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ISSUE **134**

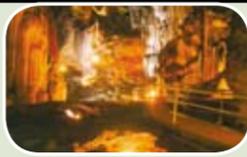
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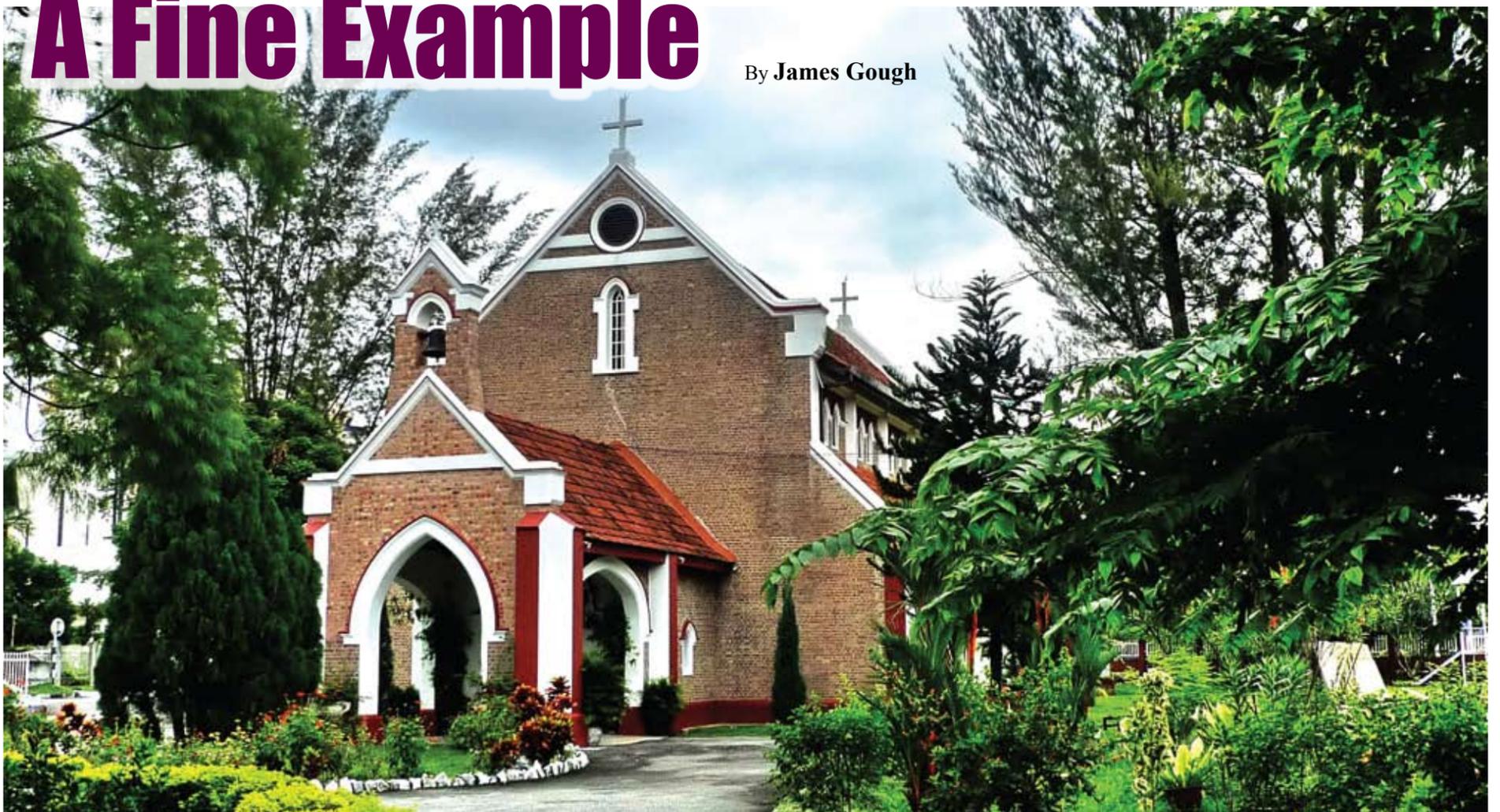
BUMPER ISSUE

Ipoh Echo wishes
our readers
Merry Christmas
A Happy New Year



Heritage Preservation: A Fine Example

By James Gough



Restoration work on the Church of St John the Divine or more commonly referred to as St John's Anglican Church, one of the oldest Anglican churches in Malaysia, has brought it back to its former glory. Eponymously located on St John's Road, it is one of the buildings listed in the Heritage Trail map of Ipoh Old Town.

Continued on page 2

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100 Years On, Divine Heritage Endures

Upon entering the gate of the church, one is presented with a red brick building that looks so English in design, it feels like one has stepped out of Malaysia for a minute and into a "Parish Church in the English countryside" to quote Rev. Anthony Dumper, the Vicar of South Perak, 1949.

Before St John's was built, the Anglicans held their services at the 'old Court House' located close to the Birch clock tower. In the year 1905, only four services were recorded.

When St John's Church was consecrated by Bishop Ferguson Davie on April 30, 1912, it was described as an "architecture of English design but suited to the local equatorial climate."

Gothic Splendour

The church, which has six bays, has Gothic architectural features of pointed arches and buttresses. Its outer walls are of fair-faced brickwork, that is, selected bricks used without plaster. Above its porte-cochère or porch is a bell-tower on the apex of the front gable. The bell was presented to the Church by Mr and Mrs A.C.J. Towers in 1935 which was the Silver Jubilee year of King George V.

Walking down the nave of the church, one passes the baptism font and teak pews. The nave is separated from the chancel by a chancel screen of finely carved trefoil arches.

Behind the altar, a trio of stained-glass windows, which together with the arcade of pointed arches above the clerestory, bathe the entire church in incandescent hues. This splendour did not happen by chance.

Divine Restoration

According to the Church's pastor, Rev. Tom Cherian, sometime before 2009, it was noted that the church was in dire need of repairs. The wooden ceiling was in danger of falling, due to wood rot caused by water seepage and termite infestation.

It took a small calamity in July 2009, when one of the porch trusses in front of the church fell, that they closed the church. "We were lucky that no one was hurt", said Rev. Cherian.

Then the dilemma arose as to whether to do a quick fix or go for a proper restoration. Fortunately, proper restoration won the day.

Expert Advice

Rev. Cherian sought advice from the Perak Heritage Society (PHS) and its vice president Law Siak Hong on how to go about the restoration of the church. During that time too, an Ipoh-born architect, Ken Yeh, now practising in Australia, was home on holiday. Yeh, who admires good work and "did not want to see good work be desecrated in the name of expediency", lent a hand.

Together, Yeh and Law advised Rev. Cherian and his committee on the steps required for restoration.

The repair work involved replacing the rafters and all the roof battens with Nyatoh wood, a time-consuming process as the wood had to be treated for a month before it could be installed. In a similar way, the trusses in the front porch were replaced. The entire ceiling, originally of Meranti, was replaced with a naturally golden dammar minyak (Malaysian kauri) wood.

Tenders were called for and RM250,000 was determined to be the cost of the repairs. This deliberation on what was to be done and the large sum quoted hindered the actual restoration work which only commenced in April of 2010 and completed in December that year.

Understandably, the congregation complained that "it had taken too long to do the repairs" but nevertheless they pulled together in their fundraising efforts and even approached the state government for assistance but none was forthcoming till this day. But ultimately the church managed to raise the funds to complete the job.

For Rev. Cherian, the repair work done on the church will see it in great shape for another 100 years. But he is also aware that regular maintenance and early detection is essential to ensuring a healthy building, indicating a cost of RM6,000 for maintenance every 2 years.



2011: Rev. Tom Cherian in the restored church

Preserving A Community

The Rev. John Cuffe, Vicar of the Parish in 1985, in his foreword for the Church's 75th year after the laying of the foundation stone, said that "a church building is not only bricks and mortar but over the years absorbs the prayers of the parishioners which builds up as the generations pass."

Back then, the congregation was 90% British, with the balance made up of Ceylon Burgers and a smattering of locals. Also in the early days the first four pews from the front were 'reserved' for the British community which was "an unwritten rule".

Parishioner and former choir-master, James Nicholas Devadason, recalled his Aunt Sarah relating an incident pre-war when she arrived early for

service and sat on a 'reserved' pew. Upon sitting down she was reminded by the warden of the 'unwritten rule' to which she responded by quoting St Paul's epistle to the Colossians, chapter 3 verse 11: "here there is no Greek or Jew, slave or free but Christ is all and in all", and didn't shift her seat.

Rich History

Another active pre-war Parishoner, William A Sankey, 85, recalled that during the Second World War, the church was turned into a noodle factory, its pews burned for firewood, its vestry used for making soy sauce and its piped organ was looted. Miraculously the panelling and chancel screen survived the desecration.

At the end of the war soldiers from the Royal Berkshire Regiment collected the chairs from the then Majestic Hotel to be used at its first service. By 1949, with the exception of the organ, the church was fully restored.

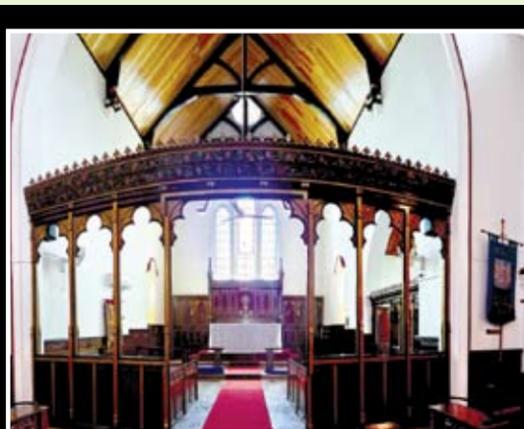
During the time of the Emergency numerous British Regiments worshipped at the Church and during Christmas, a military parade would be held in the Church grounds before the start of service.

St John's Church, being among the oldest Anglican Church in the country, has helped propagate the daughter churches of Church of the Holy Spirit in Buntong and St Peter's Church in Fair Park. It is also one of 25 gazetted heritage buildings identified by Ipoh City Council and listed on the Heritage Trail Map.

By restoring the church to its original splendour the entire Ipoh community will have a reference of how the Anglican community has grown and proliferated in the state. That is heritage value by itself.



2010: Work in progress. Devadason with Heritage Walk visitors beside the Baptism Font



Chancel screen and sanctuary



Stained-glass windows

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IPOH **echo**

From the Editor's Desk

• by Fathol Zaman Bukhari

Unemployment in Perak

Based on qualified reports, the number of unemployed in Perak is about 29,000 or 3.2 per cent of the national average. Is something being done to address this problem?

Unemployment is a nasty word as it conjures a state of helplessness and destitution involving an individual or a group of people. However, if one is unemployable due to reasons of education or qualification or experience, it conveys another meaning entirely.

There are the employed and there are the underemployed. The employed could consider themselves lucky as they have a job to do which inadvertently translates to a fixed income at the end of each month. The underemployed, however, face a different kind of problem. They are not doing what they are trained to do or qualified to do, like an IT graduate doing a salesman job or a medical doctor pedalling "minyak urut" at a *pasar malam*. Both suffer from an identity crisis and income deficiency. One does not have a job while the other has a job but is doing what he is not trained for. These problems are prevalent in our society and Perakeans are no exception.

