sdn Bhd
on being conferred the

DARJAH DATO' PADUKA MAHKOTA PERAK (D.P.M.P)

by

Kebawah Duli Yang Maha Mulia

PADUKA SERI SULTAN AZLAN MUHIBBUDDIN SHAH IBNI ALMARHUM

SULTAN YUSSUF IZZUDDIN SHAH GHAFARULLAHU-LAH

D.K.,D.K.M.,D.M.N.,D.K.A.

**in conjunction with the 83rd Birthday of His Royal Highness
on 19 April 2011**



Best wishes from

- Tan Sri Lee Oi Hian and Puan Sri Dato' Sandra Lee
- Datuk Dr Foong Weng Sum & Datin Majorie
- Dato' Dr. Y. C. Lee and Datin Lee
- Dato' and Datin Lee Hau Hian
- Dato' and Datin David Tan
- Dato' and Datin Chan Yew Mun
- Dato' and Datin Yeoh Kian Teik
- Sivaprasagam Govindasamy
- Commander and Mrs Ian Anderson
- Mr Lee Onn Hean Michael, JP and Doreen Kam
- Mr and Mrs Chong Him Shoong
- Mr and Mrs Romesh Roy
- Mr and Mrs Bernard Tan
- Mr and Mrs Calvin Li
- Mr and Mrs Raymond Chan Wai Mun
- Mr and Mrs Edward Foo Way Khean
- Mr and Mrs Timmy Lee
- Warren and Caroline Wong
- Mr and Mrs Cheah Chen Kin
- Mrs Ella MacDonald
- Ms SeeFoon Chan-Koppen

Heartiest Congratulations to

Dato' Liew Sew Yee, JP

Chairman & CEO of Thong Fook Corporation Sdn Bhd

on being conferred the

DARJAH DATO' PADUKA MAHKOTA PERAK (D.P.M.P)

by

Kebawah Duli Yang Maha Mulia

PADUKA SERI SULTAN AZLAN MUHIBBUDDIN SHAH IBNI ALMARHUM

SULTAN YUSSUF IZZUDDIN SHAH GHAFARULLAHU-LAH

D.K.,D.K.M.,D.M.N.,D.K.A.

**in conjunction with The 83rd Birthday of His Royal Highness
on 19 April 2011**



Best wishes from

Tan Sri Lee Oi Hian & Puan Sri Dato Sandra Lee

Dato Chin Lean Choong, JP & Datin Ellen

Dato Lee Hau Hian & Datin Teh Li Li

Dato Lee Soon Hian & Datin Grace Lee

Mr. Lee Onn Hean Michael, JP & Doreen Kam

Mr. Lim Hin Pang

tourism

By Rosli Mansor

Mother Nature is kind to Perak and has blessed her with many natural phenomena which some have taken for granted. One such occurrence is fireflies that are found in abundance in mangrove swamps along the coast of the state.

Kampong Dew, located to the west of Kamunting along the old trunk road, is essentially a fishing village which is also noted for its once thriving charcoal industry. Charcoal kilns are still found in the area but not as many as it was in the 1960s. Most of the charcoal produced here are for export, especially to Japan, where demand for this low-tech energy source prevails.

One other product closely associated with Kg Dew is freshwater lobsters. They thrive in the tepid waters of Sungei Sepetang, a major waterway running past the village. The crustaceans have long been an important source of income for the villagers.

The other product which has yet to evolve into a viable money spinner is eco-tourism. And the thing that will spearhead this economic activity is an insect that lives in the mangrove swamps.

Firefly or Lampyridae is a family of insects in the beetle order Coleoptera. They are winged beetles and are commonly called fireflies for their conspicuous use of bioluminescence in their abdomens to attract mates or prey.

There are 2,000 species of firefly found in temperate and tropical environments. Many are in marshes or in wet, wooded areas where food is in abundance.

The Kg Dew fireflies are found on a species of mangrove tree called pokok berembang or Sonneratia Caseoraris, which is indigenous to the mangrove swamps of the tropics.

