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AND THESE ARE THE PEOPLE WHO MAKE IT HAPPEN

Nisha Devina Roy's story - page 2

Photographs by Rosli Mansor



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CARE GIVING IS THEIR BUSINESS

It's non-governmental, non-religious and non-profit. It's also inspiring, as Nisha Devina Roy finds out



Left to right: Sumathy A/P Arumugam, Leong Lai Peng, Devi, Phan Mun Yee and Nancy Koh.

It is the Perak Palliative Care Society. Arguably, no other charitable organisation would have a better grasp of the words *need, isolation and hope* than the staff of five who toil quietly from their headquarters in Lebu Woods in Ipoh's Canning Garden area.

Sister Nancy Koh, Nurse Sumathy A/P Arumugam, Senior Nurse Phan Mun Yee and Centre Coordinator Leong Lai Peng, assisted by general factotum Devi, confront the issue of life and death daily. It is, they say, their job. Anyone who takes a closer look at their everyday schedule would most likely refer to it as a vocation.

"It is important that all of us cherish life and show our appreciation for it until the very end. We help our patients maintain this view," quips one of the nurses. They are palliative care specialists who draw strength from one another. They exchange notes daily and together examine the cases they are handling.

"They work very hard, always on call," attests Devi as she prepares morning coffee. The staff are comparing notes and plotting out the day. The phone rings incessantly.

A DISCIPLINED VIEW

PPCS was formed in October 1994 to answer an important community call for specialised care giving. It was registered and then given charitable status in June, 1995. The Palliative Care Unit in the Ipoh General Hospital could not cope with growing numbers of terminally ill patients many of whom were still comparatively self-sufficient and preferred to stay home.

A decidedly important void had to be filled and the private sector readily stepped in. The beginning

had its teething problems, but nearly 13 years on, the PPCS has become a pillar, a meaningful addition to Perak life.

The nurses work closely with the Palliative Care Unit of the Ipoh Hospital. Dr. Boon Chai Peng, honorary medical director oversees their work which is always demanding – there are always new cases referred to them and it is difficult to turn them down.

It is a group with an undeniable mission initially etched by Dame Cicely Saunders, founder of the Hospice Movement: *'You matter because you are you, and you matter until the last moment of your life. We shall do all we can, not only to help you die peacefully, but also to live until you die.'*

It is, by all standards, a big mission. It is not just a matter of parting with cash, handing out gifts and organising charity fairs. For the doctor, the nurses and the volunteers who keep the PPCS running, a different temperament is needed. A compassionate yet unsentimental view has

over it with a positive attitude that will make them appreciate what is left of life. In a way, we help each other. We help them alleviate their symptoms and they help us by demonstrating that there is a point to what we are doing."

She adds: "We have to maintain a disciplined view. Compassion is there but our work must be performed with an unsentimental vision, otherwise, our patients will lose heart. We don't want that to happen. We want them to remain dignified. That's what everyone wants."

BEYOND THE CALL OF DUTY

Aside from the usual medical help and assistance given, the presence of a PPCS nurse can prove useful in bridging gaps between a patient and the rest of the family. Illness has a way of creating tension in a household and often a point is reached when communication becomes



Nancy Koh and Sumathy Arumugam review one of their cases.

to inform their care giving. "We believe in hope," Sister Nancy Koh says, "but we are also realistic. We want our patients to be reconciled with the dire truth of whatever illness they have, then prevail

stilted and difficult. The family members may feel put-upon – something they may deny but which could be manifested in various little ways, like staying away, keeping silent or simply not listening. The

THE PERAK PALLIATIVE CARE SOCIETY

Our mission statement is:

To provide comfort and relief of symptoms to people with life threatening illness irrespective of age, race or religion

To enhance their quality of life

To support the grieving family appropriately

In order to achieve our mission we have the following roles to play:

1. to promote awareness of Palliative Care in the community
2. to advocate for better services for the terminally ill
3. to advocate for better education and training opportunities for health care providers
4. to promote the spirit of volunteerism
5. to provide Palliative Care services

The Society is managed by a Main Committee, which is elected once every two years. Activities organized by the Society are:

1. Education and training programmes
2. Volunteer programmes
3. Community awareness
4. Fund raising
5. Home Care Programme

The Perak Palliative Care Society Centre

The PPCS Centre is at No.14 Lebu Woods, Canning Garden, 31400 Ipoh

It serves as:

1. an office for PPCS
2. the base for the Home Care Team
3. a library and resource centre to provide information, education and training
4. a meeting place for our volunteers to learn and serve
5. a place to provide bereavement support, counselling service, medical and nursing consultation

patient may be magnifying small concerns and reading more from what is said or done in his midst. Misunderstandings occur.

The PPCS nurse then goes beyond the call of duty and becomes a listening board. Many times, the patient ends up confiding more in his or her nurse.

"This is okay," Sister Nancy Koh pursues, "at least, we know that we have not made them feel they are a nuisance. The more they share their sentiments with us, the better it is. That means, they remain interested. That's quality of life."

WISHES

Patients sometimes convey their wishes not to their immediate families but to the nurses or the volunteers. There was the case of Tee Hong Ching who said that his last wish was to go to Genting Highlands. The request was deliberated on and it was decided that the drive

would be too taxing. The decision was relayed and explained to Hong Ching.

But it did not end there. The nurses asked where else he might wish to go. He thought long and hard, then smiled, "The beach. . ."

Another meeting

was convened. The staff decided Lumut was a good destination and swiftly organised a trip.

Nurse Sumathy declares: "We have meetings, but we cannot talk around in circles. Our patients need things and we cannot afford to waste time belabouring issues."

Tee Hong Ching enjoyed Lumut very much and was very responsive throughout the excursion. In his words, he was overjoyed.

After the outing, his condition deteriorated very rapidly and soon after he passed away. His widow, in her grief, found consolation in the memory of the joyful time in Lumut. After that, she said, her husband appeared to be serene.

She was grateful that Hong Ching believed he mattered to others until the end.



(continued on page 11)

From the Editor's Desk

by Fathol Zaman Bukhari

EMPOWERING WOMEN

NO! TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

If you think domestic violence is only confined to those at the bottom half of the social ladder, think again. Cruelty – both physical and psychological – cuts across all social boundaries. It does not differentiate the rich from the poor.

Your friendly neighbour or your timid-looking colleague can be an abusive husband or partner.

There are no identifiable marks to separate them from non-violent members of society. A person's explosive behaviour is usually concealed behind a facade of polite or even amiable manner in public. Only those who are closely associated with the person would be aware of his unkind ways.

MAJOR HURDLE

Despite the passage of a law by Parliament in 1994 to criminalise acts of violence against women, children and the defenceless, there still exist instances of abuse that go unreported for reasons best known only to the victims. Herein lies a major problem. Their own

victims are shielding the perpetrators of inhumane treatment! Reporting the case to the authorities is construed as being detrimental to the family unit. Silent sufferers may be scared, not just of incurring further wrath from their oppressors, but, ironically, of losing the relationship with these people. It is a psychological issue that needs to be addressed. There are also the very sad cases when women think they have no choice – the financial aspect hems them in. What would happen if they run away? Who would support the children? How would they cope?

