

# THE LEADER



JUNE 2014, VOL 9 No. 1

ALUMNI MAGAZINE OF UNIVERSITI SAINS MALAYSIA



## EDITORIAL

The dreaded exam time descended upon the students as they burned midnight oil. Once over, most of them rushed off for their semester break leaving the campus strangely quiet.

For the final year students, they are metamorphosing from students to graduands (those who passed and awaiting their convocation), to full-fledged graduates. Having received their scrolls, they can proudly call themselves “alumni”, a word derived from Latin which means “to nourish or to be nourished”. The university nourished them with knowledge just as the university wish its alumni to nourish the university.

Anyway, ‘alumni’ is the plural form for alumnus (for men) and ‘alumna’ (for ladies). Undoubtedly, alumni play an important role in their alma mater in the form of giving back in terms of cash or kind. Some returned to give talks to the campus community or providing aid to the less fortunate students.

USM needs you.

### *The Editorial Team*



**Front cover:** The water tower (Building D07) is also known as the ‘Chancellory tower’ which served as the favourite lounge of the late Tan Sri Hamzah in the ‘70s.

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**The Alumni Liaison Office director / Adviser –**  
Mohamad Abdullah

#### **The Editorial Team**

Yong Check Yoon  
Sharifah Darweena Syed Ahmad Amir Feisal  
Siti Faizah Abdul Halim

#### **Special Thanks go to:**

Tan Ewe Hoe  
Seau Bee Ngoh  
T. Balasubramaniam and his group  
Rosemah Ibrahim  
Noor Afidah Ahmad  
Lee Zhen Yip  
Nasha Rodziadi Khaw  
Abidah Bahrudin

#### **Photography**

Yong Check Yoon  
Fairus Md Isa  
Sharifah Darweena Syed Ahmad Amir Feisal

## Have Language Mastery Will Travel

Seau Bee Ngoh's four years in USM empowered her with a skill with which she found a career that she is passionate about: languages. She is now a project director for several businesses and is also actively involved in social work.

Recalling her years while studying at the School of Humanities in USM, Seau who was from Sungai Petani, Kedah, said that she stayed at Harapan before it was renamed as Fajar Harapan. She majored in Bahasa Malaysia and minored in Mass Communication during her second year.

"It was the best four years in my life as my life was enriched academically as well as having USM grooming us into adults to adapt to the outside world," Seau said.



The freedom, opportunity and time that USM had granted her were used on societies and clubs such as those for music and sports.

Another fond memory was her role as a bus ticket agent for students travelling during their semester breaks.

"I liaise with bus companies as their agent to sell bus tickets to students," she said. "It helped me earn some pocket money as well as to help students 'balik kampung' ('return home' in Bahasa Malaysia) during semester breaks."

She remembered students calling her up or leaving messages to book for seats and they loved it because there were times when entire buses for popular routes were filled with USM students.

Her years at USM established lasting friendship with fellow students.

"There was a group of friends – 10 of us – from the School of Communication and a few from the School of Management who are still touching base and in fact we celebrated our 20th anniversary of being together last year," she said.

Seau added that she was very active in basketball and handball, representing USM for the four years and winning certificates and

trophies. She also joined the theatre with the Chinese group.

As most of them owned a motorcycle each, they often spent time at the VC Rock to enjoy the panoramic view of the sea and the Penang Bridge. It was long before the 'Twin Towers' were even built.

"I took Japanese language classes for two terms at the School of Languages, Literacies and Translation," she said, adding that mastering the Japanese language helped when she married a Japanese working for a multinational company.



Bee Ngoh reminiscing her days in USM

After her graduation in 1993, Seau found an international marketing job in Singapore and after three months, she was posted to Kunming in Yunnan Province, China. There she remained for a year-and-a-half before returning to Singapore for seven years where she got married and had to go to Thailand.

"We stayed in Thailand for six years during which I had to learn the Thai language but learning a new language is not much of a problem," she said. "USM taught me Bahasa Malaysia and from that I knew how to pick up the Japanese language because you need to understand the origins of a language to facilitate the learning process."

*"It was the best four years in my life as my life was enriched academically as well as having USM grooming us into adults to adapt to the outside world."*

– Seau Bee Ngoh

While in Thailand, she initially felt handicapped without knowing the Thai language and that 'forced' her to start picking up the language and, moreover, with her fraternal twin babies were on the way she has more time on her hands. She found a need to communicate. With her years of marketing experience she wanted to start a business on wellness. That was when she took up courses on massage. Opening up her own spa in Thailand and conducting courses such as on health massage for ladies, particularly those who have just given birth, was her dream comes true.

