

# LawLink

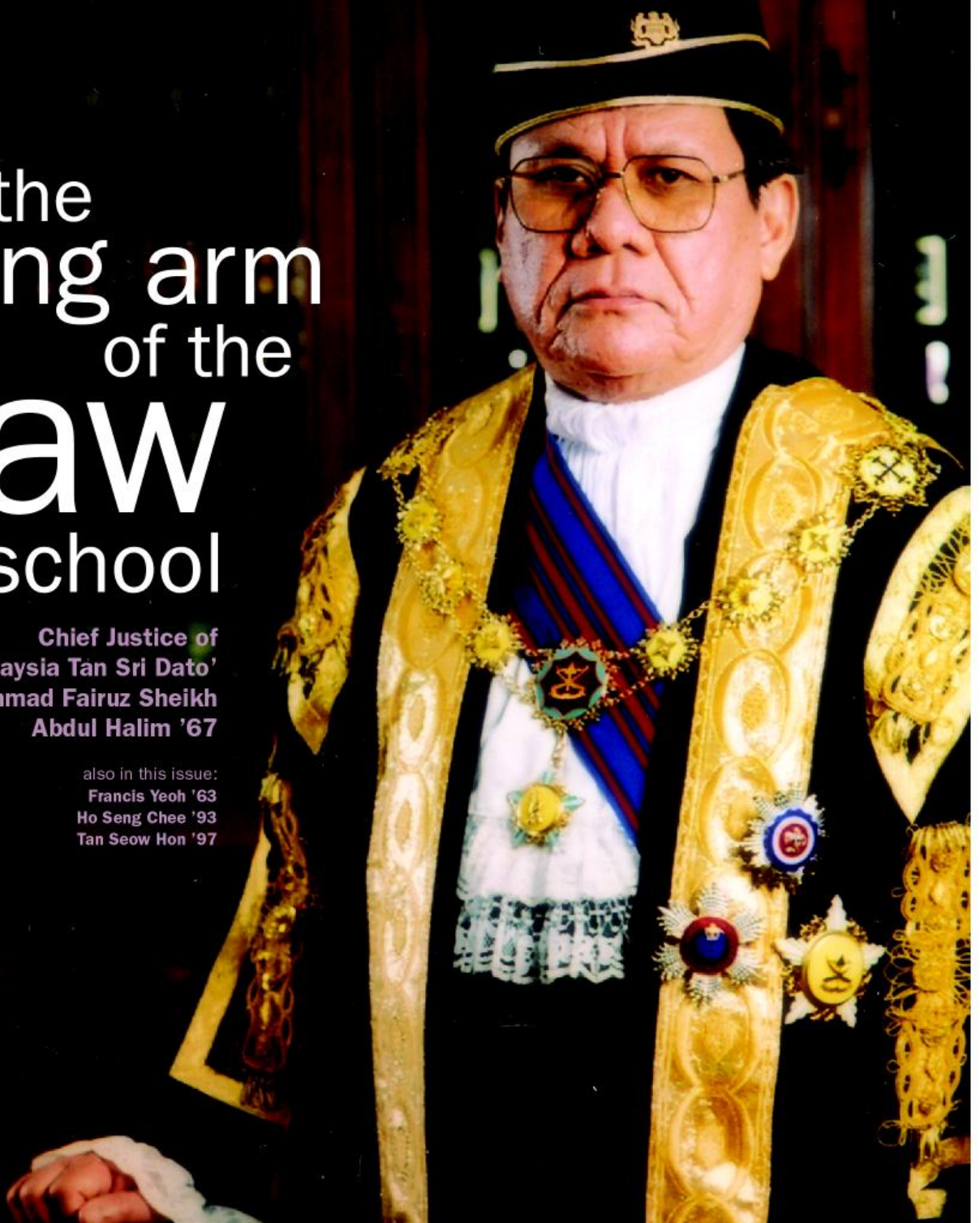
The Alumni Magazine of the  
National University of Singapore Faculty of Law

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## the long arm of the law school

Chief Justice of  
Malaysia Tan Sri Dato'  
Sri Ahmad Fairuz Sheikh  
Abdul Halim '67

also in this issue:  
Francis Yeoh '63  
Ho Seng Chee '93  
Tan Seow Hon '97





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an inner**sphere** design & production

## from the editor

Long before any government official told Singaporeans to 'go global', our Law School alumni were spreading far and wide. In this fifth issue of LawLink, we showcase a few of our brethren around the world, from the Chief Justice of the country next door, to a ballet doyen in London, to a self-confessed 'international bureaucrat' in Washington DC.

These days, we are sowing the seeds early. We have exchange programs with 30 universities in countries all across Australasia, North America, Europe and East Asia. Every year, at least 25% of our 3rd-year cohort gets to spend some time studying in another law school overseas, with a lucky few spending an entire year abroad – something we could only dream about back when I was in Law School! In our 'Future Alumni' section, two of our students write about their year overseas in the Student Exchange Program.

The student mix in Law School itself is pretty cosmopolitan as well. In addition to exchange students, a large number of our graduate students also hail from overseas. Our 'Letters from Abroad' and 'Letters from LLM' have become a regular feature, and it's great to be able to read their reflections on Law School life.

Whether you are here in Singapore or overseas, remember to stay in touch with us! To make things a little easier for you, our Alumni Relations department provides assistance in organising your Class Reunions. You can see the results in our 'Reunions' pages – this issue, we feature our inaugural Malaysian Alumni reunion and the 25th anniversary reunion of the Class of '78.

Let us know how we can help you stay close to us and your classmates. We are always happy to hear from you!

**Adeline Ang '96**  
Editor  
Assoc Director, Alumni Relations

## Dean's Message

Since becoming Dean on 1 May 2001, I have spent a fair bit of time trying to raise money for the law school. This, as I have explained in previous messages, has been necessitated by the smaller budgets given to the law school, as well as the greater demands on the law school. In this message, I wish to give an account of how we have used the resources made available to us by the university and our donors.