Domestic violence is a truly complex social problem.

A caring society must institute measures to contain the problem. The setting up of the Women, Family and Community Development Ministry helmed by Dato' Seri Sharizat Abdul Jalil in 2004 is a step in the right direction.

A ministry is now devoted to and handles women's affairs. But there is still a hitch. There is little that Sharizat and her officers can do when the



Dr Sharifah Halimah

problem is so widespread and further propped up by cultural and religious taboos.

THE PWW

Ipoh is fortunate to have a group of concerned citizens led by Dr Sharifah Halimah, an obstetrician and gynaecologist, that helps undertake the responsibility of caring for victims of domestic abuse. Her brainchild, The Perak Women for Women Society (PWW) was formed in December, 2003. The society is managed by a number of dedicated volunteers who operate from a house in Ipoh Garden.

Over the years, the group has cared for scores of battered women and children. PWW provides counselling services and temporary shelter for victims of domestic abuse. It works closely with the Perak Legal Aid Bureau in cases where legal recourse is required.

RAISING AWARENESS

The society's focus today is the creation of awareness among women

and children as to their rights in protecting themselves against sexual harassment and physical abuse.

Dr Sharifah and her team have conducted several seminars and discussions where both sexes are represented. The success of these group interactions has given PWW members a renewed sense of purpose and pride.

Like all other non-governmental organisations in Malaysia, funding and staffing are problematic. "Getting volunteers is indeed difficult," says Sharifah. "PWW is operating with the barest minimum but we survive nonetheless."

BOLD ATTEMPT

The society organised its first fund-raising dinner at a leading Ipoh hotel in 2007. They managed to collect a substantial sum from a sympathetic public.

"It is a really bold attempt, as we're rather inexperienced," volunteers Miss Yip, the society's secretary and a founding member. PWW currently has around 80 members and plans to recruit more in the months ahead.

Members pay an annual fee of RM10 and get to participate in the society's activities. Many are housewives who dedicate their time and energy for a noble cause.

"We owe them plenty for without them PWW is a non-starter," adds Yip.

The PWW requires volunteers to help run its awareness programmes, write articles, do counselling works etc.



Dr. Sharifah and members of PWW



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PUBLISHER

Ipo Echo Sdn Bhd
(Regd No 687483 T)

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30450 Ipoh Perak Darul
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Editorial

HYPERMARKETS AND MEGAMALLS

On November 7, 2007 the Star reported that the Perak State is actively courting Carrefour to set up a hypermarket in Greentown, Ipoh. Apparently State Secretary Incorporated (SSI) a commercial entity of the State Government has offered one hectare of land to the hypermarket chain for this purpose. It also appears that if negotiations are successful SSI will construct the building and lease it out to Carrefour.

Ironically on the same day the *New Straits Times* devoted its Biz Focus centre-spread to a story of citizens of Noshiro, a city in Japan's northern coast in Akita prefecture, quietly protesting the construction of a megamall in their city. It is reported that a proliferation of chain stores outside the town has already forced the closing of about half of the city's once teeming central shopping district and the megamall is seen by the community as the final nail in the coffin of

their economy.

Apparently the situation is the same in many regions like Akita where downtown areas have emptied, factories have closed and an exodus to Tokyo of youths seeking jobs has left behind towns that are predominantly for the elderly.

Citizens of Ipoh may feel that this story has a familiar ring to it. They are not mistaken. Perak's state capital is going through a similar experience. There is little doubt many small stores, unable to compete with the hypermarket, will be forced to cease business. It may also affect the existing supply chains that now support these small businesses putting an end to other local enterprises.

The question that really needs serious consideration is how Carrefour or mega commercial houses of this kind will affect the economy not only Ipoh and other state capitals, but other towns that exist away from the dominant urban centres.

We feel that social and economic structures need to be tailored to sustain the local community. There can be little doubt that hypermarkets will assist the consumer in being able to offer more efficient pricing.

On the other hand, such enterprises will contribute very little in creating income for members of the local community. The imbalance between production and consumption will inevitably impact on the multiplier effect of monetary supply and circulation which will, in turn, adversely affect the local economy. This may not be a good thing.

There is also another spectrum to this kind of development. The feeling is best illustrated by quoting Joe Ong who returned to settle in Ipoh after spending most of his working life in England.

"When I left England, I thought that I was at last escaping from the hypermarket hype but it appears it's followed me here," he lamented.

Thinking Aloud

By Siva Pragasam

SUICIDE: A TERRIBLE TREND

Two days before Christmas, 2007, a 21 year old girl from a middle income family preparing to enter university, jumped from the roof of a multi-storey building in Ipoh and ended her life.

On her arm were the words 'I cannot live without you' together with a phone number.

DEVASTATION

Her parents, absolutely devastated, kept repeating that they could not comprehend how she could have so easily dismissed her family who had loved and taken care of her for her 21 years and acted with such finality on the break of some new relationship.

On the December 29, 2007 the Star Newspaper reported University Sains Malaysia Professor See Ching Mey predicting that in 10 to 15 years suicide will take second spot as

the highest cause of death in the country after cardiovascular disease.

NEEDED STEPS

The message should worry us and if urgent steps are not taken to arrest what must be assumed to be a growing trend, it could very well develop into a culture that will be extremely difficult to eradicate.

Stress is a subjective emotion. Some can withstand tremendous stress and even treat it as a challenge, often rising to meet it with resolve and determination.

ESCAPE ROUTE

Others collapse under its weight and surrender. Sometimes they choose the ultimate escape route – death.

But stress can originate from a variety of sources ranging from academic failure to disappointment

in love.

STRESS MANAGEMENT

Reality is – and always will be – that there is no way to remove all causes of stress. The answer lies not in removing the cause of the stress but in teaching children in particular – and people in general – to manage stress.

Recently I had the fortune to observe an organised camp for about 70 children aged between 6 and 14 all suffering from cancer. It was a revelation of the indomitable human spirit. Each and every child was an inspiration and a reminder of the value and preciousness of life.

Perhaps a more productive approach to the stress problem would be to train our young to withstand all manner of pressures. One way of doing this might be to expose them to those having far more reasons to be disappointed with life.

Your Concerns

TRULY REPAIRING THE IPOH PADANG – AN ILLUSION



Levelling exercise on the padang. Note FMS Bldg beyond.

On January 15, 2008, I was standing on the terrace of the Royal Ipoh Club when this scene unfolded before my eyes: there was a tractor on the damaged playing field and a motorised roller appeared to have begun its work. There was a massive pile of sand on one side, ostensibly part of the morning's schedule.

The latest issue of the *Ipoh Echo* had barely hit the streets with my take on the neglected piece of magnificent real estate. I had asked: Does Anybody Care About Our Padang?

Now, these activities! I wondered: Had God finally answered my prayers? Was this a coincidence?

The tractor began scraping the top of the severely indented surface; the roller was doing its levelling job. I decided to wait until the men went for their coffee break.

Yes, said the tractor driver, they were there to scrape the damaged surface, fill it with sand and level the grounds. He said it was a simple job and they had a month to complete it.