After the six years in Thailand, the family had to move to Nagano Prefecture on Honshu Island, Japan, for three years.

With her mastery in languages, she opened a consultancy company as well as a trainer on subjects pertaining to women and children. While in Japan, she also conducted language courses in English, Chinese and Japanese. To give back to the community, she spent time to help out the autistic children and other volunteerism work as well.

From Japan they moved to China, stayed three years in Beijing and another three years in Shenzhen after which the family had to move back to Bangkok.


Now, her 12-year-old sons – fraternal twins – attend a Japanese school in Bangkok and are able to communicate in English and Chinese. She felt that having to travel to so many places over the years has its setback, particularly when her children were small. They have to adapt to new places and make new friends. It was a little difficult for the children especially when they are growing up but life has to be accepted with its wrinkles. However, social media saves the day by keeping the twins in touch with their old friends while they make new ones.



The Japanese students led by Bee Ngoh (standing in front of two ladies with tudung) and USM Public Relations Officers



With the twins when they visited USM Tuanku Fauziah Museum and Gallery recently.

They were here together with eight other students, aged 13 and 14, who lived in Japan, China and Thailand. It was part of their English Spring Camp programme to USM. They had a short cultural exchange session with USM students before being taken on a guided tour around the Tuanku Fauziah Museum and Gallery on 3 April. 

## 40 YEARS TOGETHER

It was an occasion to remember, particularly having being apart for 40 years after graduation. Certainly it was a long time but everyone has to join the rat race to 'cari makan' (make a living).

An opportunity struck on 16 March when a reunion-cum-luncheon was held at a hotel in Kuala Lumpur, a result of the initiative of T. Balasubramaniam (Social Sciences '75) and his circle of close friends.

Balasubramaniam, popularly known as Bala, had organised a similar gathering for the first time in February 2013 in Petaling Jaya which was attended by 60 USM alumni who graduated in the 1970s.

Bala was pleased as Punch that all the preparations that started three weeks ago have borne fruit in bringing back former USM students and to see them mingling so happily, sharing their fond 'down memory lane' stories and experiences.

"I am also grateful to the university, particularly the USM Alumni Liaison Office which has once again supported and helped me to successfully

organise this reunion, and I hope to be able to work together again in organising such events in the future,” said Bala.



Also present was USM Alumni 2002 personalities, corporate leaders and also the Pro-Chancellor, Tan Sri Mustafa Mansur (Social Sciences '76) who described the meeting as an opportunity provided for him to meet up besides rebuilding contacts, as well as reminiscing the times when they were USM students nearly 40 years ago.

“Many fond moments are still fresh in my memory and I’m delighted to be reunited with my fellow former friends especially those who are active in sports - cricket, rugby, and hockey,” said Mustafa.

Former AgroBank Malaysia President Dato’ Martini Osman who is also a USM Social Sciences alumnus said that he tried his best to attend such reunions.

“I managed to come for this after having missed three reunions because of work commitments,” said Martini.

He then added that there were faces that he could recognise but could not remember their names, or vice versa.

What pleases him most was able to meet his friends, most of whom he had known since 1973 at USM. Martini started working with Bank Pertanian Malaysia, known as Agrobank after its corporatization, after attending a short course at Universiti Teknologi Mara in 1975.

“Perhaps it was my luck that I continue to work in at Bank Pertanian Malaysia after graduation

until my retirement from Agrobank; a loyal employee to the company,” Martini reflected.

According to Rajen Moses, he would not miss the opportunity to join a programme such as this because, besides being able to meet up with old friends, such events serve as a platform to share stories of the student days of the 70s.

“There is much feedback we received each time hold an alumni reunion and there are many who felt comfortable to be at a gathering which is informal such as this,” said Rajen who is currently working as a Senior Manager at the Public Relations of the Sapura Group.

“I have attended the *Balikampus* programme organised by USM before and I used to stay in the students hostels provided.

“Such programmes are very helpful in reviving the nostalgic 70s of the university and should be held regularly to attract other alumni,” said Rajen who was the secretariat for *Malam Sirih Pulang ke Gagang Dinner* organised by the USM Alumni Association of the Federal Territory and Selangor.

Although he graduated in 1975, he was much at ease with fellow seniors. His wife, Pearl Moses, who is also a USM Social Sciences alumnus, now teaches at a private school in Kuala Lumpur, attested to this fact.


They were among those present in the USM Alumni of 1974 reunion which, this year they celebrate 40 years together. A total of 37 alumni attended and many of them have touched the age of sixty but still brimming with energy.