Based on qualified reports, the number of unemployed in Perak is about 29,000 or 3.2 per cent of the national average. Is something being done to address this problem? The answer is a resounding "yes". The question that is on everyone's lips, however, is whether the "yes" is good enough or is it a mere shot in the arm done to please the burgeoning number of Perakeans without a job.

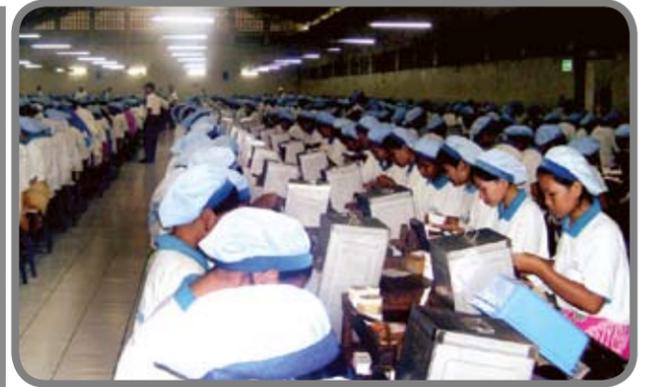
Each year the number of job seekers increases as students leave schools and institutions of higher learning. There are several such institutions in the state. Close to



Ipoh Echo's office is Kolej Poly-Tech Mara managed by Kolej Poly-Tech MARA Sdn Bhd, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Majlis Amanah Rakyat (MARA). It has seven campuses throughout the country.

The singular objective of the college is to train Malay youths in the field of information technology. The Ipoh campus accommodates some 700 students specialising in various Multimedia disciplines. Thus 700 new graduates leave the college annually. Of this number, some 40 per cent, for reasons of expedience, join the job market while the remaining 60 per cent continue with their education. This is just one institution of higher learning. There are several in the city, private and state-owned. If 280 is the base figure for one institution imagine if there are 10. The annual figure may easily reach the 3,000 mark.

Are these graduates employable? I speak from the viewpoint of an employer. The answer is both yes and no. Employees require on-the-job training to fit in. Question is whether the employers have the capacity and the time to train these greenhorns? Many may flinch at the thought



of having to start from scratch. But it is a risk employers have to take in order to employ these youngsters.

The state government has come with a novel idea of finding (not creating) jobs for these job-seekers. Institut Darul Ridzuan (IDR), established in 2005, went on a state-wide tour to find suitable jobs for those registered with the body. Perak Umno Youth's estimation of 17,000 job opportunities seemed grossly exaggerated when reality sets in. The movement's optimism was based on speculation rather than on current needs. Perak PAS Youth Secretary, Salman Hj Saleh, questioned the MB's sincerity in resolving the problem. Only about 2,000 vacancies were eventually filled. Salman took Zambray to task for making such a dubious claim. "Why the disparity in numbers?" he asked.

According to Aminuddin Hashim, Chief Executive of IDR and the initiator of the much-touted Perak Amanjaya Job and Career Fair launched in October, the base problem is compatibility. "The unemployed don't have the skills that the employers require," he lamented. Thus the age-old problem persists, despite claims to the contrary. We are not producing employable youths to meet market demands. Our education system is the culprit. A major overhaul is required. At this juncture, there is simply no political will to do the needful.

Ho Ho Ho! Santa Claus Is Coming To Town

Whenever Christmas arrives, I always look forward to songs like "You better watch out! Better not cry! Better not pout! I'm telling you why, Santa Claus is coming to town." The thought of Santa Claus to children means lots of presents are on its way and you have to be good to receive them. Such a festive season creates the atmosphere of celebration with joy and happiness within the family. An atmosphere like that does create the mood for shopping where most of us will be busy buying presents for our family to celebrate this joyous occasion. If you look around in the shopping malls, it is common to see parents trying out clothes on their children and at the same time taking the opportunity to shop for their children's basic school needs before school reopens.

All these activities, bring to mind that we, as parents and breadwinners, are like Santa Claus for the family because we have been providing them with all their daily necessities all year round regardless of whether they are good or bad and wondering if they would be saying "Ho Ho Ho! Santa Claus is coming to town" everyday. I guess most of us take this for granted because everyday we expect the breadwinner to come home, and likewise, the breadwinner would always think that they would come home unscathed. Even though no one in their right mind would want to think of the worst, it is time to give a serious thought to the phrase "precaution is better than cure" because I have seen spouses and minor children looking lost when their breadwinner who is supposed to return home safely from the hospital dies from complications.

Taking precaution through planning for our family is not difficult if one is serious about it because it doesn't take up much of our time. One can start off by thinking of immediate funding for the family upon the demise of the breadwinner and I am sure this is always in everyone's mind when something happens to the breadwinner. Immediate funding can come from Insurance and EPF through nomination where beneficiaries can receive the monies quickly. But it is also advisable to set up an "Insurance Trust" to provide immediate funding by transferring the insurance policy to the Trust just in case your sole beneficiary, who happens to be your spouse, dies or is disabled or in coma. Such a Trust requires you, during your lifetime as the "Settlor" to appoint a Trustee Company like Rockwills Trustee Bhd. to pass the insurance money to your intended beneficiaries immediately upon your demise. Other assets, such as money in your bank accounts, investments, properties, shares in your business which will be frozen, can be protected and distributed through a will and with this instrument you can choose your Executors/Trustee, Guardian, beneficiaries and state the condition of your distribution especially when minor children are involved.

Before I sign off, I would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

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>.

by Peter Lee



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Ridzuan
Tel: (605) 249 5936
Fax: (605) 255 2181
Email: editorial@ipohecho.com.my

EDITORIAL

Fathol Zaman Bukhari
G. Sivapragasam
Jerry Francis

REPORTER

James Gough

GRAPHIC DESIGN

Rosli Mansor Ahd Razali
Ed Shahir Noordin

MARKETING & DISTRIBUTION MANAGER

Ramesh Kumar

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Thinking ALLOWED • by Mariam Mokhtar**At a Loose End in Ipoh (part IV): Gua Tempurung**

Many Ipohites do not realise that one of nature's wonders, lies at their doorstep. The Gua Tempurung cave complex is a 20-minute drive by car, from Ipoh.

In June 2010, State chairman for Industry, Investment, Industrial Development and Tourism (IIDT), Hamidah Osman, told the Ipoh Echo that she would nominate Gua Tempurung for designation as a UNESCO "World Heritage Site". But no one knows the progress of this nomination.

Does Gua Tempurung deserve the status? Should one cave structure be singled out for nomination? Why not nominate the whole network of limestone hills/caves of the Kinta Valley?

Four Types of Tours

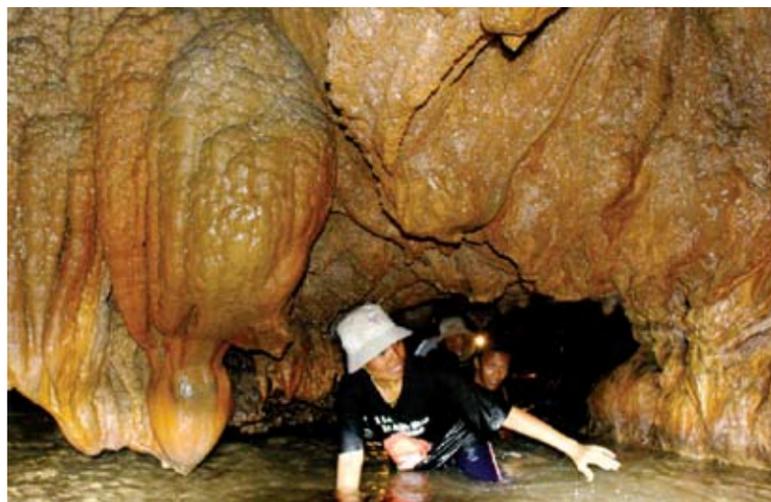
Gua Tempurung's operators have four types of tours ranging from the easy to the challenging. The choice depends on the ability of the group, time constraints and weather conditions.

We were thoroughly pleased with our tour guide whose knowledge of the caves was good, but my foreign friends were unable to understand him. His English was limited.

Apparently, coach loads of Korean and Taiwanese tourists were always accompanied by their own tour guides, who would translate the Gua Tempurung's guide commentary.

If Hamidah is interested in improving Perak tourism, she should learn from our neighbours. For example, local Balinese tour guides speak several languages fluently. They are enrolled on language courses. Perhaps, their education system is better.

Touring the caves will provide a good workout. Tours "2" onwards, are not for those with weak knees. Our guide would ensure that the slowest person in the group was not left behind.

**Guides Not Asked For Feedback**

Any criticisms are reserved for the cave management and the state tourism machinery. Our guide said that with three months to go before VPY 2012, he and other tour operators were still waiting for the state's tourism officers' plans, for the year ahead.

We were also disappointed to learn that the management rarely asked the guides for feedback. Our guide opined that tours would be of better value, if guides could communicate directly with the tourists.

He welcomed opportunities to improve his English or to enrol in night language classes, if the company was willing to pay for the courses.

Concrete and Metal Walkways Disappointing

Perhaps the greatest disappointment with Gua Tempurung was the presence of concrete and metal walkways, which apparently cost millions of ringgits to make. These detract from the natural beauty of the caves.

Why can't we learn to leave things alone? At Kellie's castle, we



destroyed the ruins of the folly. Would we even dream of reconstructing the Colosseum or the Parthenon?

Perhaps, if the Perak state authorities were in charge of Stonehenge, they would build concrete and metal walkways in and around the stones, and blast the biggest boulder to create a passage. We have no clue about conservation.

Caves are natural wonders. People should have the experience of clambering over rocks, sliding down rock-faces and walking around boulders. Only the more challenging tours, in the less accessible parts of the caves, offer these.

Clearly demarcated pathways with safety in mind should be made, rather than miles of concrete and metal structures which spoil the caves. Apart from the expense of building, there is also the unnecessary cost of maintenance.

The book "Limestone Hills and Caves of the Kinta Valley" by S.L. Wong, and published by the Malaysian Nature Society gives a good description of Gua Tempurung.

Information Inadequate

There could be unobtrusive notices naming the various caverns, like 'Lee Meng's Chamber', or 'Uncle Chong's Molar'. There could be short descriptions for the cave that was believed to store the cache of weapons of the communist guerrillas, or another for cave formations, like the sparkling crystal deposits, or the impressive 'Golden Flowstone'.

Tin mining was once an activity in the caves and is depicted in the 'Tin Miner's Cavern'. People would be fascinated to learn that in 1959, a flash flood trapped miners in 'The Tombstone'.

Interesting snippets of information make the cave come alive.

Visitor Centre

Outside of the caves, the management could construct a visitor centre consisting of an information room, showing visitors the geological aspects of cave formation, the effect of weathering and rock erosion. Books on caves or limestone outcrops could be sold.