Repairing the Padang is simple? If you have seen the damage done, you would not call it a job – it would be a mission! Think of the damaged underground system. What about re-turfing, re-configuration, re-painting. What about the final makeover?

We have been eagerly waiting for the mission to repair Ipoh Padang since the mayor's announcement on Monday, November 12, 2007.

I am not privy to the extent of the construction work needed but from what I have seen of the work in progress, the much touted RM200, 000 repair bill is nothing but an illusion.

Fathol Zaman Bukhari

HOW SAFE IS THIS?



Lorry operators should adhere to guidelines covering the ferrying of goods from one place to another. Bulk deliveries in open cabins should be sufficiently secured and immobilised with and by materials of sufficient strength to make sure they stay in place through winding roads and busy traffic.

PK

Thumbs Up

A CONSTANT THOUGHT

For the past 14 years, the nation's three turf clubs and the Pan Malaysian Pools have diligently organised charity programmes for the underprivileged prior to Chinese New Year. This year's event was held on Friday, January 25, 2008 at the Perak Turf Club. Guests from various charity organisations in Ipoh were treated to a programme that included a clown, a lion dance performance and games.

In his welcome address, Tan Sri Jeyaratnam, Chairman of Perak Turf Club, applauded the gathering of people from different racial and religious backgrounds. He pointed out that festivals in Malaysia are filled with merriment but the



Tan Sri Jeyaratnam handing out ang pow to a guest

fortunate. To this end, the three turf clubs and the Pan Malaysian Pools are happy to contribute to the community through the annual Chinese New Year programme.

The annual exercise entails the provision of

43 charitable organisations in Perak. Some 5,000 members will benefit from this year's programme. Among the recipients are Yayasan Sultan Idris Shah, Rumah Orang Tua Kampong Simee, Salvation Army and Befrienders



Presentation of mock cheque

abundance of everything, from food to goodies, should also remind the luckier ones of the needy and the handicapped. Compassion, he said, must be given sufficient space at all times. The corporate sector, he pursued, has a complementary role to play in making life more bearable for the less

financial aid to charitable organisations throughout the country. The funds are used to enhance services for the marginalised such as the disabled, the infirm, senior citizens and orphans.

A mock cheque for RM286,000 was handed to Tan Sri Jeyaratnam. The money will be disbursed to

Ipoh.

Ms Chong Phaik Kee, Director of Welfare Department in Perak, was present during the occasion. She later joined the VIPs in distributing *ang pows* and goodies to the participants at the end of the hour-long event.

A. Jeyaraj

PRESENTS FROM THE HEART

Going bald in the name of altruism is a very courageous step and when it is taken by a woman - this is part of the culture - one is doubly impressed. Shaving off her "crowning glory" was exactly what the president of the Millennium Heart Caring Society did in November, 2002. The society then needed urgent financial injection to keep the momentum of supporting various charity organisations in the state.

"Seeing the smiles on the faces of the underprivileged when we offered them food or money was well worth the sacrifice of the ten-minute ordeal and being bald for months," said Datin Jenny Lim Chooi Ying who has headed the society since 2000.

The wife of former state assemblyman of Pasir Pinji, Datuk Chan Kam, did not regret her decision. The fund-raising dinner cum hair-shaving event that evening managed to raise RM78,000. The money was utilised to provide meals, food supplies, medication and vitamin supplements to inmates of old folk homes and orphanages.

Presently, the society is financially contributing between RM1,000 and RM3,000 monthly to needy patients at the Ipoh General Hospital. It is donating three units of wheelchairs, lenses to cataract patients and a unit of air-conditioner to the Paediatric Department at the Ipoh General Hospital.

Lim said that, over the years, the society has also organised numerous health screening programmes, blood donation campaigns and anti-crime seminars for the public.

She gave as an example

a case involving a three-year-old girl whose family needed another RM20,000 for her to undergo a cochlear transplant costing RM80,000.

"We had to raise the money for her as the family was unable to do it," she

tickets, which were quickly snapped up by well-wishers, friends and corporate bodies which bought the tickets for their staff.

Proceeds from the dinner this year will be channelled towards



Datin Jenny Lim

recalled. "We mobilised our members, organised a fun fair and managed to send the little girl for treatment. The transplant was a success."

Lim added that the society's members are unique: "They are ordinary folks like hawkers, office workers and housewives. When other people knew more of our society and what we were doing, businessmen, lawyers, doctors and accountants joined in."

The members' annual donations of RM120 each make up the bulk of generous contributions for the needy.

Lim said the January 2008 charity dinner was a tremendous success. The society, after months of tedious canvassing and cajoling, managed to raise a sum of RM88,626 from the sale of dinner

charitable institutions and organisations listed below.

Bone Marrow Transplant Welfare Fund Society - RM2,000

Klinik Choong Wah Perak - RM3,000

Ray of Hope (Centre For Children with Learning Disability) - RM1,500

Woh Peng Cheang Seah Haemodialysis Centre - RM2,000

The Perak Society For the Promotion Of Mental Health - RM2,000

Ipoh Buddhist Welfare Society - RM2,000

Sekolah Semangat Maju, Batu Gajah - RM1,500

Salvation Army Children Home (Kampar Road) - RM2,000

Ren Ai Buddhist Welfare - RM2,000

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THE WAY IT WAS...



100 YEARS AGO THIS FORTNIGHT

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**Monday,
17th February, 1908**

Editorial

With the rapid increase in the number of motor cars and motor cycles, we think that the time has arrived for amending the Automobile Enactment of 1903. That Enactment contained provisions ample enough to cope with the requirements of the day. But during the five years that have elapsed since the passing of the law a great transformation has taken place in the motor car industry, which has so wonderfully expanded.

The cars on our roads have greatly increased and multiplied in numbers to the great comfort and convenience of those using them. But unfortunately with the increased facilities for locomotion afforded by this up to date adjunct of a progressive age, there has come over pedestrians and occupants of vehicles a sense of insecurity.

The number of fatal motor car accidents in the Colony and the F.M.S. has so far been very small. But it is bound to increase as the cars running continue to multiply in number. One of the provisions of the Automobile Enactment No 9 of 1903 has been apparently framed to soothe the tender susceptibilities of the owner of the private car, irrespective of the consequences to the pedestrian public. The following curious stipulations are embodied in the latter part of Section 7 of the Enactment in respect of fixing number plates to these cars.

The plate or plates

affixed to an automobile or carriage, not used for hire or trade purposes, shall be of small size and shall be affixed (in consultation with the owner if he so desires) in such a manner as not to be conspicuous, but at the same time, so as to allow of their being readily examined when necessary.

The above provisions are diametrically opposed to those of the corresponding English Act. At home, motor cars, even when adorned with a Ducal Coronet, have to bear number plates in a conspicuous place, so that they may be easily recognised. The identity of runaway cars in many a police prosecution at home has been made out by the number there on noted by spectators at the scene of the numerous motoring fatalities which occur so frequently.

Here in the Colony and the F.M.S. such accidents are happily rare, and so far there has been no recorded instance of a motorist driving off after having run over some unlucky pedestrian, or smashing some vehicle.