Together with another USM Alumni, Dato’ Ahmad Sofian (Social Sciences ‘74), Mustafa also hoped that USM Alumni Kuala Lumpur and Selangor will further strengthen its membership

and the administration, as well as to consider how they can return to render services to their alma mater and the community after this reunion.

Among the USM alumni of '75 who attended the almost two-and-a-half hour reunion were Dato' Ahmad Ibrahim, Dato' Martini Osman, Mahendran, Rajan Moses and his wife Pearl Moses, Dato' Ooi Say Chuan Lee Kee Teck, Datin Noorhayati Khalid, Ghazali Kassim and Terence Selvakumar.

Meetings like this are often held impromptu. In fact, they meet each other often, over a cup of tea in the afternoon. 

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### **Rosemah – Palapes Adalah Antara Pengalaman Penuh Makna**

“Pengalaman paling seronok di Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) adalah semasa saya menjadi ahli Pasukan Latihan Pegawai Simpanan (PALAPES), apatah lagi ia mempertemukan dengan laki-laki yang kemudiannya menjadi suami,” ujar Rosemah Ibrahim, graduan USM tahun 1987 dalam bidang Komunikasi Massa.

Menurut Rosmah, Komunikasi Massa USM adalah pilihan pertama dan menjadi detik amat bermakna apabila ditawarkan mengikuti pengajian tersebut di USM yang juga merupakan seorang yang aktif mewakili Universiti dan Pulau Pinang dalam permainan hoki dan bola jaring.

Tambahnya lagi, selain menghadirkan diri ke kelas, masanya banyak diluahkan untuk pelbagai aktiviti lain dan sangat menghargai kehidupan di kampus yang membuatnya seronok belajar tanpa tekanan.

Anak ketiga dari lima adik beradik ini berasal dari Kuala Pilah, Negeri Sembilan. Di USM, beliau ditempatkan di Desa Fajar pada tahun pertama dan kemudiannya dipindahkan ke Desasiswa Damai apabila menyertai PALAPES dan terakhir di Desasiswa Cahaya (ketika itu yang kini telah tiada dan dibangunkan Kompleks Cahaya Siswa).

“Saya ramai kawan lelaki sebagai teman rapat dan selama setahun saya di PALAPES saya tidak pernah ada teman lelaki istimewa selain teman-

teman rapat ini,” Rosemah membuka lembaran lama kehidupannya di kampus sambil ketawa.

Kisah cinta kampus Rosemah bermula hanya dengan sebiji bawang.

“Pengalaman paling seronok di USM adalah semasa saya menjadi ahli PALAPES, apatah lagi ia mempertemukan dengan laki-laki yang kemudiannya menjadi suami.”

– Rosemah Ibrahim

Menurut Rosemah, semasa di dalam PALAPES jarang ada masa bergaul dengan rakan-rakan lain, yang selalunya hanya riuh bergaul di kelas.

“Saya jarang bercakap dengan ahli-ahli PALAPES, sehinggalah ditugaskan untuk menyediakan makanan bersama untuk mengupas bawang dengan seorang PALAPES laki-laki yang di situlah mulanya kami mengenali mengenali diri masing-masing yang berakhir dengan menawarkan untuk menghantar Rosemah ke Desasiswa Cahaya kerana agak jauh untuk berjalan balik namun tawaran itu ditolak, Rosemah mengingati kembali detik manis pertemuan dengan laki-laki yang kemudiannya dicurahkan sepenuh kasih sayangnya apabila bergelar suami.



Keesokannya, pelajar tersebut yang dikenalnya sebagai Roslan menunggunya sehingga selesai aktiviti dan sekali lagi menawarkan untuk menghantar Rosemah ke Desasiswa yang kali ini tidak mampu ditolak untuk menaiki motosikal TRX 7971 sebagai bermulanya bibit

percintaan mereka sehingga membawa mereka ke jinjang pelamin pada 1 Mei 1989 sehingga dikurniakan 4 orang cahaya mata.

Kenangan paling manis bersama Roslan semasa di kampus ialah menjadi pasangan kekasih, pembonceng setia ke mana sahaja, sering meluangkan masa bersama di Perpustakaan selain sering keluar bersama.

“Roslan adalah seorang yang penyayang, sering menjadi pelindung kepada kami sekeluarga, tugas seorang ibu juga dipikul olehnya sehinggakan boleh dikatakan setiap malam bangun untuk menyediakan susu anak” kata Rosemah mengenngati kenangan lalunya.

Suami Rosemah, Roslan Mohd Ali, alumni tahun 1988 aliran Sains kini telah tiada, pergi untuk selamanya membawa bersama ingatan, kenangan, kesetiaan seorang isteri bersama pengorbanan dan kasih sayang yang dicurahkan sepanjang koma hampir 5 tahun akibat kecederaan otak setelah menjalani pembedahan tulang pada 2 September 2006 dan kemudiannya menghidapi jangkitan kuman sebelum menutup mata.