Getting to these firefly colonies is half the fun, as the traveller has to overcome a number of obstacles; the most exhilarating being the wobbling boat ride from Kampong Dew jetty. It takes about 15 minutes, in failing light and under the guidance of a seasoned boatman, to access the spot. The other half of the fun is on reaching the firefly colonies and seeing the insects glowing in the dark on the berembang trees. The flashing glow is the reason why the insects are known as kelip-kelip in the Malay language.

Tropical fireflies routinely synchronise their flashes when in large groups. The cause of this behaviour is



The Fireflies of Kg Dew

linked to the insects' diet, social interaction and altitude. Fireflies can live up to 30 days without food. The male fly dies after mating while the female dies after laying its eggs.

Realising the tourism potential these insects have to offer, some very enterprising individuals in the village formed the Kelab Chaya Alam Perak. Its objective is to promote the Kampong Dew fireflies to tourists as part of an eco-tourism package. However, facilities are still lacking and drawing tourists to the area may be problematic, considering the many shortcomings.

Dato' Hamidah Osman, the executive councillor for tourism, dropped by the village recently to see the extent of the problem. She acknowledged that the club requires assistance and pledged RM50,000 to upgrade facilities such as a covered walkway to the jetty, a waiting area, signage and a sturdier jetty.

Hamidah implored on the villagers to maintain the integrity of the area. "Destroying the insects' natural habitats will drive them away," she told members of the club. "The berembang trees are essential for the insects' survival," she stressed.

Norshamshida Abdul Rahman, Director of Tourism Malaysia Perak, who was in the entourage, echoed Hamidah's sentiments emphasising on the need for conservation. She assured the club that her office would initiate actions to promote Kg Dew in the run-up to Visit Perak Year 2012.



Besides fireflies, visitors can also fish for lobsters, see how charcoal is made and trek the jungles of Gunong Semanggol nearby. These are some of the activities that can be packaged for nature-loving tourists, local and foreign.

Readers keen on knowing more about Kampong Dew can call Khairul Salleh Ahmad on his mobile **012-5145023**. They can also access his blog: <http://fireflyzone.blogspot.com> for details.

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young perak

LENDING A HAND TO JAPAN



In the aftermath of the disaster that hit Japan in March, Interact Clubs of SMJK Perempuan Perak (PGS) and SMK Raja Perempuan (RPS) joined hands to provide aid through the "Lend a Hand to Japan Charity Concert" held at the Leong Wan Chin Hall here recently. According to PGS president, Vivien Wong Lee Yen, it was a norm for PGS to organise concerts for local charities, but they decided to take a bold step by partnering RPS to extend aid overseas. Kelvin Chow, president of Rotary Club Ipoh, said that the Rotary Club of Malaysia contributed 10 tonnes of blankets to Sendai.

"Despite the devastation brought by the earthquake and tsunami, the Japanese have remained calm and have never given up hope to rebuild Japan. This is something we all must learn," said Chow in his opening remarks. In attendance was the First Secretary of the Japanese Embassy, Kiyonori Yamakawa.

The audience was entertained to music and traditional dances performed by Interactors from various schools in the city. The PGS Military band, WHY Piano and d'Artiz Studio added colour to the night with their impressive performances. To the delight of the audience, Yean, a local Chinese artiste, turned up at the very last minute. The target of RM10,000 was easily met.

Yamakawa thanked everyone on behalf of the Japanese government.

LYW

Alma Mater Urge to Former Students



Former students of SMJK Yuk Choy have been urged to return and contribute towards the success of their alma mater. Finance Minister II Dato Seri Haji

Ahmad Husni Mohamed Hanadziah made the call when officiating at the school's speech day recently. Ahmad Husni, who is also the MP for Tambun, quoted a Chinese proverb "remember the source of water that we drink."

Every student, he said, should remember that their school has helped them to become what they are today and be proud of it.

Ahmad Husni was earlier given a rousing welcome by the school's lion dance and 24 Chinese Season Drums. He also inspected the school's uniform units.

He gave away prizes to top student Hew Choen Wai, who scored 10 A+s in his 2010 SPM results. Others included Chia Kai Xiang (10 As), Lim Jian Hao (10 As) and Master Chong Jian Bin (10 As).

SMJK Yuk Choy, Ipoh is already 103 years old and plans to build a new five-storey wing.