But in case of such an eventuality, which is neither improbable nor impossible, the number plate supposed to be fixed to the car under the conditions of the F.M.S. Enactment will be found to be practically useless for securing a correct identification of the runaway automobile. The following very useful provision of the Automobile Enactment is more frequently honoured in the breach than the observance thereof. In all cases such automobiles shall be driven so as to give as much space as possible for the passing of other traffic.

Excellent as the foregoing regulations undoubtedly are, if carried out in actual practice, we regret to observe that the majority of motor cars run through the centre of the road, however narrow, and thereby greatly inconvenience other traffic. This inconvenience will be felt to a still greater extent when the number of cars increase still further, as they promise to do at no distant date.

We would commend to the consideration of the powers that be the following amendments to the Automobile Enactment when it comes up for revision. The speed at which cars are permitted to travel through town roads and turn corners should be strictly limited. The plates affixed to cars ought to be made as large and conspicuous as those attached to private cars at home and finally we would urge that drivers of motor cars be compelled under stringent penalties to observe the rules of the road laid down in the Enactment.

* * * * *

Police News

(Before Mr A.H. Peck)

Kuoh Koh Kim, a Chinese lady living with her mother in Kamunting, left her house on the night of the 11th inst. at about 7 or 8 pm to buy some milk.

When she returned she saw a Celestial, rejoicing in the name of Lim Yi Fong, removing a bicycle from the hall and passing through the threshold of the house. She called out for her mother who in turn invoked aid of the

Police, with the result that a detective, who was moving about in that locality, collared the culprit as he was trying to mount the bicycle and ride off.

The accused stated in his defence that a man took him into the house, pointed out the bicycle to him and charged him with attempting to steal it.

On Saturday last the accused was sentenced to three months' rigorous imprisonment.

* * * * *

Captain Dempster of the Sungei Rotan Estate was coming into Taiping on his motor cycle, when a cow belonging to a Malay named Sahari, which was grazing, gave chase to him with the result that the latter was obliged to put on full speed to escape its pursuit.

On Saturday last Sahari was charged under Section 289 of the Penal Code with knowingly or negligently omitting to take such order with a cow in his possession as is sufficient to guard against any probable danger of grievous hurt from such animal.

He was found guilty and fined in the sum of ten dollars.

* * * * *

Local and General

The construction of the Johore Railway extension is, we understand, greatly impeded in some sections by the existence of swamps over which embankments have to be built.

The yielding nature of the surface causes much of the earth work to sink, making progress laborious and costly. But the officers engaged in the construction stick to their posts right manfully.

Nevertheless it is now considered doubtful whether the through line could be completed by the end of the year as at first anticipated.

* * * * *

The Sungei Ujong Railway, which is to be acquired by the F.M.S. Government, is to be handed over on the 1st July next, when important improvements and alterations on the line will be taken in hand. It is anticipated that the line will yield an handsome return on the capital outlay incurred in its purchase.

* * * * *

**Friday,
21st February, 1908**

Police News

(Before Mr A. Peck)

A Couple of Drunkards

Two Tamils named Sinnatamby and Soosai were up yesterday before the Magistrate on a charge of being drunk and incapable of taking care of themselves. The former was arrested at Simpang and the latter at Kota at about 9.30 pm on the 19th instant. Both of them pleaded not guilty to the charge and a fine of one dollar each with an option of two days in the gaol to grow sober

was the punishment meted out to them.

**Saturday,
29th February, 1908**

An interesting gambling case was heard on Monday last by the Third Magistrate, Singapore.

The police had made a raid the previous night at a house in Almeida street and arrested 7 men on a charge of gambling in a common gaming house.

One of them, Tan Hok Gee, the son of a wealthy and well-known Towkay was charged with being the occupier of the house.

The police also seized some curious musical instruments used in accompanying some singing girls who were amusing the gamblers. At the trial the young Towkay said that he kept the establishment that was raided for his own amusement. They gambled there sometimes, but it was not a common gaming house. In the result, all the accused were discharged.

The effect of recent decisions is that gambling is perfectly legal if carried on anywhere in the Colony except in a 'common gaming house'. By the effect of the paternal legislation, a rich man may gamble away a fortune in the company of his friends at his luxurious home.

But the coolie may not risk a twenty-cent price among his comrades in a dilapidated shed or shanty. Gambling has been far from stamped out in the Colony, and we should like to hear what the anti Gamblers have to say on the demoralizing effects of gambling in the light of recent events.

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Ipoh *Facts and Fancies*

by Ho Tak Ming

The Silibin Tamil Settlement

How a ten-year lease resulted in a disgraceful urban slum

In 1905, the Chairman of the Kinta North Sanitary Board, Mr F.W. Douglas, applied to the Government for a concession of land at Silibin.

He duly requested a ten-year lease in the name of two local Indian contractors.

This was his objective: to centralise living arrangements for Indians, mainly the Tamils, who had hitherto been scattered in surrounding Malay kampongs.

In order to create an acceptable Indian settlement, the proper thing for the Government to do would have been to build barracks for the inhabitants and charge a reasonable rent, thereby ensuring proper residential supervision. Regrettably this did not happen.

FAILED OBLIGATIONS

Instead the Government left it to the contractors to build the houses. The contractors, in turn, failed to fulfil their obligations and instead charged a rent of \$1 per month for a 60 feet by 40 feet site to any resident Indian who wanted to build a house. The result was badly built, flimsy, attap huts that were let out to innumerable tenants in order that the landlords could recoup their capital as quickly as possible.

Government officials cared little that the inhabitants of the settlement were herded together like cattle. Indeed, they largely ignored the slum they had created until an outbreak of smallpox occurred there in 1913.

CLEAN UP ORDERED

This, then, was seen as an immediate danger to the European colonialists. Orders were immediately given for the slum to be cleaned up.

The Silibin Settlement was separated into two parts by the railway line.

On the Kledang side of the railway were the Government quarters for the Indian clerks employed on the railway and other departments. There were several blocks of decent barracks and a number of detached bungalows occupied by the more highly-paid Indians employed in the Clerical Service and commercial firms. They formed a somewhat separate entity. But across the river and the Sanitary Board sewage works was the Tamil Settlement prop-

er, where lived one thousand-odd Tamil coolies, navvies on the roads and railway, municipal labourers and so forth.

A long straggly street with attap huts on both sides, none of which had any air of permanency, ran through this section of the settlement. Children and diverse livestock crowded the pathway, and, if one were driving, one had to go very slowly to avoid knocking down something – animate or inanimate.

There was no drainage or any idea of sanitation.

Rubbish was thrown out into the lanes for the dogs to scavenge, or to be weathered by the sun and rain.

DRINKING WATER HYDRANTS

Outside each house

there was an improvised earth drain filled with a slimy fetid coffee-coloured liquid. The only sources of drinking water were six hydrants generously supplied by the Sanitary Board. Also presented as a gift of the Sanitary Board were four latrines to serve a population of one thousand – with the result that few bothered to use them.