How about building a small-scale model of the Gua Tempurung for schoolchildren to appreciate the wonders of geology and geography? Cultivate their interest in the archaeological aspects of caves.

There is very little information about the flora and fauna commonly attributed to limestone karsts. Nature trails around the vicinity and notices could show the types of trees or ferns, insects, bats and snakes endemic to the area.

Little has been said about the revenue derived from guano collection. Or the caves' historical significance as dwellings, a communist hideout or treasure store.

Instead, we have a decrepit and tired looking souvenir shop which sells cheap trash from Indonesia and the Philippines. There is nothing to connect these souvenirs with Gua Tempurung.

The approach road is spoilt by a dilapidated go-kart area, to remind us of an abandoned project.

Perakeans Let Down

Last November, Hamidah claimed that Perakeans are the state's most important assets to ensure VPY 2012's success.

She said, "Locals are the best tour guides as they know their home-state well. But before they can reach out to tourists, the locals must be groomed to handle tourists."

The shame is that the state, and the companies it has appointed, have let Perakeans down.

They have not given full, immediate support to the front-line staff whose needs and feedback are rarely acknowledged nor appreciated by the state.

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Musings on Food

seefoon@ipohecho.com.my

By See Foon Chan-Koppen

Photos by Ginla Chew

SeeFoon falls into a big basin in Gunung Rapat



My foodie friend Ginla Chew never ceases to amaze me with the treasures she digs up in the way of eating places. And this time she has surpassed herself with the discovery of the restaurant called Eastern Cuisine.

Located on Jalan Raja Musa Wahadi in Gunung Rapat, this is an unobtrusive air-conditioned corner restaurant diagonally opposite Maybank.

Ginla had already ordered the food, and everyone's jaw dropped when the first dish to arrive was the most humongous bowl (or more the size of a wash basin) stacked to the very brim with goodies.

Big Basin Feast

'Poon Choi' is often translated "Big Bowl Feast," but the actual translation of the term is "vegetable basin," with "choi" referring to vegetables. "It was said that Poon Choi was invented during the late Song Dynasty of China. When Mongol troops invaded Song China, the young Emperor fled to the area around Guangdong Province and Hong Kong. To serve the Emperor as well as his army, the locals collected all their best food available, cooked it, and because there were not enough dishes, put the resulting dish in wooden washing basins. By doing so Poon Choi was invented." – Wikipedia



Feast we did on the 18 ingredients that went into the composition of this 'basin', each one layered one after another all the way down to the bottom of the dish. The usual course on the top is chicken and duck, implying that birds return to the nests. However, in this instance we also had abalone which has the homophonic meaning in Cantonese of "embracing abundance" and understandably made the dish a lot more pricey but given that it is the CNY special, we found the price of RM388 for the dish which can easily feed up to 12 people, acceptable.

18 ingredients

The rest of the 18 ingredients in the dish included very large and very fresh prawns, deer tendon, 'Yu Piu' or fish stomach, 'fatt choi' or black moss, and dried oysters (incorporating the classic CNY

dish of 'Hou See Fatt Choy' meaning blessings and prosperity) dried scallops, 'Dong Po Yoke' or braised pork belly, Sea cucumber, 'Fa Gao' or fish bladder, bean curd skin, mock goose, shitake mushrooms, cabbage, broccoli and taro.

Each ingredient is cooked separately and then layered. The practice of dividing layers is really clever. Relatively dry ingredients are placed on the top while others, which can absorb sauce well, are assigned in the lowest part. This allows sauces to flow down to the bottom of the basin as people start eating from the top.

Our Poon Choi at Eastern Cuisine can only be described in one word: Superlative. The truth is, as I sit here writing this, my mouth is watering at the memory and can't wait for Chinese New Year to order it again. Available in early January. Must order in advance.

Thinking that the Poon Choi was a meal in itself, I was ready to wrap up when other dishes began arriving. The Wu Tso Tsoi Yuen Kai or whiskered kampong chicken, was beautifully presented in two styles: the breast meat sliced and served as a mildly spicy Thai salad and the rest of the chicken roasted with lovely crisp skin. The Salad was tangy, not too sweet with some sesame and slivered garnishes – RM42 for a whole chicken.

Signature Dishes

On the table next was the Ham Dan Fu Gua, finger-sized lengths of bitter melon, coated in a salted egg batter and deep fried. The bitter melon that evening was especially bitter, at which two other guests wrinkled their noses and shuddered on first taste and spat out the piece, while the rest of us blithely enjoyed the dish. The bitter melon still had a crunch in it, enhanced by the crispiness of the salted egg batter. A most satisfying taste sensation for those of us who enjoy bitter melon – RM20.

Next came the poetically named Suet Ying Wong Kum literally translated to mean 'snow



shadow among the gold' which was a most unusual dish of sea cucumber stuffed with fish paste, braised with a light sauce. The fish paste was well seasoned, delicate with an added crunch from water chestnuts.

By the time the Tsi Kong Pai Kwat, fried pork ribs in special Tsi Kong black vinegar arrived, we were completely satiated. However, the aroma of this particularly fragrant black vinegar wafting from the plate was way too irresistible so we all tucked in and we were glad we did. The ribs were deep fried but juicy and tender, well coated with the dark vinegar, somewhat tangy, slightly sweet and not too cloying. Within a few minutes, nary a rib remained – RM20.

Being the foodie that I am, I wasn't ready to call it a night and began chatting with owner Tham Jun Sheng and chef Tan Pak

How. Apparently this restaurant is 5 years old but the chef and owner have been on the same premises operating before as Goodview Restaurant prior to its name change. Other signature dishes on offer here include their salt baked kampong chicken, their Taucheong (soya bean paste) steamed Saito fish belly, their deep fried pig's trotter with sauce on the side, their drunken chicken and for the coming Chinese New Year, their special 'Lo Hei' or 'Yu Sang' which is all prepared in house.

Incredibly hardworking, this restaurant, which is very much a family run affair, is open 24/7.

Restaurant Eastern Cuisine

56 Jalan Raja Musa Mahadi, Taman Hillview, Gunung Rapat
Tel: 05-3139332 Mobile: Xuan 012-202 8358

Open 24/7

10.30 a.m.-2.30p.m.
5.30-11.00 p.m.

RECIPE

By Margarita Lee



Roast Turkey with Water Chestnut Stuffing

Ingredients:

- 1 Turkey 3.5-4 kg – remove the giblets, which should be in the body cavity, defrost completely
- 2 tbsp. softened butter
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. black pepper

Method:

1. Clean turkey and pat dry.
2. Steam turkey in a wok with high heat over boiling water for 30 minutes.
3. Rub turkey cavity and skin with salt, pepper and softened butter all over the bird.
4. Leave bird and broth for later use.

Ingredients for stuffing:

- 1 cup water chestnuts – diced
- 1 cup fresh onions – diced
- ¾ cup fresh celery – diced
- 3 tbsp. vegetable oil
- 2 cups turkey broth
- 1 can luncheon meat/or chicken sausage meat – using fork, break up the meat.
- 5 tbsp. bacon chips (optional) or use beef bacon
- ½ cup breadcrumbs
- ½ tsp. sage
- ½ tsp. thyme
- Salt and pepper to taste

Method for stuffing:

1. Heat oil in a wok, sauté bacon chips.
2. Add in onion, celery; sauté until soft.
3. Add in water chestnuts, luncheon meat.
4. Add in turkey broth, stir well.
5. Add in breadcrumbs, sage, thyme.
6. Salt and Pepper to taste.
7. Leave it to cool.



Ingredients:

- 4 oz. softened butter
- 8 oz. (225 g) of streaky pork or beef bacon rashers

Roast Turkey:

1. Preheat Oven to 220°C.
2. Place about one third of the stuffing in the neck and between the flesh and the skin, then tuck the neck flap under the bird's back and secure it with a small skewer. Place the rest of the stuffing in the body cavity.
3. Spread 4oz of softened butter all over the bird.
4. Lay about 8 oz. (225 g) of streaky bacon rashers over the breast of the bird, overlapping slightly, then season with freshly milled black pepper and a little salt.
5. Place the turkey in a pre-heated hot oven, 425°F (220°C), for 30 minutes.
6. Once the bacon on top of the turkey has browned you can push it down into the tin to allow the breast to get a final browning.

Note: Steaming the turkey will cut down the cooking time and prevent the turkey meat getting dry.

News Roundup

Children's Day Colouring Contest



In conjunction with Children's Day, Sri Murugan Centre (SMC) organised a colouring contest for children below 12 years old. More than 300 children took part in the contest held at SJK (T) Kerajaan, Jalan Sungai Pari.

K. Nagemutu, Co-ordinator SMC Perak, said that the purpose of the contest was to bring out the artistic talent in children. The Guest of Honour, YB Dato' Haji Nazri bin Ismail, Assemblyman for Kg Manjoi presented the prizes to the winners and donated RM3,000 to SMC.

The children were divided into four groups and the top ten in each group were presented with prizes. All the children were given goodie bags.

AJ

Husni's Media Night



'Media Mops' from (l-r) Tamil Nesan, RTM and Bernama

Perak's media fraternity had a merry time during the Media Night bash thrown by the Member of Parliament for Tambun, Datuk Seri Ahmad Husni Hanadziah. Unfortunately, Ahmad Husni was not in attendance as he had to attend the banquet of YDP Agong Tuanku Mizan in Kuala Lumpur.

Ahmad Husni's speech was read by his special officer, Encik Saifuddin Din, who said that the Finance Minister II wished all the media members a happy evening. Also present at the function was State Assemblyman for Manjoi Dato' Nadzri Ismail.

The event, held at the Lost World of Tambun, was a night of good relaxing fun with a lot of lucky draws. In the karaoke contest, Ikhwan from Berita Harian took first place winning RM1,000, while Rosli Mansor from Ipoh Echo was second with a cash prize of RM800.

JAG

Impiana Hotel Christmas Light-Up

It was a very special night for The Impiana Hotel Ipoh as they launched their Christmas Celebrations as well as kick-starting the "From the Heart" - Christmas Charity Drive. Invited for this auspicious evening were corporate guests of the Hotel, who have championed and supported them throughout the year.

The Christmas Celebrations - themed White Christmas - was initiated with the light up of the grandest of Christmas trees sitting 20 feet above the lobby area. The St Michael's Youth Group Choir and Santa got everyone in the mood as they sang in a sing along of popular Christmas Carols in the Hotel Lobby.

This year The Impiana Ipoh is donating proceeds from the sale of their very own "Impiana Teddy Bears" to the Yayasan Orang Asli in Perak. These 15-inch cuddly little bears will be on display at the Donation booth at the Deli area for the duration of Christmas and New Year. In addition to these cute bears, they have tied up with a professional photographer who is an Orang Asli himself. "We are promoting amazing photographs of the Orang Asli Community here in Ipoh, Perak and these will be on display in the Coffee House. These photographs are on sale and all proceeds will go to the said charity," commented Mr Mark Rummery (pic), General Manager of Impiana Hotel Ipoh.