**Teaching** The first and foremost responsibility of a law school is to provide a liberal education that trains our students for legal practice while recognising that such an education also has the effect of giving our students the option to choose careers outside the law. With globalisation and other developments, it has been necessary to increase the number of subjects available to our students. Between May 2001 and August 2003, the number of subjects offered at the law school has increased by around 30%. In particular, the number of business law and intellectual property and technology law subjects has grown. In the area of intellectual property and technology law, for example, we now offer a menu of 11 subjects, far more than most other law schools leaving aside those institutions that specialise in intellectual property law to the virtual exclusion of other areas. Similarly, we have started 3 specialist LLM programmes in 2003, namely in Corporate and Financial Services Law, Intellectual Property and Technology Law, and International and Comparative Law. Another new specialist LLM programme will commence in 2004 and will focus on Chinese Law. Our various LLM and PhD programmes are now attracting excellent students and in the last 2 academic years the number of full-time graduate students has grown around 3 times to 61 students. My colleagues and I believe that we will have at least 100 – 120 graduate students by 2005.

Not only has the graduate student numbers increased, so too have the undergraduate student numbers. The annual intake is currently 220, up from 150 three years ago. We also expect each year to receive an average of 60 - 70 students in the Graduate Diploma in Singapore Law programme. Taking all those numbers together, we expect that in 2 – 3 years time when we reach 'steady-state', there will be a total of between 1040 and 1070 students each year in the law school. This is an almost 40% increase in student numbers since 2001.

Accordingly, one of our challenges will be to continue to ensure that the curriculum remains up to date and the quality of teaching remains high notwithstanding the increased student numbers and the reduced funding for the law school. This is a huge challenge especially as we foresee the need to add even more elective courses in the near future.

**Research** The second responsibility of a law school is to produce research that is helpful to the legal profession and pushes the boundaries of legal thought. At the same time, as the reputation of law schools is based largely on the quality of the research produced, there is a need to publish good work in journals that will be read by as wide a cross-section of the legal community as possible, particularly the legal scholars. Over the last 2 years, the research productivity of the Faculty has increased significantly.

For example, my colleagues at the Faculty continue to write prodigiously on Singapore law as this is the most direct way in which we contribute to the Singapore legal profession. Many of the contributors to Halsbury's Laws of Singapore are from the law school. My colleagues contribute 15 out of 20 of the subjects surveyed in the Singapore Academy of Law's Annual Review of Singapore Cases based on the 2002 edition of the Review which was published in 2003. There are more 'local' editions of books dealing with specific areas of law. We also contribute regularly to the Singapore Academy of Law Journal as well as the 2 Faculty 'house' journals. Ideally, we would like to publish most of our work within Singapore as this makes our work most accessible to members of the legal profession in Singapore. However, the effect of various university policies preclude this and in addition, the law school's international reputation would not be well served if we did not publish in overseas journals as the international audience is undoubtedly larger when an article is published in a leading foreign journal (although this may change as more issues of the Faculty's 2 journals are uploaded on to LEXIS and Westlaw). To this end, many of us now publish regularly in good overseas journals. Based on the Faculty's Research Profile 2003 alone, my colleagues have published widely overseas including in the Cambridge Law Journal, Connecticut Journal of International Law, Harvard International Law Journal, International Constitutional Law Journal, Journal of Business Law, Journal of Corporate Law Studies, Law Quarterly Review, Lloyd's Maritime and Commercial Law Quarterly, Modern Law Review, Oxford University Commonwealth Law Journal, South African Law Journal, Tort Law Review, and UCLA Pacific Basin Law Journal.



# Law School Donors Jul to Dec 2003

## Dean's Circle

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**\$15,000**

Cheong Kee Fong '68  
**\$5,000**

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M. Anad Krishnan '78

Chong Chin Pun '81

Chong Ki Keong '89

Lee Tsen-Ta Jack '95

See Hsien Huei  
Melvin '01

This has meant that while a few years ago around 70 - 80% of articles published by my colleagues would be in the Singapore journals, the percentage today is approximately 50%. This in turn has led the Faculty's 2 house journals to solicit more articles from beyond the law school, in particular from overseas contributors. For example, in the July 2003 issue of the Singapore Journal of Legal Studies, 5 of the 8 articles came from contributors outside the Faculty. For the first issue of the Singapore Journal of International and Comparative Law in 2003, only 1 of the 11 articles was contributed by a member of the Faculty (although the extremely low number is attributable also to the special feature on Chinese law). The increase in outside contributions is no bad thing for us. The reputation of our journals will rise as more such contributions are received, particularly those from eminent academics such as Dean Zhu Suli from Peking University, and Geoffrey Morse, Gerard McCormack and Adrian Briggs from England.

**Service** A great law school must be engaged in society. Traditionally, the NUS law school is an active provider of continuing legal education, both in its own right, and with professional bodies such as the Singapore Academy of Law and the Law Society of Singapore. For example, in 2004, I should expect at least 3 - 4 CLE activities jointly organised with SAL. My colleagues are also members of many professional committees and play a particularly significant role in SAL's Law Reform and Publication committees. We value our close links with SAL and the Law Society and I personally hope that these links will become ever closer during my Deanship.

In addition to service to the profession, government agencies are increasingly seeing the law school as a repository of expertise to be tapped. My colleagues and I work with many government agencies such as the Agency for Science, Technology and Research, the Economic Development Board, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Law, Ministry of Trade and Industry, National Environmental Agency, etc. Many of us are members of bodies or committees established by the government. Some are seconded to government agencies. Even international agencies have sounded us out on the possibility of working with them. All these have placed great demands on the law school and will continue to do so.