The overcrowding and overall degradation of humanity was scandalous – as many as fifteen men slept in one room, on a raised shelf that did duty as a bed. The rooms were merely sleeping cabins, the occupants tightly packed with little fresh air to breathe or space to move. The men tried to save as much as possible on rent, and thus had to be content with the minimum sleeping space.

LAWLESSNESS

As might be expected, there was a state of extreme lawlessness in the settlement, with gangs of thugs terrorising the law-abiding citizens, and the police almost helpless in trying to enforce law and order.

The Silibin Tamil Settlement was nothing short of a disgrace to Ipoh. It underlined the fact that the Colonial Government had never bothered to establish a housing policy for urban Indians.

If the Government was convinced of the necessity for the centralisation of the Tamil community in the general interests of Ipoh, the least it could have done was to provide proper housing for them. Instead, it created an urban slum for a permanent underclass of subjects.

Mistaken Identity

Once, when we were young colonial soldiers in Malaya

by Merv Sprague

Wednesday was always a bad day for soldiers. Pay Parade was scheduled for the following day when we would obediently line up for our weekly pittance. Gilbert morosely examined the meagre contents of his wallet, while I counted the small change in my pockets. Together, our combined wealth amounted to a little over ten Malayan dollars. To put it mildly, our recreational resources were limited.

The bus fare from Minden Barracks to the heart of Georgetown, Penang was 20 cents and as my comrade explained, we had just enough to visit a city cinema and perhaps have a bottle of Coke! That week *The King and I* was showing and we made a combined decision to venture forth to the Capitol Cinema in Penang Road. Both excited of a celluloid evening of colour and song with Deborah Kerr and Yul Brynner, we eventually reached Georgetown at sunset.

LETDOWN

Ushered to our cheapest house seats we waited for the main feature. High expectation turned to profound disappointment when the opening reel of

the film displayed both Brynner and Kerr plus the troop of Siamese Royal Children in a pale maroon colour. It seems that the copy of the film the cinema received was in sepia. While the visual effects were lacking, we merrily hummed along to the musical offerings of Rodgers and Hammerstein.

We succeeded in amazing and annoying the largely Chinese audience.

The film was subtitled in Mandarin, which certainly helped some of the more educated masses. Meanwhile the Hokkien and Hakka speakers were left to do the best they could as they watched Yul waltz a pretty Deborah around the Siamese palace.

'SACRIFICED'

On the way home, as we approached the Yellow



Deborah Kerr in sepia was not exactly what we had expected.

Bus Station, we espied a posse of Royal Military Police lounging around their Land Rover. The Red Cap in Charge asked us what we had been doing and we explained the trip to the cinema. Seemingly satisfied with Gilbert's poor rendition of "Getting to Know You", he kindly offered us a free trip back to our Barracks. This was a refreshing gesture that we readily accepted.

Suddenly, a truck containing a mob of armed riot police arrived on the scene. Experience told us that it would be very foolish to argue with a squad of wild-

eyed turbaned baton-wielding Sikhs. To our surprise, the Redcaps offered us up as sacrificial lambs to the Punjabi hordes.

We attempted to explain our innocence, without success. Bundled unceremoniously on the Police wagon we were despatched to the Datuk Keramat Police Station at high speed. There we were to learn that we were suspected of being involved in the sacking of the local Boston Bar.

Apparently, during the course of the evening the owner had called the police when some drunken

garrison soldiers were rearranging his beloved bar. I wondered where they had got the money to drink on a Wednesday night!

MISERY

Gilbert and I were thrown into a large holding cell where we found another twenty or so pris-

oners. There were many familiar faces - it was like a family reunion! We sat dejectedly on long gymnasium benches lined along the walls and awaited an unknown fate.

Within a few minutes, another five detainees joined us. I forget the exact genius who discovered that the heavy wooden benches were not secured to the walls, but he has my eternal thanks.

A command decision was made to use one of the benches as a battering ram. Being young and seemingly invulnerable to small arm fire, we proceeded to take not only

the door but also the entire framework out with one hit. Dust and wood splinters filled the air as we strode triumphantly towards the main Station entrance.

GREAT ESCAPE

Sitting at a small desk close to cells was a short bespectacled Chinese Sergeant who seemed to be passionately involved in some routine paperwork. He never bothered to look up as we passed. His only words were, "Good Night, Johnny." "Good Night, Johnny!"

Our great escape was concluded with the help of the Yellow Bus Company to whom I would like to offer my sincere thanks. Curiously, the riot police were nowhere to be seen and one can imagine that they had returned to mend the cell door.

The following day, there was not a peep from the hierarchy at Minden Barracks. Even the Military Police were silent and probably in hiding.

Gilbert wrote a long rambling letter to his mother about the episode.

And me?

I developed a total dislike of Hollywood movies and anything associated with Wednesdays.

Musings by See Foon Chan-Koppen



See Foon

As I sit staring at the screen, waiting for inspiration, my attention is drawn to the sight of birds of varying hues and plumage, foraging for food. I am living in a part of Ipoh where nature is still abundant – not yet ready to be swallowed up by the city.

I have this conscious yearning to linger over the view.

Which leads me reflecting on our countless unconscious yearnings. What about the things we don't allow ourselves to yearn for and have put away into the deep unconscious part of ourselves?

The American poet and philosopher, Robert Bly, once put forward a "bag" theory of the unconscious, a view of life that I'm particularly partial to.

BAG THEORY

Bly suggested that up to the age of two, we are glowing balls of energy with multifaceted, 360-degree personalities. But, with time, we begin to notice that our parents don't like certain parts of the ball. They say things like "Can't you be still?" or "It isn't nice to hit your brother". To keep our parents' love, we put that active, assertive part into this imaginary "bag" we carry behind us.

By the time we get

TAKE A LOOK IN YOUR BAG

According to one theory, the age of innocence ends at two. After that, we spend our lives packing and unpacking a bag.

to school age, the bag is quite large and quite full. Then our teachers make their contribution: "Good children obey the rules". So we take our individuality and stuff that into the bag. Other kids in class laugh at you when you say something stupid, so speaking up is bagged as well.

I grew up watching my grandmother berate my aunt for her stupidity and slowness, so these went into my bag, at an early age. Is it any wonder that I am often raging about "stupid people"?



Until the age of about 20, Bly believes, we are occupied with deciding what parts of ourselves to put into the bag, and the remainder of our lives is spent trying to recover them.

Then, dragging that invisible, dead-weight bag behind us, we wonder why we're always tired and why some situations repeatedly haunt us. Or we wonder why certain things just aren't fun or are plain difficult. Have you ever seen a one or two-year-old toddler getting low on energy? Or complain of boredom?

IRONIES

In relationships, chances are that the very qualities that draw a couple to each other in the first place are the very same ones they have each buried in their respective bags. And, as experts on human relationships will testify, these qualities are usually the ones that are identified as sources of conflict later on in the relationship.

For example, the man who was attracted to what he saw as his wife's warmth and vulnerability, may later redefine these same attributes as intrusiveness and doormat-like dependency. Or, if attracted to her independence, vitality and intelligence, he may later see his wife as domineering. Similarly, the woman who once valued her partner for his reliability, may, further down the line, condemn him as being predictable and boring.