Every outlet in the hotel is having Christmas and New Year promotions! Call the Festive Desk in The Deli or call the Hotel at **05-2555555 ext 8010** for bookings.



"Ipoh.My" - Creativity at Work

The year long Arts and Culture Programme initiated by Corporate Giant KLK Berhad in January this year as part of their CSR initiative culminated in their final showcase entitled, "Ipoh.My" which was performed by six schools from Ipoh.

The schools, SMK ACS, SMJK Ave Maria Convent, St Michael's Institution, SMK Main Convent, SMJK Perempuan Perak and SMK (P) MGS each had to present a 10-minute original sketch which they did admirably.

The opening line of one of the sketches by Ave Maria Convent went something like, "I want, I want an iPhone and an iPad and and an iPoh"...and a loud chorus in the background screamed "No!!..not iPoh...its EePoh"...and the script goes on to describe all that is unique to Ipoh town. Such was some of the creativity generated by the programme.

The KLK programme collaborated with the Actors Studio Academy@klpac, Kuala Lumpur who provided speech and drama workshops twice per month to the six schools and also students at Persatuan Daybreak, a vocational training institute for people with disabilities.

Stanley Lim, KLK's representative for the programme explained that bringing Actors Studio to Ipoh enabled more students to participate in the programme including the students from Persatuan Daybreak. A total of 137 students and another 40 from Daybreak benefitted from the programme with the students from Daybreak putting on a special performance during the showcase.

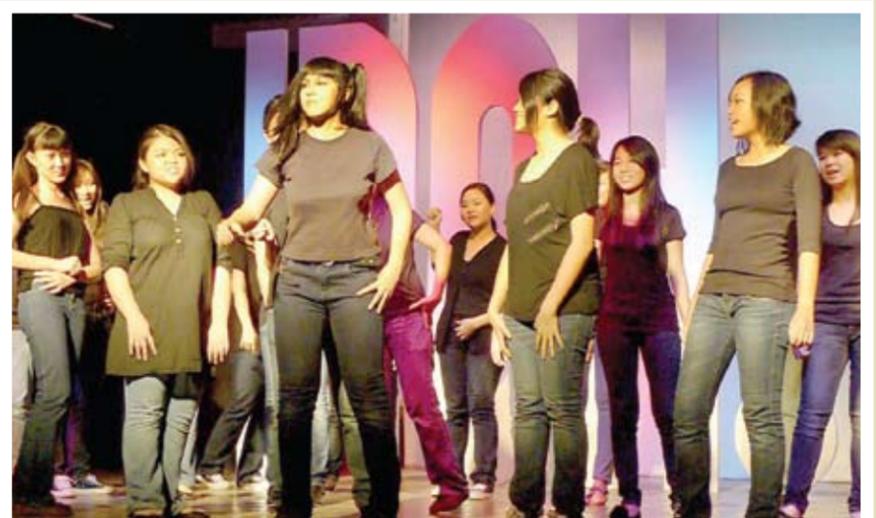
For Datuk Faridah Merican, the Executive Producer for Actors Studio Academy, she was delighted with the performances by the students saying that the "programme enabled the students to develop the creative side of their personalities and the sketches bear testimony to this," adding that "Ipoh, especially the schools ACS and St Michael's, have a great and long tradition for good drama."

As for the students, Haniff Harussani from ACS "wished the programme didn't have to end" while Shameni Gunasilan described the programme as "awesome, I enjoyed it very much".

Undoubtedly it was an all round win-win programme.

Kudos KLK.

JAG



News Roundup

Disaster Drill



Hospital Fatimah, Ipoh, conducted an hour-long major disaster drill within its complex recently. The scenario was of an accident involving an oil tanker and eight cars inside the Menora tunnel, Jelapang along the North-South Expressway. The "collision" resulted in a fire with at least 20 casualties.

The drill, part of the hospital's safety and health staff training exercise, was held during office hours.

The primary objective was to test the response time of the hospital staff during a major disaster. It was also aimed at testing staffs' knowledge and implementation of emergency procedures, and to check the serviceability of equipments and facilities.

Those involved in the exercise were from the admission and emergency department, the supply, procurement and distribution department, engineers, doctors and nurses. Students from Hospital Fatimah School of Nursing and SMK St Michael, Ipoh, took on the roles of 'accident victims'.

This was the 11th major disaster drill organised by the hospital. It is an annual affair with a different scenario enacted each time. **EL**

Youth Moral Development Camp



Hindu Sevai Sangam conducted a nine-day Youth Moral Development Camp for secondary school children. Sixty seven boys and girls attended the camp which was held in SJK(T) Kerajaan, Jalan Sungai Pari.

Guru Ramaji, Spiritual Head and Founder of the Sangam, conducted the camp. He was assisted by six volunteers from the organisation and the daily training was from 5.00 a.m. to 11.00 p.m. The students participated in Yoga, Meditation, Martial Arts, *Niyudha* (fighting without weapons), Traditional Games, Public Speaking, Leadership Training and group activities.

During the closing ceremony held at Arulmigu Mariamman Temple, Jalan Sungai Pari, the students demonstrated the skills they had learned to their parents and friends. **AJ**

Wellness

Eye Health – Cataracts

Ipoh Echo's Eye Health series continues with Consultant Eye Surgeon Dr S.S. Gill talking to us about what needs to be done before you go for cataract surgery.



*Dr. S.S. Gill
Resident Consultant
Ophthalmologist,
Hospital Fatimah*

Arrange time away from work

Patients may need anywhere between a few days to a few weeks off work, depending on the nature of their jobs, before returning to their regular schedule. You should not rush into cataract surgery without sorting this out first as it just adds to your stress.

Arrange for a Driver

It is best to arrange a caregiver to drive you to and from the hospital on the day of your cataract surgery. Make sure your driver is also available on the day after your surgery in order for you to be examined by your doctor on the first postoperative day.

Review your medications

You will need to give a detailed list of all medications that you are currently taking to the eye surgeon as some of these may need to be adjusted prior to the surgery. Never withhold information on any medication or medical problems that you may be having. Accurate information given to your doctor will help avoid complications and quicken recovery after cataract surgery. Unless instructed by your doctor, you will need to take all of your normal medications on the day of surgery.



If you are on medication to thin the blood (antiplatelet medication) your doctor may require you to stop taking them several days prior to cataract surgery. Generally, cataract surgery is bloodless but in some instances adjustments may still need to be made for some of the blood-thinning medication.

If you are a diabetic with poorly controlled blood glucose levels, your physician will be able to help you sort this out prior to undergoing cataract surgery as you will run a higher risk of complications during the recovery process if this is not attended to.

If you are hypertensive, you will still need to take all your antihypertensive medications on the day of surgery. Do not stop taking these medications unless instructed.

If you are on drugs for treatment of enlarged prostate like Flomax and other similar medications known as alpha-blockers, you will need to highlight this to the doctor prior to eye surgery because these drugs may cause eye problems associated with floppy iris syndrome (IFIS) during cataract surgery.

Eating and drinking

Pay special attention to any special instructions regarding meals prior to surgery. Do not drink any alcoholic beverages for 24 hours prior to your surgery. Follow these instructions closely.

Hygiene

On the day of the Cataract Surgery, your face should be free from makeup, eye-liners, cosmetics or powders of any kind. You should also have a thorough hair-wash and shower on the morning of surgery. Wash your face thoroughly with a mild soap. Proper hygiene will also need to be practised during the healing phase after the surgery.

Dr. Gill will discuss more on what happens during surgery in the next issue of the Ipoh Echo.

For more information, contact Gill Eye Specialist Centre at **05-5455582**, email: gillyecentre@dr.com or visit www.fatimah.com.my.

Ipoh-Medan Direct Flight Resumes



Direct flights between Ipoh and Medan are once again operational effective December 1. The service is being operated by Unimaju Fly Travel & Tours Limited, a local airline company, utilizing Firefly ATR 72 aircraft. Flights are 3 times per week, Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday and cover three destinations Subang-Ipoh-Medan and return.

Unimaju Fly Travel & Tours (UFTT) Managing Director, Habidi Zain stated that there was a demand for this sector especially for medical tourists as residents of Medan are interested in Ipoh's medical services which is of good quality at competitive rates.

Habidi added that the cost of a one-way ticket to Medan is competitive from a low of RM148 to RM248 which is applicable to adults and children. Regarding the Ipoh-Subang flight, the one way cost is RM65.

One of the passengers taking the maiden flight to Medan was Ipoh Mayor Dato' Roshidi Hashim who commended Firefly and Unimaju for committing this service for the benefit of the residents of Medan and Ipoh. "The timely commencement of this flight will also help the State and Ipoh City Council promote Visit Perak Year 2012."

Roshidi's itinerary in Medan included visits to his

PCSH Provides Free Surgery For Two



Wong Yu (pic), a 69-year old from Lucky Old Folks Home, was given free surgery for diabetic neuropathy when a severe foot ulcer in his toes caused complications necessitating orthopaedic surgical intervention as was Suresh a 13-year old from an orphanage in Buntong, who was suffering from chronic hernia and was given free hernia surgery by PCSH Resident Consultant General Surgeon, Dr Ng Seng Yew.

Perak Community Specialist Hospital has a long-term commitment to social welfare, physical and mental health care for the disadvantaged. The hospital also encourages its staff to be a caring group for vulnerable people.

counterpart there and the Malaysian Consulate General and promoting Ipoh for VPY 2012.

Enquiries for the service can be made to Unimaju's office located at the airport at **05-3137331**.

JAG

News Roundup

Ipoh (Definitely) Got Talent

By Olivia Teh Yuan Ning

My first treat upon touching down in Ipoh did not involve food per se, but rather an exceptional experience at the YMCA where I was introduced to an extravaganza of up-and-coming (and very young) talents in the finale of "Ipoh (also) Got Talent".

The show and staging were a pastiche of the 1990s. Decorated with Styrofoam and lit by old-school disco lights that flashed from green to neon pink, 12 talented performers were ushered one-by-one onto the stage by two MCs. As they proceeded to entertain the crowd with acrobatics, miming and a rather peculiar attempt at self-dueting, it was clear that there were three distinct frontrunners:

Chong Yan Sheng Aged 12 (Gold) – "This act," the MC guffaws, "you really have to see it to believe it". Indeed, draped in a Chinese emperor's robe and a large Venetian mask, Yan Sheng captured the crowd from the get-go with his (literally) dazzling and confident stage presence. He charmed his way to victory with the Chinese Opera song "Bian Nian". Displaying not only amazing moves in the classical Chinese operatic tradition and enunciation controls beyond his age, Yan Sheng also managed to emotively communicate with the crowd through his dance, story-telling performance and jaw-droppingly endearing vibratos. A true triple treat.

Au Yong Hau Zhen Travis Aged 18 (Silver) – When asked where he practised his beat-boxing, Travis named every possible hideout in Ipoh – his room, the park, in shopping centres, the toilet. I was amused. Being a fan of electronica, I eagerly anticipated hearing his drumbeats. Particularly arresting were his interpretations of hip-hop and dub-step, as well as his singing-whilst-drumming mash-ups. As judge See Foon Chan-Koppen commented, he was a one-man entertainment centre.