**International collaboration** With globalization, international collaboration is extremely important. In the last 2 years the Faculty has entered into 15 or so new student exchange agreements to enable as many students as possible to have an opportunity to study in a good law school overseas should they wish to do so. Most of these agreements have been with law schools outside Asia. As the region is likely to become increasingly important to the Singapore legal profession, we are currently in discussion with law schools in India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam for more student exchange agreements in Asia to add to our existing agreements with Chinese and Japanese law schools.

We have established the Asian Law Institute (ASLI) to bring together 10 leading Asian law schools to collaborate in teaching and research. The new LLM in Chinese Law is one of the products of this collaboration as it is a programme that will be offered by 3 of the ASLI partner institutions. We are also in discussion with a number of other law schools to collaborate in teaching and research. These initiatives will again tax the law school's existing resources. Yet they are necessary. With globalisation and the increased demands on law schools, it is my view that useful collaborative arrangements that allow us to pool resources with our partners towards a common enterprise will help the NUS law school to retain its status as a leading law school and as Asia's Global Law School.

As you can see from all this, the law school's task has become increasingly demanding, complex and difficult. The brief description of our activities in this message does not do justice to everything that is taking place at the law school today. I often wonder how much more we can manage without a significant increase in our resources. Yet it is important for us to strive to continually improve ourselves as the global competition amongst law schools intensifies. A law school that does not keep running will be left behind. I therefore appreciate very much the warm and generous support of so many of our alumni. We will use well the resources you make available to us and continue to build a law school that you will continue to be proud of. As we begin a new year, I wish all of you a peaceful and successful year ahead.

**Dean Tan Cheng Han '87**

# sheridan fellows

To recognise outstanding Asian applicants for the LLM by Coursework programme, each year students of the highest calibre in terms of scholastic and other achievements are appointed Sheridan Fellows. They are also awarded a scholarship, such as the ASEAN Graduate Scholarship or the Faculty Graduate Scholarship.

Our Faculty Graduate Scholarship holders for this academic year are Zhou Ling and Chen Mao, from China.

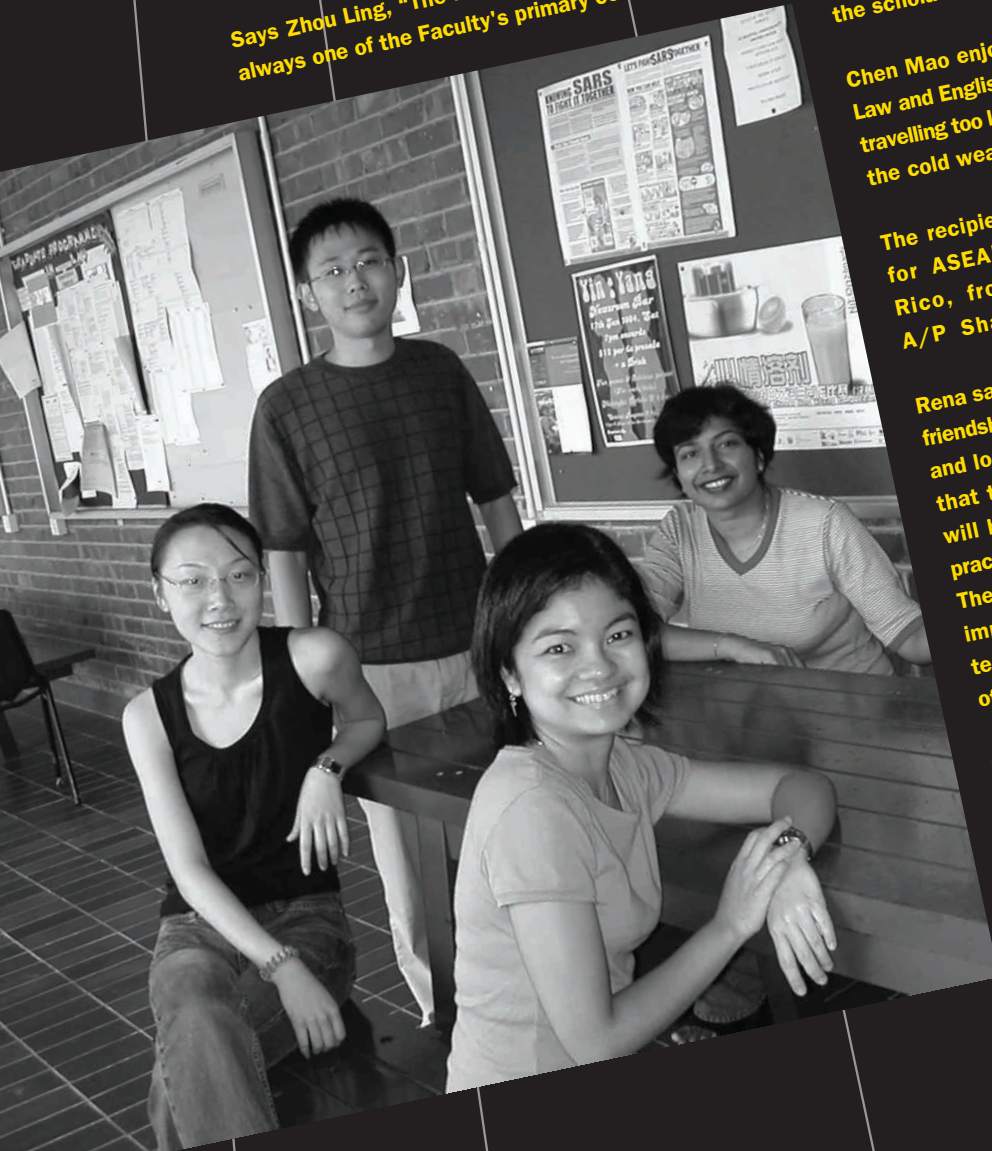
Says Zhou Ling, "The Faculty and all the other staff are friendly and always ready to help. Students are always one of the Faculty's primary considerations. I really cherish the opportunity to study and live here and also appreciate the Faculty's kind offer of the scholarship."