“Memang amat sakit dan payah untuk melepaskan orang yang kita sayang, kalau boleh saya mahu lebih masa bersamanya, namun saya puas kerana sepanjang dia sakit, kami anak beranak semuanya tidur sebilik bersama dan lakukan aktiviti yang disukainya bersama-sama” ujar beliau.

Dalam pada itu, Rosemah yang berminat dengan dunia masakan berpeklung menyertai pertandingan Masterchef Musim Pertama Astro atas dorongan anak-anaknya.

Kalau diikutkan hati sememangnya Rosemah tidak sanggup berpisah dengan suami yang masih terlantar sakit, namun desakan anak-anak dan minatnya dalam bidang masakan menyebabkannya mengambil keputusan ikut serta dalam pertandingan tersebut yang sebenarnya borang penyertaan diisi dan dihantar anak-anak tanpa pengetahuannya.



“Rezeki saya agaknya mrenyebabkan dipilih untuk menyertai pertandingan tersebut,” ujar Rosemah.

Semasa dalam proses pertandingan itulah, Rosemah menerima panggilan daripada anak-anak memaklumkan Roslan sukar bernafas lalu terus menarik diri pulang ke rumah bagi menguruskan suami.



“Setelah saya menarik diri dari program tersebut, saya terus menghantar arwah ke hospital, namun Allah swt lebih menyayangnya dan Roslan pergi meninggalkan kami sekeluarga selepas 5 hari saya kembali di sisinya” cerita Rosemah dalam nada yang amat sayu.

“Saya amat sayangkan arwah suami saya, dan ini adalah perkara terakhir yang mampu saya lakukan untuk menunjukkan kasih sayang saya kepadanya” tambah Rosemah.

Rosemah bersyukur dikurniakan bakat dalam bidang masakan, namun lebih bangga kerana dapat menjaga suami kesayangan sehingga doktor memujinya kerana Roslan tidak pernah ada 'bed sore' walaupun dia lumpuh seluruh badan.

Rosemah membelanjakan kira-kira RM 5,000 sebulan untuk suaminya, bekas Juruanalisis Bank Simpanan Nasional (BSN).

Bukan mudah untuk berbuat demikian kerana selama ini urusan keluarga dibuat oleh suami, kata Rosemah yang pernah berkhidmat sebagai Setiausaha Eksekutif di KOAM dan kemudiannya di Majlis Sukan Negara (MSN) di bahagian Perhubungan Awam.

Rosemah, memulakan perniagaan sendiri sebagai kontraktor perabot yang berjalan maju namun menyerahkan kepada staf yang dipercayainya demi menjaga suami pada tahun 2006 dan malangnya keadaan menjadi sukar apabila perniagaan itu ditinggalkan sehingga Rosemah disaman, dan menggunakan duit insurans untuk membayar saman tersebut.

Dengan kecekalan dan kasih sayang kepada suami dan sokongan daripada anak-anak, Rosemah meneruskan kerjaya sebagai kontraktor perabot di samping sibuk dengan tempahan- tempahan produk makanan seperti daging salai, ayam salai dan "moist chocolate cake".


"USM merupakan tempat yang sentiasa di hati saya, saya bersyukur kerana dipilih masuk ke sini dan dipilih masuk ke ROTU yang mengajar saya untuk hidup berdikari dan kemudiannya berjumpa dengan suami hanya kerana sebiji bawang" ujar beliau lagi, dalam ketawa namun diliputi kesedihan.

Bagi Rosemah kenangan dan nostalgia itu akan terus hidup mekar, namun kehidupan sebenar perlu diteruskan demi anak-anak. Seberat-berat mata memandang, berat lagi bahu memikulnya.

Kenangan di kampus, dunia rumah tangga dan kasih sayang terhadap suami masih terus bernyala dan tidak pernah pudar. Bercerita tentang kisah suami adalah antara perkara manis yang ingin dilakukannya kerana kisah cinta kampus itu tidak pernah berkurang walau masa terus berlalu dan jarak waktu yang makin jauh ditinggalkan.

USM tetap di hati, tetap diingati kerana di sinilah cinta mula bersemi. Doa untuk Roslan, untuk

seorang kekasih, untuk seorang suami dan ayah kepada anak-anaknya dan alumni USM yang telah mengadap penciptanya.

Doa juga untuk Rosemah yang perlu cekal mengharungi hari-hari seterusnya sebagai seorang ahli perniagaan dan ibu yang penyayang. 