The dynamics of what goes on during the initial attraction, if we go by Bly's theory, is that the very qualities that attract us are the very same ones that we have put in our own bag. And the longer we leave them there, the more they fester.

ENDLESS TASK

And me? In my bag there used to be a helpless female. In the past I would bristle visibly at male attempts to put me down with lines like "Don't worry your pretty little head over it".

To keep that "bimbo"

in the bag, I've always lugged my own luggage, opened my own doors and fought my own battles. But now she's out of the bag, and it's amazing how



many chivalrous men pop out of the woodwork to offer genuine assistance when I need it. I have no difficulty admitting that some knotty tasks baffle me and seek help when necessary.

These days, I even feel compassionate when I meet a woman who apparently has cotton wool between her ears, and marvel at the way men rally around her helplessness.



But the task of sorting through my bag is a monumental one, and will probably continue until I draw my last breath.

So, any brave "Ipohite" out there willing to join me in looking into our bags?

'Crazy Guy On A Bike' A VISA SCARE



Drenched but now closer to home . . .

'Bike for Malaysia' cyclist Law Tzou-Hann breathes a sigh of relief as he arrives on South East Asian soil. So far young Law has pedalled about 24,798 kilometres. He is heartened by the thought that, daily, he is getting closer to his goal – completing his cycling tour of the globe in aid of his favourite charities.

It has taken him three months to cycle across China.

On February 1, 2008, Tzou-Hann was flipping through his passport, just to view all the stamps of places he had been to and feeling content with how much he had so far accomplished.

JOLTED

Then, wham! He suddenly discovered that his visa for China was expiring the next day, February 2, 2008. With 200 kilometres to cycle before he reached the China – Vietnam border, he started to worry like never before!

Starting at 7.30am on February 2, 2008, Tzou-

Hann made it to the border by 6.30pm. According to the young engineer, this meant cycling non-stop for 11 hours. Kudos to Tzou-Hann for his remarkable perseverance!

He is understandably very glad. He quips: "Not bad eh!"

Those who wish to donate to Law Tzou-Hann's Charity Ride in aid of:

SMK St George Taiping Development Fund; the National Cancer Society of Malaysia; the MAA-MEDICARE Kidney Charity Fund should send their contributions to:
OGA-Longwayhome Charity Ride, c/o No 36, 1st Floor, Jalan Pasar, 34000, Taiping, Perak, Malaysia.



Kafe Paprika's



Kafe Paprika's Navarin of Lamb

Noisettes are lamb shortloin chops with the bone removed, the "tail" wrapped around and secured with toothpicks. This dish will improve in flavour if cooked the day before required. Keep covered in refrigerator.

This recipe is unsuitable to freeze.

INGREDIENTS

1 tablespoon oil
30g butter
6 lamb noisesettes
1 onion, chopped
2 cloves garlic, crushed

½ cup plain flour
1 litre (4 cups) water
2 chicken stock cubes
½ cup dry red wine (optional)
2 tablespoons tomato paste
1 large sprig fresh rosemary
2 teaspoons fresh thyme leaves (or ½ teaspoon dried thyme leaves)

250g green beans
2 sticks celery
250g baby carrots

METHOD

Heat oil and butter in frying pan, add noisesettes,

fry on both sides until browned.

Remove from pan. Drain all but 2 tablespoons of fat from pan.

Add onion and garlic to pan, stir constantly over heat until onion is lightly browned. Add flour, stir constantly over heat until mixture is browned. Stir in water and crumbled stock cubes, wine and tomato paste. Stir constantly over heat until mixture boils and thickens. Add rosemary and thyme, reduce heat,

simmer 3 minutes.

Top and tail beans, cut beans into 5cm lengths. Cut celery into 5cm lengths.

Combine noisesettes, beans, celery and carrots in large ovenproof dish, top with sauce, cover, bake

in moderate oven for about 1 ½ hours or until lamb is tender (or microwave on MEDIUM for about 30 minutes). Serves 6.

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MAXWELL'S LEGACY

Unspoilt surroundings make the oldest hill station in Malaysia a soothing favourite

by Rizal Abdullah

Many people – especially those who lived in Taiping in the 60s and 70s – still refer to Bukit Larut as Maxwell Hill. The reference is invariably tinged with affection for the hill station – the oldest in Malaysia – is associated with calming remembrances: the cool, lush rainforest of the Bintang Range, the unspoilt area leading up to the summit, the deep gullies, the little streams and the sound of icy-cold water gushing down mountain slopes.

A tourist has recorded his exuberant praise for the retreat: “The surrounding country with its groves of evergreen is very much like Switzerland’s in summer except, perhaps, the country is greener and more thickly wooded.”

Another comment, from a fitness freak who conquers the first three-kilometre steep stretch daily, is less effusive but more direct and definitely vehement: “We do not want Bukit Larut to be another Fraser’s Hill, Genting or even Cameron Highlands. If we want to see flowers and vegetables, we will go to Cameron Highlands and



Away from it all. Untouched by what its devotees disparangly refer to as ‘human design’. They want it left alone.

if we want entertainment, we will go to Genting. We want Bukit Larut to be different.”

HOW DIFFERENT?

When Taiping folk talk about wanting Bukit Larut

to be “different from the other hill stations”, they are voicing their fear of the resort being subjected to massive redevelopment schemes. They want the place to remain as pristine and “unmolested” as it had been in 1884 when it was established by the colonial officer, George Maxwell.

The only access up the summit is a single tarred road built shortly after the Pacific War and completed in 1948. A natural canopy formed by giant trees and towering ferns provide needed shade on hot sunny days. On a fine day, the summit rewards the brave and the adventurous with the panoramic view of Taiping

town, the Lake Gardens, the suburbs of Simpang and the 19-kilometre road between Simpang and Port Weld (now Kuala Sepetang). A bonus is the scenic picture of the ragged coastline between Pangkor island and Penang.

RESPITE

There are only seven bungalows at varying heights for guests who wish to stay overnight. For accommodation, advance bookings and reservations should be made. Camping in the open anywhere in the hills is absolutely prohibited.

The temperature can drop to as low as 15°C so you are well-advised to bring warm clothes. Taiping and the surrounding hills are reputed to be the wettest part of Malaysia. Expect a downpour anytime. Lightning and

thunderstorms are regular occurrences and guests are told to observe normal safety rules when caught in the open.

Maxwell Hill – Bukit Larut – is for those who desire a genuine tranquil retreat. There are neither entertainment facilities nor organised activities. Visitors who want to go trekking should seek advice from the resort management and acquire the services of experienced guides.

WALK OR TAKE THE LAND ROVER

The brave can walk. The braver still can be ferried up in specially fitted Land Rovers which negotiate the 92 hairpin bends without changing gears or slowing down. These awesome trips are managed efficiently by the Larut Matang District Office (05-8077241).



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YOUNG PERAK

A section of interest and action for the youth of our state

Students from participating schools are invited to share their thoughts with others. Contributors may write about or photograph things/events outside their respective institutions of learning. Human interest stories, observations and reflections are welcome.