Masterskill Students Shine

More than 400 students did Masterskill College of Nursing and Health proud when they scored Grade Point Averages of 3.67 to 4.00. The certificates of recognition were presented to the outstanding students during a ceremony at the college's hall in Tasek recently. Hau Wan Shin, chief executive officer of the Ipoh campus, presented the certificates. In his speech, Hau said that through this formal recognition of the students'



achievements, he hoped it would instil a sense of pride and motivate them

to greater heights. The Diploma in Healthcare programme had the high-

est number of achievers with 66 of them obtaining a GPA of 4.00.

LYW

Wira Cup Parliamentary Debate



Anderson School Ipoh hosted the Wira Cup Parliamentary Debate, North Kinta District level recently. The preliminary rounds saw the participation of 7 schools. SMK Convent emerged champion in the final, beating SMK Raja Perempuan (RPS). The motion "Social Network Enhances Meaningful Relationships" fell when the team, consisting of Anusha Rajendran, Shahira Yasmin Gul and Perianayagi Meera Letchumanan, presented solid points to outgun their opponents. RPS was represented by Shobana Naidu Gunasegaran, Nurul Nabila Abdul Aziz and Revishini Jairaj. Representative from the North Kinta District Education Office, Tengku Hamzah Tuan Ismail, presented trophies to the winning team. Shahira Yasmin Gul was adjudged the best speaker. "Our teacher, Mr Gee, was extremely supportive. I'm very happy that our efforts paid off," she told Ipoh Echo when met.

LYW

International Year of Chemistry



In celebrating the International Year of Chemistry (IYC) 2011, Institut Kimia Malaysia and UNESCO National Commission Malaysia along with Academy of Sciences Malaysia, National Science Centre, Jabatan Kimia Malaysia and PETROSAINS have teamed up to organise Karnival Kimia Malaysia in seven different venues throughout the country.

Themed "Chemistry – Our Life, Our Future" IYC 2011 celebrates the achievements of chemistry and its contributions to mankind. It too marks the centennial of Marie Curie's Nobel Prize achievement in 1911 for her discovery of radium and polonium.

SMJK Ave Maria Convent was privileged to host the Perak carnival, which was launched by Executive Councillor, Dato' Dr Mah Hang Soon recently. Booths with different kinds of chemistry-related experiments were set up for public viewing. They were manned by students from participating schools in the district.

A number of activities are being lined up during the nation-wide celebration. It includes an essay-writing competition and a symposium on women in science and engineering.

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Wellness

To Be or Not to Be ... Glasses Free!! Lee Eye Centre Leads the Way

The **Wavelight Refractive Suite** from Alcon Laboratories Sdn Bhd is the first in Asia and the latest addition to Lee Eye Centre's (LEC) collection of state of the art equipment. It is the only laser in the market which is approved by the FDA (Food and Drug Administration) of USA for treatment of nearsightedness up to 1400 degrees, farsightedness up to 600 degrees and astigmatism up to 600 degrees thereby giving it the widest range of treatment.

Corrective lenses such as glasses or contact lenses are wonderful optical aids which some of us have come to be very dependent on. Myopia (near-sightedness) is increasing in prevalence and ongoing research into this "epidemic" has shown that the urban population, particularly of Chinese ethnicity, is more prone to developing myopia and this is occurring at a younger and younger age. Consequently, more and more children (and adults) are dependent on these corrective lenses for good vision.

However, this "crutch" that are the corrective lenses, has its drawbacks and nowadays, the option of laser vision correction is becoming more appealing as the technology improves by leaps and bounds to make the procedure extremely safe, fast and virtually painless.

Laser Vision Correction

There have been so many uses for laser in eye care but most people nowadays would associate laser treatment for the correction of near-sightedness, far-sightedness or astigmatism. Surgery for the correction of these refractive errors is called refractive surgery and laser is the most commonly used method.

LASIK

This stands for **Laser-assisted In situ Keratomileusis** which for the layman is the use of an excimer laser to re-shape the cornea. This change in shape of the cornea will focus the light rays entering the eye sharply onto the retina. Patients who have had LASIK will get to enjoy good vision without their glasses or contact lenses.

How does LASIK work?