Chen Mao enjoys the exposure to a Common Law and English-speaking environment, without travelling too long across the ocean and suffering the cold weather in North America or Europe!

The recipients of our Graduate Scholarships for ASEAN Nationals are Rena Morelos Rico, from the Philippines, and Meera A/P Shanmughanathan, from Malaysia.

Rena says, "What I like most about NUS is the friendships I have made with a lot of the foreign and local students in the Law School. I know that these ties that we have formed at NUS will help us in the future as we continue to practice law in our own countries or elsewhere. The roster of law professors in at NUS is also impressive and I have learned a lot from my teachers, especially in highly specialized areas of law such as investment law and arbitration."

Says Meera, "NUS has excellent facilities, particularly for research purposes. The quality of teaching is highly commendable, and the teachers are approachable and responsive to the need of the students."



Our Sheridan Fellows  
(Clockwise from top)  
Chen Mao, Meera,  
Rena and Zhou Ling



at  
home  
around the  
world

Ho Seng Chee '93 has been with the International Monetary Fund since 1997, as Counsel in its Legal Department. He talks to LawLink about the Fund, the field and family .

(Opposite page)  
Seng Chee '93,  
Audrey '93,  
and Gabrielle

### **Why did you choose to work at the IMF? Why not continue in legal practice?**

In Law School, my favourite subjects had to do with international relations and international law. I always dreamed that I would work at the UN, or someplace like that. International politics interest me.

I discovered after a few years of private practice in Singapore that I wasn't very good as a lawyer! I found that I function better in an institutional context, where there is a very stable setup with a bureaucracy. In a law partnership, the setup tends to be more fluid, more uncertain. I like being a bureaucrat – not many people would admit to that!

My work at the IMF interests me – the policy-making aspect. What I do is maybe 35% law and 65% policy and economics: how the legislation feeds into the economic system, what changes in the legislation are needed, and how that will impact the development of the economy and the financial system. A legal background helps you think through policy-making decisions. It makes you more methodical, more logical. There is a certain element in legal training that gives you those kinds of skills.



This is an area of work that I actually enjoy. And the travel is good – it gets me to interesting places. The pay is not fabulous (contrary to what people think!) but it's enough to live comfortably.

### **What exactly do you do at the IMF?**

A large part of what I do is managerial and administrative. The IMF's operations fall into 3 categories: First, the use of IMF resources – providing financing to members; second, surveillance – monitoring of the international economic situation; third, technical assistance – to provide advice and assistance to countries to change policies and laws. My job is to manage the technical assistance of the legal department; from hiring of consultants, to managing of the budget, determining whether something falls within our means and expertise to do it, to quality control on the consistency of our legal advice.

### **Do you work in the field? Are you ever faced with dangerous situations?**

It's mainly work in the field. Rarely do we work from headquarters, aside from preparatory work. There is no substitute to actually seeing what the local conditions are – the feel of the physical conditions in the city can tell you a lot about the capacity of the country, what they can implement and what they can't. No point giving them a very sophisticated piece of legislation, but when you go there, they can't implement it. So far nothing untoward has happened to me. For most members of the IMF there is no safety issue, but sometimes people get us mixed up with other organisations or even countries. When I travel in some developing countries, if I get into a conversation with my taxi driver I will usually tell them I am a businessman, or I am in banking.

### **What about donning a blue helmet and joining the Peace Corps?**

I must confess to being a softie! I need a soft bed and a comfortable hotel, decent restaurants! I'm not really your hardcore UN peacekeeper type. The IMF rarely operates in intolerable conditions. By the time we come to a country, usually you will already have a sizeable international community there, as all the aid agencies are flowing in. Associated with the presence of all these people are hotels, restaurants, taxis, services. It's amazing how fast this infrastructure goes around the world!

### **What occupies your mind these days?**

My main preoccupation in my life now is my daughter, Gabrielle. I try to balance my work with spending more time with her. I do manage to get pretty good hours, get home in time to bathe her and put her to bed, and my wife Audrey (also from the Class of '93) and I will have dinner after that. My focus is on my family. It was what we were looking for when we left Singapore 8 years ago. It's turned out to be quite fulfilling.

### **How has Gabrielle changed your life?**

Having had a child, your plans change in some ways. You adjust your expectations, you consume a little bit less, you start to think about providing for your family ... you buy life insurance, for example! In the larger scheme of things, we would still very much like to continue the lifestyle we've been living – me holding down a job and Audrey looking after the children. That is what we were looking for.

### **So, where is home to you? Where will Gabrielle call home?**

There is a certain luxury associated with being an expat, not in the material sense, but in that you don't really have to identify with any place when you're working as an expat. You have the luxury to retain all the things that are nice about the place that you are living in, but at the same time not worry about all the things that are not nice – because you are not part of their system. It's the best of both worlds. Both Singapore and Washington are home to me. I make it back to Singapore at least once or twice a year. But somehow at the end of the trip when I get on the plane and go back to Washington, although I feel that I will miss my friends and my family, there's also a sense of relief that I'm done here, I'm going back to Washington now.

I don't know if Gaby is going to grow up in the US. We go wherever the opportunity is. If it happens to be in Singapore, Europe or the US, not a problem for us. Gaby is still very young, but ideally I hope that she would feel comfortable living anywhere in the world. Because I think in 20 or 30 years' time, we'll have a very mobile international population. A number of my IMF colleagues are children of diplomats – growing up in that environment gives you a sense of confidence dealing and interacting with people, that you do not find in many other people. So I think that's really important, that she be able to feel comfortable going anywhere in the world.

Although people might think you are a bit like a nomad, I believe that 'belonging' is a state of mind – where you have your closest emotional connections. 'Home' is wherever our family is.

Guest of Honour ,  
Assoc Pr of  
Ho Peng Kee,  
delivering the  
keynote address.