E-mail articles to –
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SCHOOL BAGS FOR THE NEW YEAR



Lead up to New Year was a bright one for these pupils.

Some 200 needy pupils of SJK (C) Pasir Pinji 1 and SRJK Pasir Pinji 2 were the appreciative recipients of new school bags from the Sate MCA. The children had been looking forward to replacing their worn-out ones.

The primary school-children, aged between 8 and 12, were selected by their schools on the basis of their families' income. State MCA vice-chairman and Ipoh Timur's MCA division chief Datuk Chew Wai Khoon said that in giving out the school bags, his party is clearly demonstrating its contribution in promoting

a caring society. They wish to participate in alleviating the plight of the needy.

In his address, he exhorted his young audience to study hard.

He advised them never to allow poverty to hinder them from dreaming big and achieving goals.

The school bag-giving gesture came in conjunction with the lead-up to this year's Chinese New Year celebrations.

More new school bags were given to pupils from SJK (C) Sam Chai, SRK Perempuan Methodist, SJK (C) Ave Maria, SJK (C) Yuk Choy and SJK (C) Chung Shan.

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A HEARTWARMING NOTE FROM TAIPING

An e-mail to Young Perak from Mr Wong Tuckee, a teacher at SM Sains Raja Tun Azlan Shah, Taiping, started it all.

He wrote: "I have been instructed by my principal - Puan Rahimah bte. Mohd

Sura to send you an article by our student – Luqman Hadi bin Azahar – who emerged as one of the top 10 students from Perak in the recent PMR examinations. Attached is the story for your perusal. Luqman was one of

those who received an award from the Perak Director of Education on December 27, 2007. He has been in this school since 2005. We hope that you will find the article useful and publish it in your newspaper to further motivate him

and others to greater heights. Thank you."

Here you are, Mr Wong Tuckee. We find the story inspiring and of great human interest. We look forward to getting more stories from you and your students for the *Ipoh Echo*. PK

EXCELLENT NEWS FOR PUAN RAHIMAH'S SCHOOL

Premier school SM Sains Raja Tun Azlan Shah in Taiping is a school that makes the state very proud.

The school performed remarkably well in the PMR examinations (2007) with 80 students out of a total of 109 scoring straight As. The other 29 students missed straight As but had Bs. In other words, none of the students of the school got a C or below for any of the subjects they sat for. Congratulations to principal Puan Rahimah Mohd Sura and the team of committed teachers for an excellent job!

OBJECTIVES

They are aiming very hard to become the state's best school. In fact, they want to beat Malay College in Kuala Kangsar! A feat which is not impossible to achieve if the students and teachers continue to aim high. Nevertheless, as Mr Wong said, the recent results were an achievement the school community can be truly proud.

The school in Taiping has always been consistently doing well in the PMR examinations throughout the years. The 2007 results were not just a flash in the pan thing.

One of the school's top achievers was Luqman Hadi. His unabashed ambition is to be the future Prime Minister of this country!

He is in the right place. At present, he is attending a school that grooms leaders. Teachers have always encouraged students to aim high and act accordingly to achieve their long-term objectives.

Luqman has taken all the opportunities here to prepare himself for high-level leadership. He is the president of the French Club at school - he speaks excellent French, apart from English and Malay. He commands great respect from his peers because of his discipline and his ability to do well in both



Luqman and friends from SM Sains Raja Tun Azlan Shah celebrate.



Luqman with an understandably proud Puan Rahimah.



Raja Nor



Raja Nor and schoolmates show off their well-earned certificates.

the academic as well as in extra-curricula activities.

ANOTHER ACHIEVER

Another high flyer from the school is Raja Nor Syamim Raja Mohd

Izzuddin. Her parents are bank officers in Taiping. Her ambition is to be a doctor.

She hopes to be a doctor who will carry out further research to find cures for some of the world's current

incurable diseases.

Raja Nor is actively involved in extra-curricular activities. She is an all-rounder. She enjoys sports and games. She is a member of the school debating team as well.

continued from page 2

TELLING IT LIKE IT IS

Nurse Phun Mun Yee explains that there are instances when families put so much hope that their loved ones will get better.

"This does not usually happen," she remarks. "It is better to face reality because things get resolved when people realise that they may not have much time left. We never lie to

we try to be understanding, but we neither patronise nor condescend."

I went with Nurse Phan to Menglembu to talk to the immediate family of a patient who was fading rather fast. The daughter had travelled from Norway to be with her parent. After a long and quiet chat with Nurse Phan, she was overcome with sadness but was grateful to have been "guided towards a better

would help her deal with matters better and enable her to make further plans.

"False hopes," pursues Nurse Phan, "do a disservice. They make people go on living in denial – the patient, the family, everybody. What is more important is for the truth to be faced squarely and handled bravely, with dignity."

'MAKE ME LOOK BEAUTIFUL'

On a Thursday, Sister Nancy Koh and I visit 58-year-old Chong Sem Peen. She is one of PPCS "success stories". Sem Peen came from the brink to be an example of how one can learn to adapt to



Sem Peen's favourite photograph, one she shares with every visitor.

the restrictions of grave illness. It was not an easy road. Left on her own by her husband and daughter when she was diagnosed with nose cancer, Sem Peen had slid into depression.

"It took a long while to coax her into becoming positive and try to be cheerful," Nurse Koh relates. "But after many visits and when she saw it really mattered to me that she should be cheerful, she came round and became more responsive. She began to open up and gradually, the old spark came back. She knows

she is very ill, but she has accepted it and has decided to confront it with some style. I commend her bravery."

Sem Peen's reaction to the presence of a reporter and the news that her photograph was to be taken was heartwarming. She asked to be excused. "Give me time," she said, "I want to look beautiful!"

Before she fell ill, Sem Peen was very glamorous. The cancer has curtailed much of her former lifestyle but, with Nurse Nancy's encouragement, she tries "to keep up". She has just had a pedicure. The nurse is buoyed by this observation.

The bond between care giver and patient is very obvious. It is inspiring. While Nancy Koh changes the bandage on Sam Peen's wound, the latter talks about the PPCS and its volunteers. She informs me about the tea parties where patients are taken out for a day so they may have some fun, so that they may smile.

We talk as more pictures are taken. Sam Peen says, 'Make me beautiful!'

DYNAMIC VOLUNTEERS

The PPCS has an enviable support group and a few dedicated volunteers who go the extra mile in augmenting the efforts of the regular staff.

Volunteers help by driving patients to their doctor's appointments or their patients' children to school as well as in grocery shopping. Volunteers also assist in providing emotional support to patients and their families.

Mrs Jemima Daniel has been a volunteer since 1996. She is a member of the 'Patchwork Gang' – a



Nurse Nancy Koh giving words of reassurance to Sem Peen who was shocked at the sight of a snake in her backyard. Sem Peen is still able to look after herself and has, with the encouragement of the PPCS, worked out a "contingency plan" for herself. She has a neighbour who looks out every morning to see whether Sem Peen has opened her door. If the door is open, it means Sem Peen is OK. If it's not, the neighbour comes across to check on her.

group of ladies who gather on a weekly basis to sew and turn out handicraft items which are sold. The income collected helps with ongoing fund-raising for the PPCS. She also makes regular visits to the Palliative Care Unit at the Ipoh Hospital. Recently, Mrs Daniel won a Public

LIVE EVERY MOMENT

The staff and volunteers of the Perak Palliative Society do more than hand out medical supplies and dispense advice.