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## *Pengalaman Mengajar Di Pedalaman Beri Erti*

"Alhamdulillah, saya bangga menjadi guru di Sekolah Kebangsaan Lemoi ini dan saya tidak pernah menyesal ditempatkan di sini" ujar Afidah apabila ditanya mengenai perasaannya mengajar anak-anak orang asli yang jauh di pedalaman.



Noor Afidah Ahmad dilahirkan pada 17 November 1984, merupakan anak kelahiran Pulau Pinang telah memulakan perkhidmatan sebagai Guru Bahasa Inggeris bagi pelajar Tahun 1, 5 dan 6 di Sekolah Kebangsaan Lemoi (SKL), Cameron Highlands pada tahun 2010. Perjalanan untuk memasuki sekolah ini daripada Ringlelet, Tanah Rata memakan masa empat jam.

Anak kelima daripada enam adik beradik ini telah memegang Sarjana Muda Pengurusan pada tahun 2006 di Universiti Sains Malaysia. Beliau memulakan alam persekolahan di Sekolah Kebangsaan Pematang Janggus, seterusnya di Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Sri Muda dan melanjutkan pelajaran ke Kolej Matrikulasi.

"Sejak di bangku sekolah lagi saya ingin menjadi guru, dan saya juga memohon untuk melanjutkan pengajian di peringkat sarjana dalam bidang pendidikan, namun USM telah



menawarkan jurusan pengurusan kepada saya” kata Afidah.

Tambahnya lagi, walaupun agak kecewa pada mulanya, namun dia tetap menerima tawaran tersebut. Sepanjang pengajian beliau di USM dan Pengurusan khususnya telah mengajar

beliau untuk menguasai Bahasa Inggeris dengan baik.

“Saya bersyukur kerana menerima jurusan ini, subjek-subjek pengurusan banyak memperbaiki penguasaan Bahasa Inggeris saya dan saya akui penguasaan Bahasa Inggeris saya agak lemah sebelum ini” kata Afidah



Setelah tamat pengajian di USM, beliau terus bekerja dengan kakaknya dan pada tahun berikutnya beliau cuba memohon untuk mengikuti program KPLI, namun gagal. Hasrat untuk menjadi guru yang diimpikan daripada kecil lagi tercapai apabila beliau diterima masuk ke Program KPLI pada tahun 2009 setelah beliau memohon buat kali kedua.

Setelah tamat program ini, beliau terus ditempatkan di SKL. Perjalanan masuk ke sekolah tersebut perlu menaiki kereta pacuan empat roda. Namun tidak ada sedikit penyesalan di hati beliau mengenai sekolah tersebut.

SKL mempunyai 106 orang murid keseluruhannya. Setiap tahun (darjah) hanya mempunyai satu kelas, dan setiap satu kelas hanya mempunyai 18 orang murid.

“Murid-murid disini perlukan pendekatan pembelajaran yang mudah, bilangan yang sedikit dapat membantu saya mengajar murid-murid saya dengan lebih perhatian” ujarinya.

Tambah beliau lagi, pengalaman yang paling berharga apabila murid-muridnya mendapat tempat pertama bagi Pertandingan Story Telling

pada tahun 2011 dalam kalangan Sekolah-sekolah orang asli dan tempat ke-empat dalam Pertandingan Public Speaking pada tahun 2012 di peringkat daerah Cameron Highlands.

Beliau akui bukan senang untuk mengajar kanak-kanak orang asli ini, namun apabila melihat pencapaian dan perubahan murid-murid ini, ia merupakan kepuasan yang amat bermakna.

“Berkhidmat di dalam Kelab Pengguna selama 3 tahun di Universiti Sains Malaysia telah mengajar saya berkomunikasi dengan ramai orang di samping melatih kesabaran saya berhadapan dengan pelanggan sekaligus ini




mengajar saya untuk bersabar dalam menyampaikan ilmu kepada murid-murid saya” ujar Afidah

Apabila ditanya mengenai pilihan beliau sekiranya ditawarkan di tempat lain,

beliau memaklumkan bahawa beliau inginkan 10 tahun lagi bersama sekolah ini. Beliau amat sayangkan anak-anak murid beliau, dan banyak lagi yang beliau ingin lakukan untuk mereka, namun beliau tidak nafikan bahawa sebagai anak perempuan, beliau harus memikirkan masa hadapan dan keluarga beliau.

“ Perasaan saya berbelah bahagi, memang saya mahu luangkan 10 tahun lagi disini, namun sekiranya ditakdirkan saya berkahwin kelak, saya perlu fikirkan perihal keluarga saya” ujar Afidah.