(Bottom)  
Live Radio  
interview with  
FM93.8 "In the  
Living Room"

# CCLS Seminar

## on "Business Excellence: The Emerging Role of Corporate Social Responsibility"



On August 19, 2003, at Meritus Mandarin Singapore, the NUS Center of Commercial Law Studies (CCLS), together with Lexis Nexis Butterworths, and CSR International Group of Companies, co-organized the Business Excellence seminar on the Emerging Role of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). This seminar brought together the global and local experts from diverse yet relevant backgrounds, with the purpose of facilitating a better understanding on the CSR as both an emerging standard requirement and a business strategy for excellent global business today.

Guest of Honour, Associate Professor Ho Peng Kee, Senior Minister of State for Law &

Home Affairs, pointed out that: "Today's organizations are faced with a complex and dynamic global environment. The rise of a wider base of stakeholders has put pressure on companies to be accountable, not only for their own performance, but for the performance of their entire supply chain, and a continually evolving set of CSR issues so as to remain relevant. A company is no longer only about profit maximization, because fair business practices, employee relations, community involvement, environmental conservation efforts increasingly matter to stakeholders. Singapore is dedicated to promoting its corporate social responsibility, both locally and its investments globally. The upcoming Consumer Protection (Fair Trading) Bill is just one step."

Speeches focused on Business Excellence, Corporate Social Responsibility, Dispute Avoidance and Resolution Strategies, Reputation Management, and Fair Trading respectively. In the afternoon session, the guests were separated into five groups for workshop discussion on the above five topics based on their interests.



# Inaugural ASLI Conference

The Asian Law Institute (ASLI) is a joint effort among 10 leading law schools in Asia to promote research and teaching collaboration. Based at the NUS Faculty of Law, ASLI will organise annual academic conferences to examine contemporary legal issues of interest to Asian countries. The conferences will gather scholars and experts from Asia and beyond.

The Inaugural conference will be on "The Role of Law in a Developing Asia" and will be hosted by the NUS Faculty of Law on 27 - 28 May 2004. It is envisaged that several wide-ranging sub-themes consistent with the general theme of law in a developing Asia will be examined. The papers will address areas of relevance to Asia including (but not limited to) constitutional reform, the administration of justice, Asian legal traditions, international trade and investment, cross-border crime, the harmonisation of commercial law in Asia and intellectual property protection in Asia.

The conference will be an excellent opportunity for scholars in Asian law to meet and exchange ideas and to form closer working and personal relationships. More information about ASLI and the inaugural conference (including the registration form) can be found on <http://law.nus.edu.sg/asli/>. Enquiries may be directed to [asli@nus.edu.sg](mailto:asli@nus.edu.sg).

Law  
School  
Highlights  
09

Welcoming the Class of '03  
to the Law School Alumni

Commencement  
2003



### Appointments and Visiting Professors

Congratulations to Dean Tan Cheng Han '87, who has been re-appointed Dean for a second term. Cheng Han was also appointed Senior Counsel at the Opening of the Legal Year in January 2004; together with Prof. Andrew Phang '82, who was formerly with the Faculty and is now with Singapore Management University.

A warm welcome to NUS law alumnus and David Marshall Professor, Stanley Yeo '76. Stanley, who was formerly with the Faculty and was Law Club President in his student days, is Professor and Director of Teaching at the School of Law and Justice at Southern Cross University in Australia. Stanley is visiting till June 2004 and will be teaching Criminal Law and Comparative Criminal Law this semester. Welcome also to Visiting Professors Pierre Larouche and Ian Macduff. Pierre, a graduate of McGill, is Professor of Competition Law at Tilburg University in the Netherlands. He will be teaching a course on the law of the European Union, the first time this is offered at the Faculty. Ian is Director of the New Zealand Centre for Conflict Resolution at the Faculty of Law, Victoria University of Wellington, and will be teaching courses on Mediation and Negotiation during his stay at NUS. The Faculty also welcomed Visiting Professor Liu Kung Chung, who is Research Fellow of the Institute for Social Sciences and Philosophy (Jurisprudence Division), Academia Sinica, Taipei. Kung Chung will teach a course on Information Technology Law in the present semester. A warm welcome too to Visiting Prof. Gao Yongfu, professor of law at the Shanghai Institute of Foreign Trade and an Associate President of the Shanghai WTO Affairs Consultation Centre.

In November 2003, the Faculty welcomed Distinguished Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA) Visiting Professor Robert Force from Tulane University Law School. Prof. Force was in Singapore to advise on the directions to be taken by the Faculty in growing our maritime law expertise.

Congratulations to A. Kumaralingam, who has been appointed tenured Associate Professor. Helena Whalen-Bridge LL.M '01 takes on the position of Deputy Director of the Legal Writing Programme. She will lead the charge on our first year courses, building and improving on our experience last year.

Lim Lei Theng '92 rejoins the Faculty as the other Deputy Director of the Programme. Lei Theng and Helena will work on launching the two second-year modules under the programme - the Trial Advocacy Course and a brand new Legal Case Studies Course. Meanwhile, Assoc. Prof. Chan Wing Cheong has been appointed member of the Elder Protection Team, a multi-disciplinary forum for discussion of allegations of elder abuse. The team conducts elder abuse assessment, decides on the appropriate intervention plan and gives advice to service providers on management of cases. Meanwhile, Tang Hang Wu '95, on study leave for his PhD at Cambridge, has been appointed a Global Research Fellow at the New York University Law School in Spring 2004. Lye Lin Heng '73 is on sabbatical and is a Visiting Associate Professor at Yale University's Environment School. While in New Haven, Lin Heng will be teaching a course on Comparative Environmental Law.

Prof. Walter Woon '81, seconded to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, has been appointed Ambassador to the Kingdom of Belgium, the European Communities, the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and the Kingdom of the Netherlands. He is also Permanent Representative to the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. Assoc. Prof. Teo Keang Sood has been appointed external examiner of the Kulliyah of Laws, International Islamic University Malaysia. Keang Sood has also been appointed a member of the Panel of the Strata Titles Boards from October 2003.