Their kindness is constant; their efforts are low-key. But following them around is a lesson in what they perform best – the gift of caring.

The self-facing and energetic nurses who sally forth from the big green gates of the PPCS headquarters at Lebu Woods make one see that it is the basic things that really matter. That time is the best gift you can give people. That a smile and an encouraging word can go a long way. That touch is important. That life, every minute of it, counts.



Service Award from the Rotary Club of Kinta. She donated the gift cheque to the PPCS.



Now a treasured photograph in a family album: Tee Hong Ching with his wife, grandson and daughter in Lumut.



Tee Hong Ching seen here with his grandson said he was overjoyed. It made a big difference that people unrelated to him cared about his last wishes.

patients, or give them false hopes. We try to be gentle,

understanding of the situation". This, she added,

CULTIVATE THE READING HABIT

These days, the basic rule is: "To earn more, you must learn more".

There is an old saying that "knowledge is power". In my opinion, knowledge is only potential power.

It becomes power only when you are able to apply it in your daily life.

ALWAYS YOURS

Your education – your knowledge – is always yours. You may lose personal property, your house, your car, the furniture and the money you've hidden under the bed – but you

would be able to find your way out of Misery Street. You cannot mortgage your education, but you can use it to start new ventures, even from scratch.

Think of this: the most powerful weapon you have is your mind. Isn't it ironic that nobody could detect it immediately when you walk into a roomful of strangers? Or you can walk past security borders without having to declare it. But, once past those borders, the same mind can help you build and acquire things; it can help you attain new heights.

PERSISTENCE

Of course, everything is easier said than done. You have to keep trying; you have to keep learning. And, after learning, be persistent. You must never say, I have learned enough. I now know everything.

Look: What you learned 20 years ago is no longer sufficient to get you through present demands at the workplace.

If you are an engineer and if you had your education in the 1970s and you have failed to keep up

with changing trends and technological advances, you have fallen far behind your more diligent peers.

You will remain employable only when you keep up with the changing world.



The key to success is curiosity, resourcefulness and the belief that life must involve certain risks.

Imagine what you can achieve if you had all the knowledge and are able to apply it in the various aspects of your life.

BEGIN NOW

It is never too late to begin. Try this for yourself and give yourself a month's trial period.

Try reading for an hour a day on an area of your choice or your chosen field. Soon you will notice that your life is beginning to change. That's because your mind is opening up. You will see more opportunities and possibilities around you.

Research has shown that the average adult reads less than one book a year. If you were to read a book a week, that would add up to 52 books a year and about 500 books in the next ten

years. Good books are a good source of knowledge.

They are a big help. For example, if I record 30 years of learning – mistakes, failures, lessons learned – between the covers of a book, all you need is a week to have an idea of what life could be!

So, reading is the first step in improving your mind and your life.

It is an easy leisure to cultivate – you do not need to organise a group!

As Alvin Toffler once said: "The illiterate of the 21st century will not be those who cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn, and re-learn."

Harry Seggu

Sport

by Steve Darby

SO YOU WANT TO BE A PROFESSIONAL FOOTBALLER part 1

Then start believing in hard work . . .

I am often asked by young players or even their parents – what does it take to be a professional footballer? It has always been a popular question, especially now that it can be such a lucrative career with players such as John Terry earning up to RM130,000 a DAY!

It's easy to say the simplistic clichés such as skill, fitness, mentality or even luck. In reality, if it's broken down into its required components, it's quite a complex process to reach the top. Perhaps the most important aspect is hard work!

I believe you can divide the game into four main areas – physical, mental, technical and tactical.

This two-part document is given to all young Perak players in an attempt to “football educate”.

PHYSICAL QUALITIES

AEROBIC CAPACITY

The ability to “run all day”, “good engines”, measured by bleep testing. This is the ability to cover long distances in a game i.e. Beckham –10km per match. Gained by either long distance running or playing games at a high intensity. Watch Maldini, Cafu, Rise.

ANAEROBIC CAPACITY

The ability to run fast “he's like lightning”; “he gets there first”, i.e. Thierry Henry.

Measured by sprint tests through light gates. Gained by sprint training and weight training. The ability to repeat sprints is



a great asset. Watch Bistuta, Shevchenko, Raul.

STRENGTH/POWER

Essential ingredient of a modern player. “He doesn't get knocked off the ball” – “he wins tackles” – “he can look after himself”. Measured by Gym tests. Strength is gained by



weight training and plyometric work. You get to the ball first, jump higher, can protect the ball better and get injured less. Watch Drogba, Torres, Rooney.

FLEXIBILITY

Helps with the range of movement, reduces injury. Gained by stretching and core work in the gym. Ex-

ercises should be done before and after training for maximum effect.

TECHNICAL QUALITIES

HEADING

A difficult skill and often underrated. Watch Ronaldo. Strong neck muscles will assist this skill, plus confident technique: “You head the ball...it doesn't head you”. Watch the ball right onto your forehead.



PASSING

The higher you play



the more important this is. You “keep the ball” at the highest level. The qualities of a pass are its accuracy, i.e. to feet, or in front of a player, and its weight – can the receiver pass or shoot first time. Watch Kaka, Fabregas.

CONTROLLING

Your first touch of a ball should allow you to pass or shoot



Clockwise: Rooney, Beckham, Drogba, Giggs, Ronaldo, Zidane and Torres.

with the next touch. The majority of high level football is played at one and two touch. You get in the line of flight of the ball, relax the controlling surface and keep the ball moving. You should try to receive the ball with your body in a position that you can always see the opponent's goal. Watch Zidane.

TACKLING

The best defenders come off the pitch with “clean shorts”. Go to ground as a last resort – when you are on the ground you are out of the



game. The best defenders “nick the ball”; they “mark in advance” or “inside to out”. They intimidate forwards with strength and never show pain. When jockeying, “watch the ball . . . not the feet of the forward”. Try to force the forward wide or even better towards his own goal. Try to win the ball when you have cover. Watch Baresi, Vidic, Carragher.

DRIBBLING

A player who can “take people on” or “do people” can destroy any team shape as they pull players out of position if they have gone past somebody. Watch Giggs. The key factors are change of pace and direction. The best dribblers keep the ball between their feet so they can go either way and often keep the ball going when they are tackled. The great players know when to stop dribbling and when to pass. Dribbling is encouraged in the final third and THEIR penalty box.

SHOOTING

“If you don't shoot you don't score” – be prepared to shoot, have confidence. The best shot in the world is no good if it is wide so the most important thing is not power but accuracy! The majority of goals are scored from 1 or 2 touch. As the ball comes, relax, get the ball “out of your body” and “watch the ball hit your foot”. The ball goes where your head goes. Watch Torres, Viduka, Van Nistelroy.

Next issue: Tactical qualities and mental discipline you would need.

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