LASIK is an outpatient procedure that is fast, painless and very safe. An ultra-thin flap is first created on the corneal surface; this flap is partially lifted off to allow a highly specialised laser to reshape the cornea; the flap is then replaced and serves as a type of natural "bandage" (Figure 1).

Traditionally, this flap is created with an instrument called a microkeratome, which is essentially a metal blade used to cut the corneal surface. Technology has improved now and a special laser called the *femtosecond* laser is used to create this flap. This is even more precise and allows for even safer surgery and this "all laser" or "bladeless" LASIK is fast becoming the new standard of care for laser vision correction.

The Wave Light Refractive Suite was designed by Germans to integrate the 2 lasers not only with one another, but also with the pre-surgery machines which are used to assess the patients. This gives the advantage that all the treatment data recorded by the

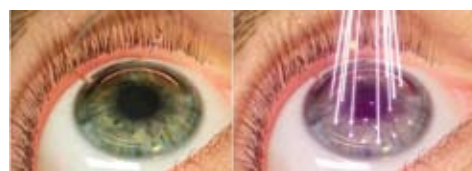


Figure 1. A hinged flap is created and lifted up for the excimer laser to reshape the cornea



The Wavelight Refractive Suite

machines used to assess the patients, can be transferred by the click of a button to the lasers. This is called WaveNet and will reduce the chance of human error where the data has to be entered manually. All these features of the Wavelight Refractive Suite allow the surgeon to provide consistently excellent refractive and visual quality outcomes with an unparalleled level of safety when performing laser vision correction.

Who is suitable for LASIK?

It is important to remember that LASIK will only help to reduce dependency on glasses or contact lenses; it is NOT A CURE for refractive errors. Not everyone is suitable to have LASIK and a very complete and thorough examination of the eye is necessary to assess each potential candidate.

Are there side effects?

LASIK is very safe but nevertheless still a surgical procedure and therefore, should not be trivialized. Infection and inflammation is possible after any surgery and LASIK is no different but it happens very rarely. Serious complications are extremely rare and so far, there have been no reported cases of blindness from LASIK.

The Wavelight Refractive Suite being the first in Asia, and FDA approved, will see eye care being elevated to world standards and Ipoh given prominence as a centre for superlative eye care.

The FDA is a regulatory body which controls the use of drugs and medical equipment in USA and they are world recognized as the "gold standard" because they have very stringent criteria of assessment before a new drug or machine is approved for treatment.

Lee Eye Centre Sdn Bhd

Main Office: 44-46 Persiaran Greenhill, 30450 Ipoh, Perak. Tel: 05-2540095/2544951 Fax: 05-2540273

Branch Office: 30 Taman Setia, Jalan Raja Omar, 32000 Sitiawan, Perak. Tel./Fax: 05-6925155.

Website: <http://www.lec.com.my>

Protecting Your Knees

Arthritis takes different forms including Gouty, Psoriatic, Rheumatoid, and others. Some are systemic diseases, and some are local. Osteoarthritis, or OA, is a local condition of the knees due to excessive wear and tear of the knee cartilage in one or more of the compartments of the knee.

So why would one get OA of the knees? Well, aside from injury to the cartilage, the constant strain of excess weight, genetics, and just ageing are the most common causes so OA is a disease of wear and tear. There are 3 major factors that make knee cartilage wear out. 1 – Alignment; 2 – Time; and 3 – Stress.

Because of genetics and in Malaysia, the cultural habit of wearing non-arch supporting slippers, and going barefoot in the house, a significant portion of the population has flat feet, knock knees or bowed legs. Add compulsory jogging in school, and the national obsession with badminton, and we see significantly more than 30% of the population with knee problems.

Since OA is an inflammation of the joint, you would expect the signs of inflammation to exist. Remember the word SHARP. Swelling – Your knee may swell up. Heat – Your knee may feel hot to the touch. Altered function – You may not be able to bend it or put weight



Unloader brace

on it. Redness – Your knee may have a reddish or pink colour to it, though not necessarily. Pain – There may be a great deal of discomfort. In addition there may be crunching sounds in the knee, called crepitus. If any of these conditions exist, it's best to go to your doctor or chiropractor of choice for evaluation.