### Visitors

The Faculty welcomed visits by Chief Justice Xiao Yang of the Supreme People's Court of the People's Republic of China and Chief Justice Bagir Manan of the Supreme Court of Indonesia. Both Chief Justices met with staff and students of the Faculty, including our exchange and graduate students from China and Indonesia.

The Faculty also welcomed former judge of the International Court of Justice, Prof. Christie Weeramantry, who is currently Emeritus Professor at Monash University, Australia. A delegation of senior Ministry of Justice officials from Vietnam also visited the Faculty. In September 2003, two German professors - Otto Depenheuer from Cologne University and Dieter Umbach from Potsdam University - visited the Faculty under the auspices of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation. Prof. Depenheuer gave a seminar to faculty and students on "State and Religion".

### Citations

Asst. Prof. Victor Ramraj's publication, Freedom of the Person and the Principles of Criminal Fault (2002) 18 S. Afr. J. Hum. Rts. 225, was cited by Supreme Court of Canada in a dissenting opinion in R. v. Malmo-Levine; R. v. Caine 2003 SCC 74.

# faculty update

(Top)  
Prof. Walter Woon  
(Bottom)  
Our first ASLI Fellows



The Law of Negotiable Instruments by Assoc. Prof. Poh Chu Chai '72 was cited in *Ung Eng Huat & Anor. v. Arab Malaysian Bank Bhd.* [2003] 6 M.L.J. 1. Chu Chai's other works, *Law of Pledges, Guarantees and Letters of Credit* and *Law of Insurance*, were cited in *NCK Metal Sdn Bhd. v. Bumiputra-Commerce Bank Bhd.* [2003] 2 C.L.J. 182; [2003] M.L.J.U. 290 and *Wilayah Beauty Gems Sdn. Bhd. v. Arab Malaysian Assurance Bhd.* [2003] 6 M.L.J. 122 respectively.

### **Asian Law Institute (ASLI)**

ASLI welcomed its inaugural batch of Visiting Fellows in August 2003. The Fellows were in residence for periods ranging from two weeks to three months, and participated actively in teaching, seminars and discussions. Parweena Supriyavatr, from the Faculty of Law of Chulalongkorn University, is an environmental law and trade law specialist. Li Jian Yong, from the East China University of Politics and Law in Shanghai, introduced the students to aspects of Chinese law in the Comparative Legal Traditions course. Suparjo Sujadi, a land law specialist from the Faculty of Law of the University of Indonesia, delivered a seminar on land and agrarian reform. Abdul Rani bin Kamaruddin from the International Islamic University of Malaysia introduced students in the Comparative Legal Traditions course to elements of Islamic Law, while Mark Fenwick from Kyushu University delivered a seminar on the Japanese Criminal Law System and co-taught the Administration of Criminal Justice course. Liu Dongjin from the College of Law of Peking University delivered a seminar on intellectual property protection in China in conjunction with the Intellectual Property Academy of Singapore. Wang Wen Yeu from the National Taiwan University delivered a seminar on securities in Taiwan and spoke to the Securities Regulation class. In December 2003, ASLI, together with the International Labour Organisation (ILO) Regional Office in Bangkok, convened a two-day workshop on labour and industrial relations law in Asia.

### **Masters Degree (LLM) in Chinese Law**

The Faculty has teamed up with the East China University of Politics and Law and Peking University Law School, to launch a specialist one-year LLM degree in Chinese Law. The first intake of students is expected in July 2004. The degree course, to be taught in English, is thought to be first of its kind outside Greater China. The course will be taught by faculty members from the three participating law schools. The degree will also have an innovative multidisciplinary dimension as students will be able to choose from a limited number of non-law courses, including courses in Chinese language, culture, history, and politics.

### **Asia Pacific Centre for Environmental Law (APCEL) - Intellectual Property and Biological Resources Conference**

The Asia-Pacific Centre for Environmental Law (APCEL) of the NUS Faculty of Law, together with the Singapore Academy of Law (SAL), the Intellectual Property Office of Singapore (IPOS) and the Intellectual Property Academy, organised a conference on "Intellectual Property and Biological Resources" from 1 to 3 December 2003 at the Pan Pacific Hotel. The Conference focused on the legal and ethical controversies that have arisen from the global biotechnology revolution, with particular emphasis on the compatibility of intellectual property rights with the biological wealth that resides in the flora and fauna of developing countries.

Former Dean of the Law Faculty and Singapore's current ambassador-at-large, Professor Tommy Koh '61, chaired a panel discussion at the end of the conference with commentators from the US Patent and Trademarks Office, the IUCN Law Commission, as well as representatives from the World Intellectual Property Organisation and the Convention on Biological Diversity Secretariat. Asst. Prof. Burton Ong '99 played an instrumental part in the organisation of the conference.

### **Ties with Foreign Law Schools**

In May 2003, the Faculty of Law entered into individual student exchange agreements with Northwestern University School of Law in Chicago and the New York University School of Law. Under the terms of these agreements, each law school may send one student on exchange for a year, or two students for a semester each. This brings the total number of student exchange agreements with top US law schools to four. The Faculty currently has agreements with Columbia Law School in New York and the School of Law of Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri. In June 2003, an agreement was signed with the law school of Kyushu University in Fukuoka, Japan. This was followed by the signing of an agreement in November 2003 with Tsinghua University Law School, one of China's leading law schools. The Tsinghua agreement is the fourth signed by the Faculty with Chinese law schools – the others being with Peking University, the East China University of Politics and Law and Fudan University. In October 2003, Dean Tan Cheng Han '87, Assoc. Prof. Gary F. Bell, Director of the Asian Law Institute and Asst. Prof. Victor Ramraj, Deputy Director of the Graduate division, travelled to Hanoi for meetings with colleagues at the Hanoi Law University. They met with the University's Rector, Dr Prof. Le Minh Tam, its Vice-Rector, Dr Le Hong Hanh, as well as other colleagues. The discussions will most likely lead to a memorandum of understanding to further collaboration between the two institutions, for faculty and student visits. In recent years, ties with Vietnamese law schools have strengthened, and several Vietnamese students enrol in the Faculty's LLM courses every year.