“Namun, buat masa ini saya akan jalankan kerjaya saya seperti biasa dan membuat keputusan apabila sampai waktunya nanti” tambah beliau lagi.

Beliau juga menasihatkan para pelajar untuk menerima apa jua jurusan sekiranya ditawarkan kerana banyak lagi yang menunggu kita di masa hadapan. Jangan mudah kecewa apabila apa yang dihasratkan tidak dapat, mungkin apa yang ditawarkan itu mendidik kita untuk menjadi lebih hebat. 

## *What Makes Persatuan Bahasa Tionghua Tick*

Membership to Persatuan Bahasa Tionghua (PBT, Chinese Language Society) is based on one criterion, the ability to speak Chinese. Race is not a barrier. Therefore, it is possible to find a handful non-Chinese to be in the association as well.

“In fact we welcome all to join the club and take part in its activities,” said Lee Zhen Yip who is the president of Persatuan Bahasa Tionghua (2013/2014) which has about 200 members.



He then explained that the society has three objectives and they are to increase social awareness among its members; increase creativity and appreciation of art among members; and to inspire its members to be optimistic about life.

In fact the association is one of the pioneering societies. The society started in 1970, a year after USM was established as Universiti Pulau Pinang and while the fledging university was still occupying the premises of the Malayan Teachers' Training College (MTC). USM moved to its present location in 1971.



If there is anything about sustainability to cite, this society has been practising it for decades. The outgoing committee imparts their knowledge and shares their experiences with

the in-coming committee. Hence, pitfalls can be avoided yet the sharing of experiences will not stymie creativity and possible improvements.

Over the years PBT has grown relatively well, helmed by enthusiastic students with various talents. It has expanded to include 10 sub-committees that have been given much autonomy to conduct various activities for its members. They comprise Mandarin classes, singing group, dancing group, drama group, debate group, *Bian Ji Zu* (editorial), cultural group, *She Fu* (social work), *Tu Shu Zu* (library), counselling for students.

“The *Bian Ji Zu* editorial team produces five to six newsletters per semester,” said Lee, adding that the team handled the entire publication process.



“The sub-committees plan their own activities and for the performances, you can see that students came from diverse background including those from the sciences and they shine on stage,” said Lee.

For those who are interested to learn to dance, they are able to do so at Tekun hostel's foyer.



“It is all about self-motivation,” Lee remarked.

Far from education and fun, the society also actively participated in social work such as raising funds for the less fortunate. One example is the profit raised from the annual concerts goes to deserving charities.

To promote reading, the society has established a library, Perpustakaan Persatuan Tiong Hua, on the third floor of Kompleks Cahaya. It has a collection of novels, science, hobbies, art, language, philosophy, and many other categories in the Chinese language.



Despite the task of keeping the society running in ship shape, the committee picked during its Annual General Meetings comprises up to eight persons: a president, a vice-president, two secretaries, one treasurer, and two or three board members. They succeeded in pushing the society to new heights because of the members' cooperation and team work. 🏆



### ▲ New Year Celebration

About 20 Bangladeshi students and their family members gathered at Anjung Budi on the eve of their new year (Pohela Boishakh) on 13 April. Each participant brought a traditional dish to supplement the joy of the close-knit community celebrating their new year away from home.

Although some have their spouses and children with them but they still miss celebrating it in a big and great way with their friends and relatives. 🏠



**A.K.M. Kamruzzaman**  
School of Housing, Building and Planning  
Status:



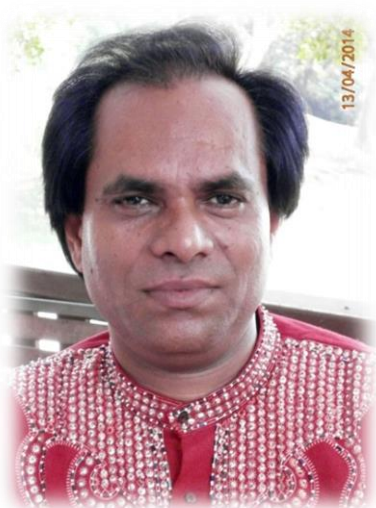
**Dr Jahurul Haque**  
School of Industrial Technology  
Year of graduation: 2014