Treatment for OA runs the gamut from pain relievers to total knee replacement surgery, depending on the length and severity of the condition. There are many other options developed for treatment of this commonly

occurring affliction which treat the underlying causes which were discussed earlier. Orthotics can support and level the feet, having a beneficial effect on the knee alignment. Correct diet and exercise can reduce weight and therefore strain. Physiotherapy can balance muscles in the legs, affecting knee alignment and wear and tear. Unloader bracing can reduce the strain factor on the knees and allow them to rest and heal. Shockwave therapy can stimulate healing and reduce spurring from wear and tear. Chiropractic care can help balance the pelvis, lessening stress to the knees. Proper diagnosis means proper treatment and the best outcome.

OA is a progressive condition, but it can be stopped and even reversed if caught early enough. Better yet if you or anyone you know has any of the risk factors mentioned above, take a preventative approach. See your practitioner of choice now! An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure!

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Community

Grand Celebration – Tamilar Thirunal



The annual Tamilar Thirunal (Tamils' New Year), which has been celebrated in Malaysia for more than fifty years, was celebrated on a grand scale

this year. Tamils regardless of their religion and political affiliation come together and participate in the activities. The event was organized by a coalition of more than thirty NGOs. The theme for this year was "Unite Under Tamil Language".

The function started with a procession from Little India to the Town Hall. The procession was witnessed by representatives from different religions, political parties and NGOs. The procession consisted of five floats depicting the five great Tamil epics. Between the floats were groups of dancers performing traditional folk dances such as peacock dance, koolattam (dance with two sticks), poikkaal kuthirai (horse dance), karagaattam (dancing with pot on head) and silambattam, martial art using bamboo staff) all accompanied by music.

The main event in the Town Hall started with lighting of the kuthu vilakku (lamp) followed by barathanatyam dance. Members of the community who excelled in their profession were honoured. The highlight of the night was a literary talk given by K. Arivananthan, a Tamil scholar from India.

AJ

sport

Bowled Over by YBU

Yayasan Bina Upaya (YBU) hosted a bowling match between representatives of the local media agencies and its staff. The friendly game was held at Ampang Superball bowling alley, Ipoh Parade recently. Some 30 bowlers partook in the competition which was officiated by YBU's Chief Executive Officer, Khairul Azwan Harun. The aim of the outing, said Khairul, was for YBU to thank the media for their assistance in highlighting the foundation's activities to the public. There were no winners or losers. However, Khairul's team scored an almost perfect game with 495 pin falls. Khairul gave away prizes to all participants.

RM



Century Ride Malaysia 2011



Century Ride Malaysia 2011 (CRM) will be held on Sunday, July 17. This year's event will take riders along a different route than previously. It will commence at Dataran MBI, Ipoh to Kellie's Castle, Sri Iskandar, Bota Kiri, Bota Kanan, Parit and back to the start point for a distance of a hundred miles. It will take an average rider over five hours to complete.

The one-day cycling event will provide participants a unique opportunity to participate in a cycling marathon

– pedalling in the company of friends, acquaintances and strangers. It is a non-competitive event that caters to cyclists of all levels of aptitude – from beginners to the seasoned. Introduced in 2006, the event attracted about 250 participants during its inception. Last year the number swelled to 605. Over a thousand riders are expected this year.

The objective of the ride is to encourage and develop grass-root events for Malaysians. With the rising number of cycling-related accidents, the theme for this year is "THE RIGHT TO RIDE".

The event is organised by Kelab Road Runners Ipoh and is sanctioned by the Perak Triathlon Association.

CRM is regarded as the premier cycling event for the masses in the region. This event serves as an opportunity for corporations to showcase their products and create brand awareness. With the rising cost of hosting, the organisers are hoping that corporations will chip-in to make it affordable for participants. Their support is greatly appreciated.

Readers can access: <http://www.centurymalaysia.blogspot.com> or drop by Levelo Bike Shop, No 3, Leboh Cecil Rae, Canning Garden (beside New Hollywood Restaurant) or call 012-462 1798 and 016-323 6035 for details.

FZB

Clearwater Masters 2011

The recently concluded inaugural Clearwater Masters 2011 Golf Tournament held at the scenic Clearwater Sanctuary Golf Resort, Batu Gajah, attracted over 150 participants for its 4-day event from April 28 till May 1. It is not surprising especially with a cash prize of US\$75,000.