### **Comparative Anti-Terrorism Law and Policy**

A major international research symposium on Comparative Anti-Terrorism Law and Policy will be held at the Faculty on 24-26 June 2004. The project will bring together leading academics from throughout the world to examine and compare anti-terrorism laws and policies, focusing on Southeast Asia and Asia, but also looking at the major jurisdictions in North America, Europe, and Africa. Stemming from the symposium, it aims to publish a major collection of essays on the topic. The symposium is being spearheaded by Assoc. Prof. Michael Hor '84 and Asst. Prof. Victor Ramraj, who were jointly awarded an NUS Research Grant for the project.

### **Graduate Certificate in International Arbitration**

The Faculty is running a Graduate Certificate in International Arbitration course, commencing January 2004. The course is accredited with the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators in London and the Singapore Institute of Arbitrators, and is funded by EDB. The course director is Adjunct Assoc. Prof. Lawrence Boo '80.

### **Centre for Commercial Law Studies (CCLS)**

The Faculty's CCLS, headed by its Director Assoc. Prof. Stephen Phua '88, ran a seminar on the Consumer Protection (Fair Trading) Act in August 2003. CCLS also co-organised a Seminar on Business Excellence held in August 2003 in Kuala Lumpur. In October, a seminar on Competition Law: A Practitioner's View, was held, attracting a cross-section of regulators, lawyers and corporate counsel. A similar seminar, this time from the Australian regulator's perspective, was held in the same month. The speaker was Mr Michael Cosgrave, General Manager of the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission.



*(Opposite)*  
The Chief Justice  
presenting our Dean  
with a ceremonial mace,  
to commemorate  
the meeting.

# Meeting the Malaysian Chief Justice

Dean Tan Cheng Han '87 renews our ties with illustrious alumnus, Malaysian Chief Justice Tan Sri Ahmad Fairuz Sheikh Abdul Halim '67

In September 2003, Dean Tan Cheng Han '87, accompanied by Assoc. Prof. Alan Tan '93, paid a visit to the newly-appointed Chief Justice of the Federal Court of Malaysia, Tan Sri Ahmad Fairuz Sheikh Abdul Halim '67. Cheng Han and Alan were in Kuala Lumpur to host the Malaysian Alumni Reunion; which was attended by Tan Sri Ahmad Fairuz and his wife, Puan Sri Mazni Mohamed Noor.



During the call at his chambers at the old Federal Court Building in downtown Kuala Lumpur, Tan Sri Ahmad Fairuz reminisced about his Law School days at the old Bukit Timah campus and voiced his support of the Faculty's aim for stronger ties between alumni in Singapore and Malaysia. In particular, His Honour welcomed the Faculty's hosting of the alumni reunion for Malaysian graduates, and looked forward to more interaction among alumni from both countries. His Honour fondly recalled his teachers and classmates in Singapore, many of whom are still active on both sides of the causeway.

Tan Sri Ahmad Fairuz was also apprised on the latest developments in the Faculty, including the establishment of the Asian Law Institute (ASLI), the renovation of the C J Koh Law Library and the introduction of various specialised Master of Laws (LLM) programmes. In the course of the discussions, His Honour noted the Faculty's desire to attract more applications from Malaysian students for both the undergraduate and graduate programmes at NUS. Tan Sri Ahmad Fairuz was impressed with the changes which have taken place since his university days in Singapore; and was happy to hear of the continuing push for improvement and development. In the course of the discussion, His Honour touched on his plans for the Malaysian judiciary and the development of law in Malaysia in general.

Tan Sri Ahmad Fairuz was appointed Chief Justice on 17 March 2003, making him the first ever head of the Malaysian judiciary to have graduated from the National University of Singapore or its predecessor institutions. His Honour's career in the judicial service started when he was posted as a magistrate in Penang. He has also served in important positions such as the Legal Adviser of Kedah/Perlis, Johor and Selangor, Official Assignee of Malaysia, Chairman of the Advisory Panel in the Prime Minister's Department and Special Commissioner of Income Tax. He was appointed a Judicial Commissioner in 1988 and a High Court Judge two years later. In 1995, Tan Sri Ahmad Fairuz was promoted to the Court of Appeal. He subsequently became Federal Court Judge in September 2000, Chief Justice of Malaya in 2001, and President of the Court of Appeal in December 2002.

Tan Sri Ahmad Fairuz's appointment to the position of Chief Justice of the Federal Court is the culmination of an illustrious judicial career and we wish him the very best for his tenure.

# God and Morality



at Harvard

Tan Seow Hon '97 writes about her experiences of running a workshop on Law and Morality at Harvard University. Find out how she far ed, raising conservative concepts in the face of 'liberal or thodoxy' at Harvard

**My students sipped sodas and munched brownies (generously sponsored weekly by Harvard), while I screened a clip from Terminator 2 in which the boy told Arnie's character it was just wrong to kill, to illustrate a view of morality known as moral realism. I asked the crowd of 30 bright graduate students whether they believed in right and wrong, and if so, whether these were referable to God or some conception of human nature.**

Some answered, throwing in the postmodernist "he or she" when referring to God; others said they would exercise their "Fifth" (referring to the privilege against self-incrimination in the Fifth Amendment of the American Constitution); one or two others suggested my question was inappropriate. I explained that the question was relevant because the subject was natural law theory, which asserted that legal systems are based ultimately on higher principles, discoverable by us, derivable from God and/or human nature.