**Dr Md Azmal Hossain**  
School of Industrial Technology  
Year of graduation: 2012



**Dr Md Zainul Abedin**  
School of Industrial Technology, USM  
Year of graduation: 2014



**Dr Md Rejaur Rahman**  
School of Distance Education  
Status: Post Doctoral Fellow



**Jasim Uddain**  
School of Biological Sciences  
Status: PhD in Biotechnology



**Kaniz Fatema**

School of Biological Sciences, USM  
Status: PhD student



**Md Humayun Kabir**

School of Humanities (Geography section)  
Year of graduation: expected 2015



**Luthful Alahi Kawsar**

School of Distance Education  
Status: PhD student



**Md Latiful Islam**

Centre for Marine & Coastal Studies  
(CEMACS)  
Status: PhD in Mariculture, expected  
completion 2016



**Md Shamsuddin Sultan Khan**  
School of Pharmaceutical Sciences  
Year of graduation: expected 2014



**Ranjan Roy**  
School of Humanities  
Year of graduation: expected 2014



**Mst. Nahid Akten**  
School of Biological Sciences, USM  
Status: PhD in fish nutrition



**Wahidu Zzaman**  
School of Industrial Technology  
PhD in Food Technology  
Year of graduation: expected 2015.

## Living in the Present, Loving the Past



Far from the rugged image of Indiana Jones who, as an archaeologist, is armed with a bullwhip and searching for legendary lost treasures, Nasha is none of the above. He is just a very ordinary person with a passion to be a detective of the antiquities, uncovering history in its raw state from the ground.

Long before Nasha Rodziadi Khaw even had the opportunity to dig his shovel into the dust, he discovered that he has an advantage of being a child of mixed parentage, Malay-Chinese to be precise. He had a flair for learning new languages and the love and ability to mix with people of other races.

Nasha, an alumnus of USM, did his undergraduate studies in Chemical Sciences in 2008 before obtaining his post graduate degree in Arts (Archeo-History) in 2011. His interest in history was ingrained into him since childhood, prompting his pursuit of this dream by making a bold decision to take a minor in the field of Archaeology at the undergraduate level before going for it at postgraduate level.

"I think the advantage that USM students enjoy is that they are granted the freedom to choose what they want for their minor. As long as there is no overlap with the major, science students

have the opportunity to take literature as a minor," said Nasha.

He added that this advantage has taught many of his colleagues to think outside the box and dare to try new things.

Nasha is the second of three siblings who speak Malay and English at home besides being able to understand a smattering of Hokkien. His interest in history and archaeology inspired him to teach himself the Portuguese language at the age of fourteen. The love for history could be attributed to his growing up in an environment of having various races for family members, particularly his father being a *Peranakan* Chinese.

Born in Taiping, Perak, on January 11, 1985, Nasha was raised there for a while before his family moved to Butterworth, Penang. He began his schooling at Sekolah Kebangsaan Bagan Ajam, then moving on to study at SMK Dato' Onn and furthered his studies at Penang Matriculation before entering USM.

"I frequently changed partners at USM," he joked. "What I meant was I was able to mingle with everyone regardless of race and religion and I'm not tied to just one friend; I can have breakfast with my Malay friends, have lunch with Indian friends and dinner with Chinese friends."

At USM, Nasha joined Kelanasiswa (photo below) and Archaeology Club. His interest in history and archeology was revived and grew in intensity. He took Spanish lessons until the third level and reflecting on it, the language is very close to Portuguese.



"I was a little envious of Nasha because he is capable of mastering Spanish easily," said Ramli Shahrill Nasha, a classmate for the Spanish lessons.

Nasha can be called a pioneer for Desasiwa RST as for the duration of his studies he was there, staying at Desasiwa Saujana in the first year, second year Desasiwa Restu and at Desasiwa Tekun for the final year.

“Despite the distance between the hostels and the School, I preferred to walk because I love to, particularly if there are classes in the morning; moreover the bus are quite crowded around this time,” he said.

Nasha is finishing his PhD studies which are expected complete in December 2014 at the University of Peshawar (UoP), Pakistan, in the field of Archaeology. He admits that he found some difficulties in living in a foreign country. But whatever the problems, he decided to tackle them one at a time to proceed with his study in this field.

“I remember how hard it was for me to decide to continue my study in this field. When I take a minor in the field, my interest grew and I instinctively knew I have to make it my major,” Nasha said.


“In the final year of my study here (in Gandhara, Pakistan) I started to think about what I would do after the completion of my studies later. I definitely do not want to work as a chemist who is, most of the time, confined within the laboratory, so I decided to make archaeology as my future as I have been fascinated by it since childhood,” he added.

He was particularly grateful to Prof Dr Mohd Mokhtar Saidin and Dr Nazarudin Zainun for introducing him to archaeological research and the pursuit for authentic history. Slowly he learned the basic theories until he was confident to pursue his PhD.



“I chose UoP because its campus is located in an area of most historical sites in Gandhara and is rich in archaeological artefacts,” he said.