The winner of the event was American Berry Henson who carded a total 19 under par 269 over 4 days to earn himself a handsome US\$13,125 purse.

On the fourth day, Henson returned to the clubhouse with four under 68, while second place winner, Taiwan's Chang Tse-Peng (8 under 64) and third place joint-winner, Malaysian M. Sasidaran (6 under 66). Sharing the third spot were Jonathan Moore (USA) and Rick Gilmore (Canada).

The win was Henson's first international success after earning his Asian Tour card earlier this year

from Qualifying School in Thailand. Henson who stayed at the resort throughout the tournament described his stay as relaxing and 'ideal' and jokingly attributed his success "possibly to the chicken chop which he had every day".

Clearwater Sanctuary CEO Kenny Yap meantime was pleased with the overall running of the event and indicated his intention to increase the prize money to US\$85,000 next year adding that the "tie up with Asian Development Tour was in line with the Resorts goal of improving the standard of golf in the country".

JAG



Caring For the Community



Canned food manufacturer Ayam Brand's community-care campaign has entered its fourth year, aimed at promoting the consumption of healthy food by all, regardless of their social standing. It is targeted at the underprivileged, especially the disabled, single mothers, old folks and orphans.

Since the programme's inception more than 7,000 people from 115 charity organisations nation-wide have benefited. Twenty-one homes from Perak have gained from the campaign so far this year.

"We hope our on-going programme will encourage the community, especially children, to consume healthy food," said the company's representative, Khoo Wooi Ling, during the handing-over ceremony held at Rumah Anak-anak Yatim dan Miskin Anning, Ipoh recently. Loke Wai Loon received the gifts on behalf of the orphanage.

Ed

Slippery Entrance to Special Traffic Court

The entrance to the Special Traffic Court along Jalan Panglima Bukit Gantang Wahab here is sloping upwards to the door. The slope is steep and the surface is of smooth cement, creating a slipping hazard.

Social worker, Hamid Lee Abdullah, said that he had seen a number of people; especially senior citizens slip and fall. During rainy days the situation becomes more dangerous. He had informed the court officials of the problem, but no action has been taken.

The surface of the entrance must be replaced with relatively smooth but slip resistant material to prevent people from slipping. The slope must be made gradual or construct steps to make it user friendly. The authorities must not wait for a serious accident to happen before taking action.

AJ



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news roundup

Men Against Violence



Tranquil Kampung Baru Chenderong was bustling with activity during the Kampar District "Men Against Violence" road show recently. Jointly organised by Wanita UMNO and the Kampar Parliamentary Committee, the show saw the involvement of 13 non-governmental organisations such as the Perak Women for Women Society, Buddies and Majlis Kanser Nasional. The theme was "Stop, Restrain, Think" which was aimed at creating awareness among men about violence against women. It was also to educate women on their rights and protection. Students from SMK Dato' Bendahara CM Yusuf, SMK Malim Nawar, SMK Sultan Yussuf, SMJK Yuk Kwan, SMK St Bernadette's Convent and SMK Toh Indera Wangsa Ahmad were present as well.

"By supporting this cause, men can contribute to harmonious family living," said the organising chairperson, Datin Norma Hanum. According to her, the programme is the first of its kind in Malaysia. It was launched by Menteri Besar Dato' Seri DiRaja Dr. Zambry Abdul Kadir last year. Adun for Tualang Sekah, Nolee Ashilin, vouched for the establishment of a shelter home for battered women.

Datin Paduka Marina Mahathir, a prominent women's rights advocate, was the guest of honour. In her opening remarks, she said that of the 3,600 abuse cases reported nationwide, 261 were from Perak. "Changes can happen if we change our perception. When violence against women is reduced, crime rate will automatically drop," she remarked.

LYW

New Market for Buntong

The 50-year-old market in Buntong is to be relocated nearby. Two sites have been identified; one at the Hindu temple opposite the Police station along Jalan Sungai Pari and the other on land adjacent to Spooner Road.

The Ministry of Local Housing has allocated RM6 million for the project and if the market is built at the site of the temple, another RM500,000 would be required to relocate the temple.