Syazreen Mazlan Aged 10 (Bronze) – As this petite girl wearing a demure white dress shuffled and swayed nervously onto the stage, no one expected her to house such a powerful voice within. Serenading the crowd with a Malay-classic, "Menaruh Harapan", Syazreen demonstrated her superior range to an all-silent crowd. The judges were similarly lost for words; "wow", was all a bemused Kelvin Ooi could coo. In fact, superstardom is likely in the cards for this prima-donna in the making. As she happily posed for photographers post-show, Ipoh may have caught a glimpse of a Siti Nurhaliza in-the-making.

A warm congratulations to the other finalists: Aaronjit Singh, Emanuel Yoong, Tan Khya Xin, Charlotte Ooi, Chua Phaik Tzhi (withdrawn), Eunice Lau, Joanne Lai, Kam Cai See, Yvonne Chan, Amy Loi & Ng Wei Yen, and Devilz dance group (Foong Keng Yip, Goh Kiat Jiat, Koh Sai Khean, Koh Siak Leong and Tan Hao Jie).

And last but not least, a heartfelt thank you to third judge, Juwita Suwito who gave a superlative rendition of one of her own songs.

This judge certainly got talent!



Young Perak

Tadika Adik Bistharii Graduation 2011

Twenty-two students from Tadika Adik Bistharii graduated and received their certificates upon completing the K2 programme from Datin Thavamani Thambhipillay, Chairperson Board of Governors, at the Royal Ipoh Club.

Tadika Adik Bistharii (TAB), established in 2001 by Pushpa Jeyasingam, strongly believes in providing young children with programmes that build community support, respect for diversity and build relationships between children, family and staff. The TAB programme is based on a developmentally appropriate practice and child-centred methodologies that prepare children to succeed and life-long learning.

Congratulations to the six students who received the Best Student Award 2011: Wan Jia Tong, Navvaruuben J. Winson, Chan Kar Yan, Kisshore Sashitharan, Jananie Therukkumaran and Thayaanethee Selva Kumar.

Ms Mun, the principal, gave the opening speech followed by speeches in four languages by the children. The ceremony concluded with songs and dinner.



Ipoh – Fukuoka Exchange

A simple ceremony was held at Dewan Azlan Shah, Bangunan MBI, Ipoh, recently, to kick start an exchange programme between students of Ipoh and that of its sister city, Fukuoka, Japan.

The eight Form 4 students from Ipoh are Nur Wajihah Khalipsa and Nur Ayuni Mohd. Salleh of SMK Raja Perempuan, Mohd. Danial Zakaria of SMK Gunung Rapat, Melissa Choong Yu Pei of SMK Tarcisian Convent, Darren Lee Yeu Jyn of SMK St Michael, Anusha Rajanran of SMK Convent, Saktivadivelu Letchmanan of SMK Methodist (ACS) and Nurin Dayana Norazhar of SMK Raja Chulan. They were selected by the Perak Education Department based on their academic performance, involvement in co-curricular activities, adaptability and versatility. These were some of the criteria imposed.

Once selected, they were provided with Japanese language lessons and cultural dance practices to enable them to better communicate with the Japanese people and to promote Perak since 2012 is Visit Perak Year. At the ceremony, the eight students entertained guests with the 1Malaysia dance.

The week-long exchange programme, beginning 7 to 14 December, 2011, is the 16th in the series since its inception in 1989. It has the tacit support of Ipoh City Council and Fukuoka City.

EL



Polytechnic's Entry among Winners

Polytechnic Ungku Omar (PUO) Ipoh participated in the recently concluded Amphibious Vehicle Contest 2011 held at the National Science Centre, Bukit Kiara. The contest, backed by the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation, was to pick the best entry from among the many institutions of higher learning in the country. Some 33 teams from institutions such as UiTM, UPSI, UTEM, UniTen, and not forgetting PUO, took part.

Polytechnic Ungku Omar prepared four teams for the contest. Three made it to the quarter-finals with one qualifying for the final. The amphibious crafts which the students designed were capable of performing both on land and in water. The participants were thankful for the advice and guidance given by their mentor, Encik Zukarnain, a mechanical engineering lecturer with the polytechnic.

FZB



RM2 Million for Women NGOs

The state government's allocation of RM2 million in its 2011 Budget is proof enough of its desire to help the marginalised, the abused and the needy from among the fairer sex. A large sum of the money has been given to non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to assist them in implementing programmes for the benefit of women. Besides money for deserving NGOs, part of the allocation was also used for state-sponsored programmes and campaigns with similar objectives. This was revealed to the media by Dato' Hamidah Osman, Executive Councillor for Women Affairs, at a ceremony to disburse money to 53 women-linked NGOs recently. Only organisations registered with the State Welfare Department were considered.

The presentation ceremony was held at the State Secretariat Building Ipoh. Each NGO received RM1,000. "RM968,750 or 48.4 per cent of the allocated sum has been disbursed to 272 organisations," said Hamidah. "Besides addressing social problems, funding is also earmarked for combating AIDS and diabetes which afflict the general public," she added.

Dr Faizah Nordin, manager of Chemor-based orphanage, Yayasan Amal Annur Maisarah, thanked the state government for its empathy. "The donation, though small, is indicative of the authority's sincerity in helping privately-managed institutions like ours," she said. "The money will go some way in easing our financial woes."

Liew Piang Tshoong of Persatuan Kebajikan Orang-Orang Kurang Upaya Ipoh, a society caring for the physically disabled, was more explicit. "The money is timely but I wish for a larger sum as the cost of maintaining the centre escalates yearly," she lamented.

RM

Property

By Olivia Teh

LE GREENE DEVELOPMENT – Committed to HEALTHY LIVING

Prospective home-buyers are often, and all too conveniently, exposed to the terms “healthy living”, “green” and “affordable” in property-development descriptions; but which development can fully live up to its promises?

Apparently **Le Greene**, a housing project by **Energiser Properties Sdn Bhd**, can. The development, comprising a total of 290 units are slated to be fully completed by end of 2014, and will deliver a “first-in-Ipoh” project plan catered specifically to address and fulfil all three promises in a consistent, professional and sustainable manner. As Operations manager Joesephiine Chor affirms in our meeting with her, “we want to give our home-owners their Dream Home; and we want to give it to them at an affordable price.”

Healthy Living

“We have qualified personal trainers in our gym. At a low price, they can give residents a personalized service, and provide them with a fitness regimen most suitable to their body and health types.”

Fitness is top of the agenda at Le Greene as part of fulfilling their promise on healthy living. In fact, the fitness amenities available on-site is Le Greene’s biggest selling-point, its niche.

Spanning over 1,600m square, the land consists of an impressive 2 storey, 5-roomed gym furnished fully with state-of-the-art US-imported equipment, a 25-metre length swimming pool, a badminton court, a personalised ‘track’ course for cycling and jogging enthusiasts, and a pantry and barbecue area for convenient after-work refreshments. A private sauna house, tennis and basketball courts will be built in the near future.

Joesephiine is quick to highlight that these luxuries are merely reserved for the residents. “Outsiders who want to join The Gym will have to pay a joining fee of RM1,000 and monthly payments of RM180. Memberships are by invitation and recommendations only.”

Latest Fitness Classes

Indeed there is a good reason as to why non-residents may be interested in gaining such a privilege. “The Gym”, aptly called, provides residents and members with the “latest fitness classes in town”, ranging from step, pilates, yoga, circuit trainings, cardio dance and spinning classes. Before embarking upon any exercise regimen, residents and members are also expected to stretch in the “Stretch Room”, which features a TRX wall – Ipoh’s only strength rope-training equipment. Other rooms include the cardio room, which is fully equipped with brand-new treadmills and elliptical trainers, and furnished with floor length windows overlooking Ipoh’s iconic limestone hills; the weight room which takes up the whole ground floor of the gym, and the “Spinning Room” which contains 26 state-of-the-art bicycles.

Security Top Priority

Ancillary to the ‘healthy living’ concept is also the developer’s goal to provide residents with safety. “We want to make sure that our residents feel safe here, so that they can freely use the compound as they wish. We train our guards in-house, and all the roads are completely surveyed by CCTVs. We have regular patrolling every 2 hours and a CCTV is attached beside the pool for constant monitoring in case of emergency. Everything is done in-house to maintain a high level of security”.

Green

“People want to escape the concrete jungle. They want to come back from work, and be greeted by the green landscapes and surrounding scenery of the limestone hills.”

Having scrapped prior plans to build apartments and additional unit lots in order to “limit the number of residents and to preserve the scenery”, the developers of Le Greene have turned their attention to providing their residents with a holistic, eco-conscious life. Accordingly, paver stones, instead of tarmac, are utilized to line the road as washing it would be easier, thus reducing aggregate water usage.

Furthermore, Le Greene has hired in-house landscapers to design the parks. “We want to make sure that our residents are greeted by lush flora from the entrance, to the end of the compound. We want this place to blend in with nature, with the mountains.” Joesephiine adds that some spaces may also be utilized as an orchard for residents to promote organic farming.

Affordability

“Although the majority of our buyers are mid- to upper-range income earners, we want to make sure that young families and young executives can afford the houses too.”

Perhaps this is why Le Greene offers interested buyers the option of choosing between the 20x70 single, double or triple storey terraces, and the semi-D houses. These properties are being offered at market prices ranging from \$233,800 to “around a million” for the semi-D properties, which will only be launched in the middle of next year.

So far, the response for the single and double storey developments have been



well-received. “Around 90% of our single storey houses have already been snapped up at a private showcase held mid-this year”, says Joesephiine, adding that “our main customer base was made up of exactly who we wanted to cater to – the young executives and some Japanese expatriates.”

Increased Capital Value

Such encouraging response could well be positively correlated to the increasing capital value of the properties. The single-storey houses which were sold for \$165,800 at launch date in November 2010 now have an alleged resale value of at least \$233,800. Purchasers wanting to rent out the property can expect a rental rate of around \$1,200 for a fully furnished unit. All single storey units are built on a “Built and Sell” concept; meaning the houses are fully completed with CCC (Certificate of Completion and Compliance) before the units are sold. Purchasers can shift in immediately upon signing the sales and purchase agreement and having fully paid for their units.

Similarly, the value of the double storey developments have increased by \$90,000



from \$298,000 to \$388,000, with next year’s value being currently evaluated as exceeding \$400,000. Rental rates start at \$2,500 fully furnished.

Ideal Location

For those worried about the sustainability of these figures, Joesephiine assures that the supply and demand of the properties will remain robust going into the near future, as the developers are firmly committed to providing “exclusivity within this compound, whilst continually generating market and buyer interests in the properties”. Moreover, Le Greene happens to be minutes away from the North-South Expressway, as well as Giant, Tesco, Jusco, Maybank, Pantai Hospital and Sunway Lagoon. Convenience and the centrality of its location are most definitely important factors to this development’s success.