During his leisure hours at UoP, he would spend time at a bistro either alone or with friends because of his interest in jazz.

“I love Nina Simone and one of her songs that I really like is *Love Me or Leave Me*,” he said. 

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## ***A Habit with a Difference***

For anyone who does not know the owner of the Art Habit Café in Alor Setar, Kedah, well would not have anticipated that the unassuming lady is a graduate of architecture from USM.



Abidah Bahrudin decided to work on the concept of a ‘casual café’ that will double up as a central repository for the realisation of her ideas faced difficult in gaining wide acceptance. “Habit of Art Café is also a place for me to experiment in creating ideas in designing that I want to express,” she said.

The cafe which has been operating since July 2012 had also experienced some difficult periods pertaining to its finance. However, Abidah overcame these constraints by leveraging on what she learned in the area of designing that enabled her to conduct her business within the limits of her capital.


“Acceptance by the local community about the concept and design of the cafe that I want to point out at the time was also the biggest hurdle that we have overcome and we did it by encouraging receptions and functions that may need the services of Habit Art Café,” said Abidah, adding that people are receptive towards the concept.

Abidah also said that for to be successful in business, one must be observant, strong, and have patience besides having the support and



involvement of family members and close relatives in your endeavour.

She had previously served as a professional architect and the interest still runs in her blood as one can see her own architectural expressions and concepts at the Habit Café.

To give the regular activities a touch of difference, Adibah also hold events such as books and arts bazaar and lantern festival. 

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**S. R. Chandraprasad**  
B.Sc. (Microbiology) '04  
Professional Service Specialist  
3M Malaysia Sdn Bhd  
Petaling Jaya, Selangor

## KEEPING TRACK



**Prof Mohd Zaid Abdullah**  
B. App. Sc. '86  
Lecturer  
School of Electrical & Electronic Engineering  
USM, Nibong Tebal



**Nur Nadia Hanim Taselim**  
B.Mgmt. '12  
Executive Secretary to Senior Deputy Registrar  
Vice-Chancellor's Office  
USM, Penang



**Dr Musa Ali**  
B.Soc. Sc. '90  
Director  
Centre for Innovation and Productivity in  
Public Administration (PIPPA)  
USM, Penang



**Mu'azzah Ismail**  
B.Comm. '06  
Assistant Registrar  
Vice-Chancellor's Office  
USM, Penang



**Ahmad Badri**  
B. Eng. (Materials Engineering) '90  
Lecturer,  
School of Materials & Mineral Resources  
Engineering,  
USM, Nibong Tebal



**Associate Professor Hasmaliza Mohamad**  
B.Eng. (Hons.) '97  
Lecturer  
School of Materials & Mineral Resources  
Engineering,  
USM, Nibong Tebal



**Noor Afidah Ahmad**  
B.A. (Teaching) '06  
Teacher  
Sekolah Kebangsaan Lemoi  
Cameron Highlands



**Dato' Dr Madinah Mohamad**  
B. Soc. Sc. '79  
Secretary General  
Ministry of Education Malaysia  
Cyberjaya



**Seau Bee Ngoh**  
B Comm '93  
Project Director  
We Link ( Asia ) Co., Ltd.,  
Bangkok



**Dato' Aloyah Mamat**  
B.Soc.Sc. '82  
Director General  
Immigration Department  
Putrajaya



**Lim Jenny**  
B.Tech. (Food Technology) '00  
Operation Manager (Analytical Dept)  
Fisher Scientific (Penang Branch)  
Penang



**Chua Kee Yong**  
MBA '03  
Business Development  
Khay Hor Holdings Sdn Bhd  
Taiping, Perak



**Comm Dato' Wira Mortadza Nazarene**  
B.Sc. '83  
Director  
Federal Commercial Crimes Investigation Dept  
Bukit Aman



**Dr Lee Keat Teong**  
PhD (Chem Eng) '04  
Director  
Research Creativity & Management Office  
USM, Penang



**Assoc Prof Dr Zuraini Zakaria**  
B.Sc. '85  
Lecturer  
School of Distance Education  
USM, Penang



**Tang Eng Cuang**  
B.Sc. (Food Technology)  
Product Specialist  
Sartorius Stedim Malaysia Sdn Bhd  
Bukit Jalil, Kuala Lumpur

## Endnotes



**Top to bottom:** A view from the Red House; The swimming pool as seen from Anjung Budi; Dewan Tuanku Syed Putra; Anjung Budi (right) fronting the Centre for Instructional Technology and Multimedia (better known as PTPM); The iconic Post Office as seen from Dewan Tuanku Syed Putra.