The consultant is working on the plans and construction would commence next year. All the traders in the present market would be allocated a stall in the new market.

A random survey of the traders revealed that except for a few traders, the majority of them are not aware that a new market is to be built. They were not informed by city council of the plan.

The traders are not willing to move and the main reasons given are that they have been doing business in the present market for a long time and if they move, would lose regular customers. They want the existing market to be renovated.

The present market is in an ideal location. Traders are also not happy with a multi-storey building which is not popular with the shoppers.

Ah Fook who is running a drinks stall said that most of his customers are senior citizens who live nearby and the market is their meeting place. They would be reluctant to go elsewhere. All the chicken sellers are not in favour of moving.



MBI Requested To Review Traffic Flow

Residents in Taman Kaya and Taman Perak, which are located at Ipoh Garden East, want the city council to review the traffic flow going in their respective neighborhoods: specifically into Persiaran Perajurit 5 and Persiaran Perajurit 3.



At a meeting organized by State Assemblyman for Canning Wong Kah Woh, they claimed that road improvement work completed under the flyover joining Jalan Belibis going into Jalan Perajurit earlier this year has caused much inconvenience to the residents there.

They complained of traffic jams at peak hours and delays turning into their respective Taman since not being able to turn into Persiaran Perajurit 3 due to the island erected there this year.

Residents' representative Lee Chee Seng said 150 signatures have been obtained from the affected residents and would be forwarded to the Mayor.

Wong stated that he would meet with the Mayor for a review of the traffic flow. He is of the opinion that the PLUS underpass should be widened as it is the cause for the bottleneck and traffic congestion during peak hours. He gave the example of the widened underpass at Tambun Road before Tambun town. "Due to the growing property development eastward such as Bandar Baru Tambun, Sunway and also the Haven, expanding the underpass is a long-term solution which will benefit all residents," said Wong.

JAG

Lions Clubs International Convention



Over 1800 Lions Clubs International members gathered at Stadium Indera Mulia, Ipoh to witness the formal launching of the 49th Lions Clubs International Convention on April 30.

The opening ceremony was graced and officiated by HRH Sultan Azlan Shah of Perak. In attendance was Menteri Besar, Dato' Seri DiRaja Dr Zambry Abdul Kadir.

The convention, which stretched over a period of three days, was attended by representatives of Lions Clubs International from Malaysia, Brunei and Singapore. The objective of the convention was the deliberation of issues of common interests to members within the social fraternity.

The selection of Ipoh as the venue for the convention was due to the city's aestheticism and its historical significance. The organising chairman, Dato' Dr Foo Wan Kien, was most gratified that they had the highest number of delegates (1,850) in the past 50 years. He expressed thanks to the state government, especially Menteri Besar, Dato' Dr Zambry Abdul Kadir and Mayor, Datuk Roshidi Hashim, for strongly supporting this project. However, he bemoaned the fact that some hospitality sectors did not give their support and he has urged them to join forces with NGOs to promote Ipoh.

RM

N. Kalyani, a vegetable seller said that city council had informed her of the new market. She is happy to move after being in one place for so long.

The city council needs to hold a public hearing with the traders, NGOs and the public on the new market and explain the reason for the relocation. The suggestions proposed during the meeting which are relevant, must be incorporated into the new building.

The market is for the people and it must satisfy their needs. The traders know what is best for them and their input is important.

Last, but not least the location of the market must not cause traffic jams along Jalan Sungai Pari.

AJ

Preventing Disabilities to Children



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said parents need to have basic knowledge to prevent any adverse consequences to children with disabilities at an early stage. Najib said this when launching the "Setia Bakti Programme: Campaign on Early Intervention to Prevent Disabilities to Children" at Stadium Indera Mulia, Ipoh on May 3.

To date, 428 community rehabilitation centres have been established nationwide. More than 14,000 physically disabled children, including those with hearing and visual problems, have been given guidance and training to help them become self-reliant. Another 4,500 remain at home and are being cared for by the centres' workers who make house visits. However, there are still many physically and mentally challenged children who do not benefit from the services due to their parents' ignorance.

"Such an attitude should not exist as these children can be guided and trained to make them productive individuals," said Najib.