Sales Office: No. 10B & 10C Persiaran Greenhill, 30450 Ipoh, Perak.
Tel.: 05-253 2463 **Fax:** 05-253 2469 **Email:** ee7813@gmail.com
 Joesephiine – 012-402 9109



LETTERS

We reprint some of our reader's comments from our online paper. Go to <http://www.ipohcho.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.

Will The Non-Muslims Get A Crematorium?

I refer to the article 'Hassle over a Crematorium' (IE Issue 132, Nov 16-30, 2011). A few politicians were trying to mislead the Indians in Buntong and create an impression that the crematorium is a Hindu issue and must be dealt with immediately, in spite of the state government sitting on it for years.

The fact is Hindus are a minority and they practice both burial and cremation. Therefore, the majority of the users of the crematorium would be Christians, Buddhists and others. If the state government was serious, they would have built one long ago.

Instead of depending on politicians, Dato' Dr Mah Hang Soon, State Executive Councillor for non-Muslim Affairs, must discuss with the Perak Branch of Malaysian Consultative Council of Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Sikhism and Taoism (MCCBCHST) who are the official representatives of non-Muslims.

I read about the Mobile Crematorium on the internet which is being used in India. The state government can study this option where no land is required and the crematorium goes to the funeral house. This would be convenient for the people.

A. Jeyaraj

Community

In Appreciation of Caregivers



Yayasan Sultan Idris Shah Ipoh held its Skill Development Centre Graduation Day and Best Caregivers Award 2011 ceremony at its Bercham premises recently. DYT M Raja Puan Besar Perak Tuanku Zara Salim was the guest of honour.

The 118 graduates, one of whom is from Nigeria, who received their certificates in community-based rehabilitation skills training, are caregivers from government-run rehabilitation centres around the country.

Best Caregiver Award 2011 went to Mdm Saraswathy who has been caring for her son, Jayakumar, since his accident in November 2006. The boy sustained head injuries with right hemiplegia (paralysis of the arm, leg, and trunk on the right side of the body). Jayakumar has regained 65 per cent mobility and is now able to move around on a modified motorcycle.

First runner-up Chan Yeow Hoong takes care of his mother who suffers from left hemiplegia, while second runner-up Mrs Augustini looks after her husband who was diagnosed with head injury/hemiplegia.

Chong Wen Rui, 12, received the Special Excellence Award for scoring 6 As and 2 Bs in the recent UPSR examination. Chong, who is enrolled in a normal school, suffers from Spina Bifida and was registered at Persatuan Pemulihan Sultan Azlan Shah in December 2002, when he was still a toddler.

EL

Arts and Culture

We Love, We Care Fund Raiser



City Ballet Performing Arts Academy presented a production recently entitled, "We Love, We Care" at Dewan Leong Wan Chin, Perak Girls' School in Ipoh. A total of 160 performers, ranging in age from 6 to 30 years old, were involved.

The two-hour production consisted of two parts. The first part was a ballet performance titled "Circle of Love". It was a tale about friendship and love

overcoming difficulties and tragedy. Jeremie Gan Wen-Jian, winner of the 14th Solo Classical Ballet Competition 2011, from Kuala Lumpur, performed with students of City Ballet Performing Arts Academy, Ipoh.

The second part was a musical entitled "Hairspray" a story made famous by Hollywood star, John Travolta. It was about an overweight, yet talented, teenager, Tracy Turnblad, who dreamt of being on her favourite TV show.

This charity production was to raise funds to acquire a medical vehicle for Klinik Lutheran, a charitable organisation that provides free healthcare services to the underprivileged in rural areas where medical attention is not easily obtainable. This vehicle will not only be used to transport medical equipment and supplies to rural communities but to serve as an examination room, especially for teenagers and women.

Klinik Lutheran is still short of its target of RM200,000 needed for the vehicle. Readers who wish to contribute can do so by contacting Phan, Chairman of Lutheran Church in Malaysia and Singapore, at **012-5757504**.

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Project Managed by: **KINTA REAL ESTATE SDN. BHD.** (45589-K)

APOLOGY

We, the developer of Sunway Avenue, a double storey shop office project in Tambun, Ipoh, wish to apologise to the Sunway Group of Companies including Sunway Holdings Sdn Bhd, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Sunway Bhd, over the use of the name "Sunway" for our project.

It is not our intention to infringe the abovenamed companies' Intellectual Property Rights and to mislead our potential buyers or any others into believing that our project is one of the Sunway projects. The project was named as such because we thought it is appropriate as it is located within the vicinity of Sunway City Ipoh.

In view of the objection from the Sunway Group of Companies, we have since renamed our project as Sakura @ Taman Perpaduan Indah. We humbly hope the Sunway Group of Companies management will accept our explanation and our genuine apology.

From:
The Management of
Five Star Sakura Sdn Bhd (944522-V)
Kinta Real Estate Sdn Bhd (45589-K)

An Appeal

The **Rangjung Yeshe Dharma Society Perak (RYDSP)** plans to bring some festive joy to some of the needy families in and around Ipoh for the coming Chinese New Year season early 2012. We hope to distribute food and household items in kind. We have already identified some such needy families and elderly people. We are continuing to seek out more of such families.

We wish to invite generous hearted individuals or companies to join in this meritorious deed in sharing festive joy with the less fortunate in our midst. Donations in kind (food stuff like rice, biscuits, beverages, canned food, cooking oil, sugar, salt, instant noodles, *meehoon*, tea, coffee, milo, condensed milk, evaporated milk, spices, soya sauce and household items such as washing detergent, toothbrush, toothpaste, etc.) as well as cash are most welcome.

Donations are to be handed over by January 6, 2012. For details, please contact Committee Members: Fay (017-5790303) or Michael Foo (012-5070104).

Our Society is located at 3, Persiaran Happy Garden, Taman Happy Garden, 31650 Ipoh.

News Roundup



Nur's Parents Seek Justice

The fate of toddler Nur Sofiera Natasha, 2, hangs in a balance. She suffers permanent disability of her right limb as a result of a calcium injection by medical staff of Hospital Raja Bainun, Ipoh (Ipoh General Hospital).

Nur Sofiera's problem began when she was brought to the hospital by her parents for the treatment of a mild illness. That was in 2009. She was warded but was allowed to return home after 10 days although her condition was not resolved. "Fearing for her safety, we brought her back to the hospital for follow-up treatment," recounted her mother, Husdalia Hussin, 30, when met at her Jalan Hospital flat recently.

The parents are disputing the statement made by Dato' Dr Mah Hang Soon, Executive Councillor for Health and Local Government, who had, in a press conference, following a directive from the Menteri Besar, Dato' Seri Dr Zambry Abd Kadir, stated that Nur's disability was caused by a virus which attacked her brain and nervous system while still in her mother's womb.

"I am aghast why such a statement is made at this juncture. It now seems that my daughter is at fault and not the hospital," she protested. "There were no such records on my child when I delivered her."

Husdalia wants an open discussion with all the parties involved, witnessed by Dato' Mah and the MB. "This will settle the issue once and for all," she added. "There have been too many speculations and assumptions made thus far."

The parents can take comfort that the matter has now come under the purview of the Health Ministry. An independent board of inquiry will be convened soon to find the root cause of the problem.

Business

By See Foon Chan-Koppen

The Haven – A Catalyst for Change in Ipoh

When a project wins four international awards and is continually bringing attention to Ipoh on the world stage, even Ipohites start to sit up and take notice.

The Haven has been putting Perak in the limelight for five-star luxury condo-living since its launch in March last year. Winning four international awards including the prestigious Diamond Eye Award, Geneva, Switzerland and the Arch of Europe Award, Frankfurt, Germany, earlier this year and being selected by New Straits Times' veteran property journalist S.C. Cheah for his choice award in August this year, has cemented its burgeoning reputation as the development of choice for buyers looking for quality and excellence.

The Haven Lakeside Residences is located in Tambun and is being developed by Superboom Projects Sdn Bhd, whose two earlier projects, the nearby 576-unit Permai Lake View apartments and the 175-unit Subang Galaxy link houses in Subang 2, Selangor have appreciated by 100% in two years.

The Haven project with a GDV of RM270 million comes with quality finishing and eco-features like solar energy and rainwater harvesting. It comprises three 26-

Having passed the half-way mark in sales and with the first tower of 23 floors completed, while work on the second block has reached the 6th level, CEO of Superboom Projects Peter Chan is not resting on his laurels yet.

"I still have a long way to go," he told Ipoh Echo recently. "I will continue to keep up the marketing pace while keeping an eye on the building works but with top contractors like the Bina Puri group (Malaysia's second largest construction company) and Beijing Construction Engineering of China (the largest in Beijing and the world's top 250 contractors) going full steam ahead, buyers and myself are rest assured that the final quality will be top notch," he added.

Uphill Climb Initially

But it was an uphill climb for him initially. When the project was first launched, other developers and Ipohites scoffed at the grandiose scale of the development. "They're crazy. People in Ipoh don't buy condominiums, they want landed property. It is doomed to failure." Rumour mongers began circulating malicious stories about banks' reluctance to give high loans; that the project was under-capitalised; that the company was bankrupt; outcries of



here, I saw only the potential for Ipoh and wish to work with other business leaders to bring back the vibrancy to this city and to re-capture some of the glitz and glamour that Ipoh once had when tin was king. I have had to dispel the perception that to live in Ipoh is to "fatt moh" or turn mouldy; that it is nothing but a toilet break on the way to or from another destination," said Peter.

"My mission is to bring wealth back to Ipoh. I cannot do it alone. I need the support and collaboration of all the movers and shakers in this city to achieve this," he declared.

And slowly but surely, Peter Chan is achieving his mission. He has dispelled most of the rumours and quietened the nay sayers. He has done more to put Ipoh on the world map and achieve recognition for Ipoh's hitherto under-rated qualities of a laid back life-style, lower cost of living, its scenic wonders of the Karst formations, and the general favourable conditions for vacation and lifestyle than any other developer in the city. He works tirelessly and zealously, travelling the globe, giving talks and lectures, to make potential investors aware of Ipoh as an attractive option for investment.

Leads and Lags

According to Peter, Ipoh is becoming the number 1 investment destination particularly under turbulent times such as the current investment climate. Prices have already risen in Ipoh and because of the trend of 'leads and lags' and the catching-up phenomenon, they are expected to move faster than KL and Penang. And when times stabilize, the prices will jump.

"The Haven is a catalyst for this change. Right now the time is ripe to take advantage of this trend. Let's not wait another 15 years for this to happen," said Peter emphatically.



storey blocks on a 5.44 ha site which includes a 1.6 ha lake with a 280 million-year-old limestone formation aptly named *Rockhaven*, surrounded by 4 ha of hill slope bordering a virgin forest.

Ten-Year Lease Back Scheme By BWI

Sales have been encouraging with 85% of the first tower, 70% and 50% of the second and third blocks having been sold; 55% to Ipohites, 25% from Kuala Lumpur and Penang and the rest from overseas. The additional incentive of a 10-year lease-back scheme with guaranteed returns of 6% for the first three years and 7% for the next two with the further 5 years to be renegotiated, to be run as a condo-tel by Best Western International (BWI), the world's largest hotel chain, has understandably added to its popularity.

destruction of the environment were heard; that the lake would be covered up after all three blocks are completed and a fourth block put in including the possibility of a cement plant; that the company never paid its bills and even ludicrous tales of the Haven eventually being a place to keep concubines (actual quote from a buyer who pulled out) and nay sayers from as far afield as Kuala Lumpur were condemning the project before it even got off the ground.

