

From the communications team.....

Dear members,

Welcome to the last Newsletter before most of you head off to your home countries for your Summer Holidays. For those of you who have recently joined the Malaysian Culture Group it is important to know that the MCG Events Planning Team and some other sub-groups take a break from organising events from Mid June to Mid August when we start back in earnest. Whether you are lying on beach somewhere, visiting Museums or visiting family take some time to think about how you can help the MCG, as Diana has mentioned we are urgently looking for a Secreary and the EP team is always looking for new members. Have a great holiday and we will see you in August/September.

Michelle Pease

Coming up...



Excursion: Visit and Guided tour to the Malaysian Chinese Museum

Wednesday 12th June, 10.00 for a 10.30 start. Unfortunately this event is now fully booked, if you wish to be put on the waiting list please contact the Events Planning Team at mcgklev-ents@gmail.com

President's Message

Dear Fellow MCG Members

At last month's AGM we all enjoyed hearing the foundation story of our much valued organization. 35 years ago Kate Hashim and friends grew their passion and curiosity about Malaysian culture into a much larger group of kindred spirits seeking out and exploring the many facets of our fascinating home.



I am new to Malaysia but twenty five years in Asia have found me very active in the cultural and museum organizations of my previous homes in Jakarta, Hong Kong and Singapore. Before I had even arrived to KL I knew that Malaysia Cultural Group would be full of kindred spirits who love to discuss ideas in a book group, examine artifacts, textiles and temples, meet talented intellects and of course devour new foods and cuisines. Indeed every month there are many fascinating MCG events to look forward to and more importantly wonderful members to meet.

Volunteer organizations always need new volunteers to put their hands up to keep their spirit alive. At the AGM I raised my hand to share my energy, enthusiasm and experience to help steer our organization through the next year as your new President. A huge thanks to AyLing Liem, Vice President and Cheryl Hoffman, Member at Large who have also agreed to join the Committee.

I would also like to extend a heartfelt thank you to our dedicated outgoing committee members: Jeanne Greer, Bindhya Priesner and Caroline Amberg Terimah Kasih and Selamat Jalan!

Sadly since the AGM our Secretary Bindhya Priesner has had to resign due family and work commitments, this means that we are now in need of a new Secretary. Do put up your hand if you would value working with a great group of people and insuring MCG continues on for at least another 35 years.

On a happier note, our Events Planning Convenor, Marianne Khor, who had resigned at the AGM, has decided to continue in the position, she will be joined by Michelle Pease as Co-Convenor.

The MCG is an organization run by our members for our members. Please email me with all your ideas, suggestions and feedback so that MCG continues to be relevant as your kindred spirit.

I look forward to seeing you at upcoming events!

Diana Daymond
presidentmcg@gmail.com

Did you know that the Malaysian Culture Group has a Facebook Page? Click [here](#) to visit the MCG page

Reviews...

Lectures - Building Up, Tearing Down, the Whoops factor. A lecture by Elizabeth Cardoso, President of Badan Warisan

Diana Daymond



Enak! Cho Cha Foodstore, Chinatown

Jane Bircher



Explorers - Visit to the Leprosy Museum and Settlement, Sungai Buloh

Caroline Amberg & Dori Levai



Book Group 1 - The Stolen Bicycle by Wu Ming-Ye

Meredith Tomkovitch

Book Group 2 - A House Without Windows by Nadia Hashim

Nina Chandola

Meet your MCG Events Planning Team



Judyth Gregory Smith

I was born in London and grew up in the UK. In 1971 we emigrated to Australia for more opportunities for our children. They took all the opportunities and left the country. We still live in different countries which is probably why we get on so well. Richard the eldest is with the Australian Federal Police. Fiona lives in France, but cycles daily over the border to Geneva where she works for the International Committee of the Red Cross. I was fortunate that my younger son, Alex, who is married to a Malay and has two small children lives in Kuala Lumpur and invited me to live with them.

I did not go straight to university from school, as my mother was a war widow and she needed financial help from me. My academic life did not start until we were living in Australia, I juggled studying for degrees, raising three children, holding down a full-time job and spending weekends with Richard my husband studying birds. Richard worked for the Australian Government and we were sent to Papua New Guinea where the birds were great, but security was not. When Richard retired, we went on my postings, first to University Utara Malaysia where the Vice-Chancellor gave Richard a team to study and record the birds of Kedah. Later, he continued similar research when I joined University Malaysia Sarawak. Eventually we returned to Australia as Fiona embarked on a PhD, we thought it would be nice to be in the same country as at least one of our children.

Richard was happy spending every day with birds (feathered ones). I preferred writing and for years wrote articles for The Guardian Weekly in London, the Weekend Australian in Sydney, as well as a couple of books on Sulawesi and one entitled Myanmar: a Memoir of Loss and Recovery. My latest publication is Bernard the Wombat of Ugly Gully – which will soon have a sequel as they are such fun to write.

My life now revolves around Myanmar where I go four times a year to give away Used-Glasses or Gifts of Sight as they are more poetically called. I work with Win San who is a taxi driver and Saya Htay, his wife who does all the administration. We started slowly three years ago, but our routine has hastened and we have now given away 3,600 pairs. Of course, we could not achieve this without our many supporters such as MCG who collect glasses all year round and the Association of British Women Malaysia which has recently sponsored three boxes of glasses to be sent to Myanmar by mail. Reliance Optical and The Hive in Bangsar and above Hock Choon also supply many pairs of glasses and I hardly ever go to a meeting anywhere in KL without someone kindly giving me a big bag of glasses to pass on.

Richard and I both loved Myanmar. Richard died 19 years ago. It goes without saying how much I miss him, but hope he would be happy to know I am doing some useful work in Myanmar, the country we both loved.

Judyth Gregory-Smith