The campaign is being spearheaded by the Welfare Body of the Wives of Ministers and Deputy Ministers (Bakti) under its Semai Bakti Programme, a community-orientated service programme. It is aimed at creating public awareness on the importance of early preventive measures to avoid disabilities to children.

A 13-episode television series about autistic children, entitled "Jika Itu Takdirnya", is currently on TV1 to complement the on-going campaign.

RM

Autism Awareness



The Autism Aspergers Help Association (AAHA) successfully held their autism awareness walk last month.

Titled 'Walk for Autism 2011' its goal was to create public awareness of the growing needs of children with autism.

AAHA President Dr Shan N. Narayanan in his speech explained that Autism is a developmental disorder and is increasing in numbers. "Autism not only impacts the child but the family and community too". The need to create awareness is addressed by offering parents information on signs, detection, diagnosis and where they can get help.

The most important thing is for parents to accept that their children are autistic and realise there is help available. Dr Shan said it had been scientifically proven that the earlier an intervention programme is started with autistic children, the more likely is the outcome to be better than when they start kindergarten at six years old.

The association, which was set up last year, was also trying to raise funds to set up a kindergarten to cater to children with autism in Ipoh. Assisting Dr Shan with the organising of the event was AAHA Programme Co-ordinator and Principal of Blooming Kids Inclusive-Play School Mrs Michele Cheah.

Dr Shan also thanked Ipoh City Council's secretary Dato' Abdul Rahim Ariff for officiating at the event and for allowing the use of the facilities at the Polo Grounds.

JAG

My Say

● By Jerry Francis



Should We Be Ashamed Of This Garden?

How can Ipoh City Council live up to its slogan “Bersih, Hijau Dan Membangun” (Clean, Green and Developing) when it cannot even keep up with the maintenance of a once beautiful garden in the city centre?

Described as a mini Taj Mahal, the garden – Medan Stesen surrounded by some of the city’s most famous iconic heritage buildings – Moorish architectural Railway Station, Colonial-style Town Hall and High Court buildings, has been the focal point for locals and visitors. It offers a postcard view of the city.

It is also smack in the path of those arriving by train, which has increased its trips between Kuala Lumpur and Ipoh daily since the introduction of the electric train service. Just take a look at it. Is the city council doing enough to maintain the garden? I am ashamed as a resident to point this out, but it is necessary before the garden deteriorates further. What used to be appealing is now appalling.

The only Pokok “Upas” (Antiaris toxicaria), from



The non-functioning fountain collects water and litter



Upas tree

which the city got its name, is in the centre of the garden. It was planted by the Rotary Club of Ipoh in January, 1980, and has grown into a healthy matured tree. A marble plaque under the tree, which contains some information about the tree, has lain smashed into pieces on the ground for months. Yet, no attempt has been made by city council to replace it. Only the plaque laid by the Rotary Club to commemorate the planting of the tree is still intact, but the words are fading.

The beautiful fountain with water spouting high

and lit at night, stopped functioning years ago. All its magnificence has also faded. Some mosaic on the fountain walls and tiles around too, are breaking up. The rusted piping system of the fountain is exposed with a pool of water and litter inside. It appears to be an ideal breeding ground for mosquitoes in which case, to whom is city council going to issue the summons?

The fountain is like an unwanted child. It is being left to whatever fate the city council may decide for it later. At one end of the fountain, the war memorial which commemorates Perak’s war dead of the First and Second World Wars, has been vandalised. The inter-crossing footpaths and rows of shrubs and trees are poorly maintained. Litter bins are toppled and litter often swept under the plants, which are not properly trimmed. Racks, brooms and dustpans are also left under the shrubs. For now it has to endure an existence in disgrace under the excruciating gaze of the hundreds of people crossing over to the railway station or strolling about in the garden.

The garden is the first place that visitors to this “city that tin built” will see on their arrival by train. This is also the first image they will record with their cameras. It is also the starting point of the “Heritage Trail”. Therefore, it is important that the city council maintain a good “first impression” of the city.

Perhaps the majority of the city residents are paying very little attention to the garden nowadays. After all it is no longer attractive. But what will the tourists say when they decide to take a peep into the fountain. Needless to say, I will be ashamed.



Smashed marble plaque under the tree

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