Changing Mind-Sets

Undaunted by the criticism, Peter Chan went on a mission to tell the world about Ipoh and to change the mind-set of Malaysians in general and Ipohites in particular.

"I have never uttered a single critical word about my competitors. With all the infrastructure that is already

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.

Wawasan Open University Open Day, Saturday & Sunday **December 17 & 18**, 10.00 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. Counselling sessions will be provided for January 2012 intake. Enjoy 50% discount for Processing & Administration and fee rebate with special gifts upon registration. For information, contact: 05-2426323/2436323.

Meru Patchwork Society Charity Bazaar, Saturday **December 17** from 2.00-5.00 p.m. at Function Room 1, Meru Valley Golf & Country Club, Ipoh. All proceeds will go to Pertubuhan Jagaan Kanak-Kanak Cacat Setia (Mentally and physically challenged children's home) in Silibin.

ISH & Perak Chest Society Public Forum, Sunday **December 18**, 9.00 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. at Dewan Anugerah, KPJ Ipoh Specialist Hospital (5th Floor). Topics: 'Asthma & Allergy Rhinitis', 'Quit Smoking' and COPD. For registration or further information, contact Customer Service, Pn Aziera or Ms Sarah at 05-2408777 ext. 8111.

Free Bone Density Screening at PHI, Tuesday **December 20**, 2.30-4.30 p.m. at Wellness Centre, 2nd Floor, Pantai Hospital Ipoh. FREE Bone Density Screening for first 30 participants who register on the day of the event. For information/registration, call: Wellness Centre 05-5405604.

Hope for Autism Society Ipoh Charity Dinner, Friday **December 23**, 7.00 p.m. at Hillcity Ballroom, Hillcity Hotel Ipoh. To raise funds for the first Hope Activity Centre in Ipoh to cater for the earning and training needs for individuals with autism and related disabilities. For tickets and donations: 05-5467827 Cyrus/Ann.

Punjabi Pop & Culture Music Evening by Karmick Connection led by Micky Narula, **December 24**, 7.30 p.m. at Dewan Serbaguna Bangunan SUK Negeri Perak. Free entrance.

Workshop on Community Care for Clients with Dementia, Wednesday **December 28** from 8.00 a.m. to 1.00 p.m. at Pantai Hospital Ipoh. Registration can be made by sending email to april@dementia.com.my or call April at 019-5712738. Deadline is December 17.

Perak Indian Chamber of Commerce Annual Dinner 2011, Friday **December 30**, 7.30 p.m. at Banquet Hall, SUK building. For details call 05-2555553.

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Wellness

By SeeFoon Chan-Koppen

Repair, Regenerate, Recharge

Facial and body rejuvenation is now at our doorstep, thanks to the opening of the new division at Kinta Medical Centre, a medical facility in accordance with all Ministry of Health guidelines dedicated to helping men and women turn back the clock, externally and internally, without surgery.

Age has an insidious habit of creeping up on all of us. We can hold the process in abeyance with expensive lotions and potions but at some point as we stare bleary eyed into the mirror in the morning, a question sneaks into our minds, "Is it time for a face-lift?" Where in days of yore, the only recourse was to go under the knife as in cosmetic surgery; today, the plethora of options is mind-boggling. And Ipohites now don't have to go far to find it.

Critics may say that it is sheer vanity to spend so much time and money just to look good but according to Dr Terry Lee Lean Hiap, who helms the centre and has undergone approved levels of training and certification, his gratification comes from seeing his patients increase in confidence and self esteem as he helps them improve their appearance.

"We're the first clinic to offer medically supervised treatments with a wide choice of options and equipment. Kinta Medical has invested in some of the latest machines for facial and body rejuvenation and patients need not go to KL or Penang like before," he said.

PRP Skin Rejuvenation

It is also the first hospital in Ipoh to offer platelet-rich plasma (PRP) injections for facial rejuvenation, thanks to its investment in a highly sophisticated centrifuge that prepares the solution for injection.

PRP Skin Regeneration Therapy, a type of regenerative medicine with the patient's own blood, uses components called platelets in the blood to rejuvenate the skin. These injections are safe with minimal risk of allergy or infections. The therapy is found to have much greater efficacy in rejuvenating the skin, eliminating wrinkles, and reducing irregularities from acne marks compared with conventional therapy.

"It is effective particularly for crepey skin under the eyes (fine wrinkles) that are difficult to treat by conventional rejuvenation therapy. Platelets contain substances called growth factors that activate and rejuvenate cells in the



body. The growth factors, when released, induce the production of collagen and generation of new capillaries to rejuvenate the skin," Dr Terry added.

Laser Therapy

For those with a fear of needles and blood, the clinic has a range of different types of lasers and radio frequency machines, each with its own specific action for different goals to be achieved. "I use both non-ablative and ablative lasers depending on the patients' needs. I tailor the treatments after examination of the condition of their skin," he continued.

Ablative Lasers

So-called 'ablative' or skin resurfacing lasers briefly direct an intense burst of laser energy onto the surface of the skin which heats water within the surface layers, causing both the water and the tissue of the skin to turn to vapour. This allows layers of the skin to be removed in a precise and controlled way to the appropriate depth. The skin then heals over a period of time, as new layers of collagen are produced. This intensive treatment can significantly reduce the appearance of lines and wrinkles on the face, neck, and other parts of the body. Acne and other types of scars and certain stretch marks can also be improved. For instance, a fractional CO2 laser is used to improve acne scar as well as for mole or skin tag removal.

Non-Ablative Lasers

The so-called non-ablative lasers have lower energy levels than ablative lasers and treats the layers of skin under the surface without damaging the surface too much. This

lessens the recovery period after the treatment and reduces the number of complications that can occur. It is thought that the laser's heat in the dermal layers causes collagen to be produced which helps reduce the appearance of lines and wrinkles. A Q-switched Nd:Yag laser is very useful to treat pigmented lesion like lentigines, freckles and melasma.

Full Complement of Services

Aside from laser rejuvenation, the clinic offers a whole host of other services for rejuvenation both inside and out. Botox injections are very popular and extremely effective in alleviating wrinkles. This involves the injection of Botulinum toxin, a material that has been known for over a century and used for medical purposes for more than 50 years. Its initial uses were for strabismus (commonly known as a lazy eye) and blepharospasm (inability to move the eye in certain ways). It has been used successfully in more than half a million patients since it was approved for removal of frown lines in 2002.

Then there are the modern soft tissue fillers Juvederm and Radiesse, which can nicely camouflage the mouth lines, the line running from your nose to the corner of your mouth called the Naso-Labial fold line, and the line running from the corner of your mouth down to the chin or jaw bone called the Marionette Line as well as plump the aging lip. Nowadays, the nose and chin augmentation can be done by injecting filler with minimal downtime and risk of complications.

And finally for the whole body, the clinic offers the original Swiss formulation MFIII sheep placenta. Given as injections, they are touted to renew stamina, vitality, improve longevity, strengthen the immune system, improve skin complexion and build stronger bones and flexible joints.

For Ipoh to have a one-stop rejuvenation centre is certainly a welcome move. And for Ipohites to move, be aware that the centre is now offering promotional packages on all their treatments, with special prices pre-Christmas and pre-Chinese New Year, after which their prices will be much higher. So make your appointment with Dr Terry Lee soon.

For more information: **Kinta Medical Centre**
20 Jalan Chung Thye Phin; Tel.: **05-2425333/2542125**
or email **Dr Terry at terryhiap@yahoo.com**.

Seaside or Mountain Vacation in Genki, Glamour Square

There's something in the air and while it may not be love, some say it's the next best thing – **negative ions**. Negative ions are odourless, tasteless, and invisible molecules that we inhale in abundance in certain environments. Think mountains, waterfalls, and beaches.

Ions are molecules that have gained or lost an electrical charge. The more negative ions there are in the blood, the more efficient the cell's metabolism process. Negative Ions in our body are essential in sustaining and improving our health.

As we breathe in oxygen, albeit necessary to life, the process of oxidization releases free radicals which disrupts normal cellular functions and accelerates the aging process as well as aggravating much illness. Antioxidants quench free radicals and we're constantly being exhorted to get enough anti-oxidants into our bodies to counter the ravages of pollution, aging, work and environmental stress and the toxins that we ingest through the food supply.

Keeping this in mind, the Japanese set out to find the perfect solution that could utilise and release these antioxidants in the most advantageous and all-encompassing way. As such, "antioxidant houses", coated from floor to ceiling with antioxidant 'enzyme' paints, were built. The idea was to create an environment filled and charged with negative ions, allowing for our skin and lungs to naturally absorb them into our cells and system. Such a concept took the world by storm.

Hotbed Antioxidant Therapy

Now Ipohites need go no further than to Glamour Square in Bercham to charge up with negative ions and experience Hotbed Antioxidant Therapy at Genki, an antioxidant spa that has been quietly operating for the last two years.

Decorated with lush flora, wooden panelling and flooring, Genki has a spiritual and relaxing aura about it; it is perhaps the perfect place to unwind from our bustling city-life. Our visit was immediately welcomed by a friendly Miss Chick, who served us a special enzyme drink, made on the premises in their antioxidant pail which they sell. "The pail is perfect for fermentation. You can make yoghurt in them too, and they turn out ionized, which is extremely beneficial for the body. Alternatively, the pail allows you to store your groceries for a longer time than usual, they remain fresh," she conceded as she pulled out



Week-old egg and bread

two bowls, one, containing a raw egg and the other a piece of bread, both of which had been there for more than two weeks; the egg looking like it had just been cracked that morning and the bread with not a single mould visible.

Neutralise Toxins

I was then shown the many warm to hot rooms, which contain tiled-beds that can be heated up to around 40 degrees Celsius. These dry-sauna rooms where you rest on



'anti-oxidant beds' beds consisting of special ceramic tiles, release over 2 million negative ions/cm³, that will flow into your body to neutralise toxins.

The therapy is reputed to assist in anti-aging of cells and overall body; reduced cholesterol levels; improved blood circulation; relief of pain and stiffness caused by rheumatism; increased immune resistance; increased metabolic rates and weight loss; reduced sugar levels after multiple treatments for Diabetics; and pain relief and improvement of general well being for cancer patients.

Each therapy session takes roughly around 30-40 minutes. First timers can opt for the membership costing RM100 which entitles them to five sessions. Walk-In session RM38 including healthy fruit juice. Other value packages are available.

Genki Antioxidant House

Lot 14 - 1 First Floor, Glamour Square Commercial Centre, Persiaran Bercham Selatan 20, Taman Bercham Jaya, 31400 Ipoh, Perak.

For more information: **05-5475366** or Miss Chick Chooi Kuan **016-5322675**.

Blood Donation Drive

Yayasan Bina Upaya Ridzuan (YBU) sponsored blood-donation drive in Batu Gajah was a roaring success. Held at the town's premier TJ Supermarket recently, the response from the public was overwhelming. Over 300 people who patronised the supermarket took time off to donate a pint of their blood for a worthy cause. The blood was aimed at restocking depleted supply at Hospital Raja Bainun Ipoh (Ipoh General Hospital).



The campaign was launched by YBU's Chief Executive Officer, Dato' Zainal Abidin Omar. Staffs of the hospital were there to offer a helping hand. Also present were Dato' Jamri Suria, District Officer of Batu Gajah and UMNO Batu Gajah Division Chief and Patron of Silat Serimau Hitam Perak, Dato' Yusoff Kassim.

Dato' Zainal thanked the public for their support. "This is YBU's first attempt at conducting a blood donation drive," he remarked. "I am touched by your generosity."

RM

Sport



Perak Taekwondo Showdown

Recently, 500 young and enthusiastic Taekwondo exponents from all over Perak met at the MSN Hall in Ipoh for the 31st Perak Youth Interschool Taekwondo (WTF) Championship 2011 and 30th Perak PTNP-MSN Closed Taekwondo (WTF) Championship.

Both events were organised by Master Nawas, the Founder and Head Instructor of RSB Taekwondo Club. The championships, which lasted two days, was officiated by Dato' Haji Nadzri Bin Ismail, State Assemblyman for Manjoi, Dato' Haji Nadzri, who was very pleased to see the participation from all races, donated RM2,000 to the tournament.

The Organising Chairman, Ahmad Zahar bin Abdul Wahab stressed that this tournament aims to reach out to all young people to join Taekwondo, whilst at the same time, encouraging them to train hard and produce great national exponents in the near future.



Badminton Great Launches Tournament

Former badminton great Dato' Ng Boon Bee launched the inaugural Ipoh Swimming Club Inter-Club Badminton Tournament 2011 with the coveted Dato' Ng Boon Bee Cup as the challenge trophy, after the opening of Ipoh Swimming Club's newly-refurbished badminton hall with the addition of two new courts, recently. The other guest of honour at the opening ceremony was Dato' Seri Dr Abdullah Fadzil Che Wan, former president of Badminton Association Malaysia.

Dato' Ng was a three-time All-England Doubles Champion in 1965, 1966 and 1970, and was one of the members of the team that won the Thomas Cup in 1967. He was voted Sportsman of the Year in 1968. Besides badminton, he also excelled in football and rugby. Dato' Ng was inducted into the *World Badminton Hall of Fame* in 1998.

EL

**Community
The Sinking Feeling**

Two widowed sisters, A. Sellaimah, 69, and A. Gangamah, 88, are at wit's end. The house they live in is in dire straits. The floor of the house is in danger of caving in due to structural collapse. The ground is sinking and will soon bring the whole house down.

Having no other source of income other than Sellaimah's late husband's monthly pension, the sisters have run out of ideas as to how to salvage their sinking abode. "I've approached the welfare department and some other government agencies for help. But they could offer little other than some encouraging words," said Sellaimah to Dato' Zainal Abidin Omar, Chief Executive Officer of Yayasan Bina Upaya Darul Ridzuan (YBU) when he and his staff dropped by their Buntong house recently. Sellaimah hopes YBU can do something to alleviate her problem. "Hopefully, the foundation can help build us a new house," she quipped. "My late husband's RM700 pension is barely sufficient to see us through."

The foundation will find a suitable solution to the sisters' woes. Dato' Zainal handed over food parcels to the siblings before departing.



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News Roundup

Getting To Know



A luncheon talk co-sponsored by Tourism Malaysia Perak and the Perak Information Department was held at Hillcity Hotel, Ipoh recently to detail the roles and responsibilities of these two government agencies to participants. Over 70 participants took part in the half-day seminar. They consisted of government officials and members of the local media. Information Department Director, Hj Muhamad Aszahari Abdul Rahman started the ball rolling with an introduction on the responsibilities of his department.

"The days of yore when the Information Department was closely identified with movies are long gone. Disseminating information today is a lot harder than in the old days," he said. The singular role of the department is to impart information on government policies to the public. However, the advent of Information and Communication Technology has somewhat blurred the line between what is seen and what is done.

Puan Norshamshidar Abdul Rahman, Director of Tourism Malaysia Perak was next on the podium briefing the participants on tourism potentials in Perak in view of Visit Perak Year 2012. Tourism, according to Nor Shamshidar, generated almost RM37 billion in 2009, the third biggest contributor to the country's earnings after petroleum and raw commodities. Dato' Saarani Mohamad, Executive Councillor for Information, Farming and Rural Development closed the luncheon talk.

FZB

Visitors from Denmark

Y's Men's Club of Ipoh took time off to entertain two of their foreign counterparts recently. Bent Junker-Hansen, 72, and Ruth Elizabeth, 68, are from Bjert, Denmark. Their visit was of significance as it was ahead of Visit Perak Year 2012, which is just around the corner. The couple was met on arrival at KLIA by members of the Kuala Lumpur chapter and driven to Ipoh.

While in Ipoh they were taken to all the touristic spots listed in the city's travel brochure, including trips to outlying Kuala Kangsar and Taiping. They also visited the day care centre run by the Society for the Promotion of Mental Health in Ulu Kinta and were briefed accordingly.

The couple was impressed with what they saw and promised to pass the word around when back home in Denmark.

Ed



Club to Promote VPY 2012

Kelab Bakti Gunung Kledang, an Ipoh-based Malay social club has set its sights on helping the state government promote the much-touted Visit Perak Year (VPY) 2012. The club's new president, Dato' Megat Shahrani Megat Shahrudin told Ipoh Echo when met after his inauguration ceremony at Crystal Ballroom, Impiana Hotel, Ipoh recently. "We'll complement Tourism Perak's efforts by all available means to propagate VPY 2012 to our counterparts abroad."

Megat felt that a clean Ipoh would go a long way in

attracting visitors to Perak, as the city is an entry point of choice. "Keeping Ipoh clean will be the other objective our members will pursue in earnest," he added. The club will work closely with City Council in ensuring that cleanliness is maintained at a high level. "At this juncture, the only solution I can think of is conducting awareness programmes and *gotong royong* involving members and their families. Incidentally, the club consists of about 60 members, which includes some of the scions of the local Malay aristocracy and the Who's Who in Perak.

The club's major contribution in 2011 was the establishment of two welfare homes, Pusat Jagaan Rumah Ihsan and Rumah Anak Yatim Darussalam. "This was made possible with assistance from members and corporate bodies," said out-going president, Dato' Mohamad Razali Khalid. "Hopefully, with the existence of these two centres, social problems affecting the marginalised and the poor in the state will be reduced," Razali remarked.

DYTM Raja Muda Perak, Raja Dr Nazrin Shah and DYTM Raja Puan Besar Perak were the guests of honour at the inauguration dinner.

RM



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Transform with a Professional Accountancy Qualification CATIACCA	Ms. Liza Wong, Course Coordinator School of Accountancy	10.30am - 12.00pm	1.30pm - 3.00pm
Thinking From a Different Perspective	Ms. Cheryl, Lecturer School of Art & Design	12.00pm - 1.00pm	12.30pm - 1.30pm
Spotlight on Business & Marketing	Ms. Chevi, Course Coordinator School of Business & Marketing	1.00pm - 2.00pm	11.30am - 12.30pm
Shape your Future Success	Mr. Au, Head of Academic	2.00pm - 3.00pm	10.30am - 11.30am

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My Say

By Jerry Francis



Why do we need to develop water-related activities like other cities where their rivers are deeper and wider? Sungai Kinta is hardly 30 metres wide and 2 metres deep, and as such not feasible for any water-related activities. Furthermore, it is also badly polluted.

Such activities, particularly a river cruise, are doomed to failure. Just take a look at the nearby arti-

Do We Need Water-Related Activities At The Riverfront?

When the then Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Mohamed Tajol Rosli Ghazali officiated what was to be a multi-million-ringggit Ipoh city riverfront beautification project with fanfare and wide publicity on January 27, 2004, there was joy amongst the residents of the city.



It was generally felt that at last, the embankments of Sungai Kinta, which bisects the city into New Town and Old Town sectors, would be a new focal point.

Now seven years later, the project has not materialised. It has become yet another much talked about project in Perak that has fallen off the track.

Under the proposal, Sungai Kinta was set to become a tourist spot with the introduction of water-related activities by the state government. The state chairman for tourism, Dato' Hamidah Othman, had earlier tried to revive the project, but now no-one seems to talk about it.

She said that for a start, they might offer kayaking along the river for tourists and city folk. According to her, a river cruise would also be offered by a private group of companies, which was undertaking a RM200m development project along the 1.2km stretch of the river.

"The cruise will start from Taman D.R. Seenivasagam to the Kinta Riverfront," she said, adding that more activities would be introduced from time to time.

She said efforts to make Sungai Kinta "an engine of growth" for tourism activities was in line with the state's ambition in making the industry the second biggest income earner for Perak.

The question is, can such water-related activities be developed as a tourist attraction on the narrow and shallow Sungai Kinta? I am amazed by such a suggestion. No wonder our plans often fail because we do not give much thought to such proposals before implementing them.

cial lake in Taman D.R. Seenivasagam and what has happened to its water-related activities.

We must be crazy to expect that tourists would be interested in our river cruise. What is there to see, except the polluted water and the riverbanks that are hardly attractive? Unlike Malacca where the river cruises allow visitors to see the heritage buildings, a traditional kampong and some big monitor lizards lazing in the sun along the riverbanks.

What we really need is to beautify the stretch of Sungai Kinta's embankments, not water-related activities as they would be a waste of public funds.

Rivers have always been the focal point of cities all over the world. They not only reflect how well responsible authorities can manage pollution, but also how well they can co-opt rivers into their beautification plans.

Famous cities all over the world, which were founded along rivers, have been beautifying their river embankments. Look at London, Paris, Amsterdam and even Singapore where their riverfronts have become well-known landmarks.

The cities are beautiful because of the rivers, where the bridges and riverbanks are spruced up to blend with the development. However, Ipoh is just like many others in the country which have yet to make use of their rivers for beautification purposes.

Sungai Kinta continues to be polluted as those living upstream are throwing wastes into the river daily. Efforts by the Drainage and Irrigation Department to save the river from pollution through such campaigns as "Love Our River" have not been successful.

If the state government is serious about developing the riverfront, it should be concentrating on the embankments. Forget about the water-related activities, as they will be a strain on funds.

Morubina Group of Companies had initially looked at it in the right perspective. It had developed a stretch of the embankment as food outlets, constructed small-scale replicas of famous bridges across the river and established a tin mining gallery to reflect the past glory of the "City That Tin Built".

The riverfront can become the rendezvous for visitors to refresh themselves and visit the tin mining gallery before setting out to the various mining and cultural heritage sites in the state. While the city folks can walk or have a "teh tarik" and some food at one of the outlets. However, to make the project a reality, there is a need to put a more determined effort to developing the riverbanks.

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