No, this isn't divinity school. It was the first session of a workshop I designed and ran as a Byse Fellow of the Harvard Law School, titled: "Law and Morality: A Critical Examination of Natural Law Theory and its Relevance in a Pluralist World".

Given that Harvard is known for its orthodoxy of liberalism and political correctness hostile to absolutist visions of philosophy, morality and law, fiery debates are expected in a workshop that addresses the least favorably discussed of legal theories in the classrooms here. These days, to declare one's self a natural law theorist in a postmodern environment is to be seen either as a religious fanatic or a joke. This is somewhat ironic, as Harvard began historically as a school to train religious ministers. Its crest still reads "veritas", meaning "truth", a word with unmistakably absolutist connotations.

Passionate debates and remarks such as "natural law is fit for the museums" notwithstanding, participants suggested they enjoyed discussing what was to them a novel subject. I was heartened by their willingness to make time for a workshop dealing with issues of morality. Also refreshing was their view of discourse as a process of sharpening ideas, instead of sharing personal thoughts only if they were writ in stone.

At the final session, one participant looked ecstatic – she explained that she finally understood my true purpose for conducting this workshop. I asked her to elaborate.

She said my workshop was never meant to be a plain defense of natural law theory. She was right. I was more interested in turning critiques of natural law on their heads, by using the same measure with which they judged natural law to judge them. Liberalism, for example, purports to be neutral amongst different conceptions of the good, but it often forges, in a non-neutral manner, dialogue on absolute values, which liberalism treats as unreasonable and irreconcilable, and therefore to be shunned. Ironically, liberalism's equally absolute value of autonomy is in competition with absolute values cherished by other theories, and needs justification. While my happy participant had hitherto preferred liberalism, she now feels it is impoverished, as Man cannot begin to speak of a shared humanity or life unless he is apprised of his substantive vision of humanity, and doesn't fear discoursing on ultimate questions of life, which dialogue doesn't necessarily carry with it imposition on others. She saw the light when I said we all had presuppositions about our world and how we related to it anyway, conscious or not, and that my exhortation that we examine our worldviews and be upfront is worthy.

A Singaporean friend told me my workshop was useless. She couldn't imagine why anyone would come. I guess she means it is useless to the practitioner.

Do I agree? If through philosophy I lead another person to ask life's deepest questions, I feel I've done something meaningful. The answer is for him to find. I might have rescued him from a life lived fully but which he feels has no meaning, to borrow Hugh Grant's words in the movie, About a Boy.

But supposing because I'm a law academic I must impact law, is legal philosophy useful for the practice of law? I think so. The making of a building fit for living involves the architect, the engineer, the construction worker, the manufacturer of raw materials, the interior designer, etc. Suppose they forget the purpose of their project because it's been long ongoing. Someone must remind them, lest they build a dungeon instead of a home. I think legal philosophy serves a similar purpose. It reveals structural flaws and inadequacies that are deviations from the true purpose of the enterprise of justice. Without this knowledge, the enterprise must fail to be what it purports to be.





Lakshmi Ganesh in the sari which she wore at graduation



Providing their own entertainment!



Class Reunion 18



Where were you in the graduation photo?



Our lively MC, Angeline Jansen



# Class of 1978 25th Anniversary reunion

08 November 2003

Their class motto may have been “Silence is Golden” but theirs was by far the rowdiest reunion to date, with the most “class participation”!



# Francis Yeoh

## Doyen of dance... and dogs!

Francis Yeoh '63 is General Manager of the London Studio Centre, a school for ballet and the performing arts. He is also an award-winning breeder of champion show dogs.

### When and how did you get into breeding dogs?

It all started in 1970 when Mrs. Ann Tan (Anamah Nagalingam) '63, a cohort of the class of 1963, gave me her pet Shih Tzu. I sent 'Hippy' the dog to beauty parlour for weekly grooming as his long hair needed it and was verily informed that he was worth 'showing'. I did and he won each time and became a

champion in the shortest time possible and I was hooked. An American lady at that time was showing some chihuahuas that were quite wonderful and I was intrigued. On a trip to London in 1976 I went to a dog show in the Great Park at Windsor Castle and while there managed to persuade two famous breeders to sell me a

dog and a bitch chihuahua. To cut a long story short - I won very well with them and their progeny in Singapore.

### What are the challenges of breeding and training dogs?

It took years of hard work to achieve success. I had to travel the length and breadth of UK to show the dogs; if I was showing in Edinburgh, I would be travelling the night before - arrive at the showground by early morning, sleep in the car until it is time to show - then the long drive home. If that is not dedication, I don't know what is! I made up my first champion chihuahua in 1984 - not bad for a novice in UK. I have made up many champions in my favourite breed, the Longcoated chihuahua. I also took up judging and now judge at shows internationally and have since travelled to many countries - Australia, Belgium, Czech Republic, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Japan, Norway, Singapore, Sweden, Taiwan, USA and Zambia.

### What brought you to London?

I trained at the Royal Ballet School in 1965 and one of my teachers was the late Dame Ninette de Valois who was at the time Director of the School. My best moment was of course performing at the Royal Opera House on our graduation in July 1966 but I was also delighted to have been one of four students from the School to be chosen as pages in the Royal Ballet production "Cinderella" which featured Margot Fonteyn in the title role and three other ballerinas of the company. I was in London from 1965 to 1968 on a British Council Grant to study at the Royal Ballet School and the Benesh Institute of Choreology. My studies at the Benesh Institute were interrupted by an offer to dance with Harlequin Ballet.

It was a touring company and gave me a great opportunity to see the country and also to gain useful professional experience. I returned to Singapore in Summer 1968 after a few months training at the newly formed London School of Contemporary Dance.

### After 10 years' law-related work in Singapore, what made you decide to return to London?

I came back to London in September 1978 principally because I needed a refresher - I worked for the Benesh Institute of Choreology from 1979 to 1988 as administrator and company secretary. I then joined the London Studio Centre as General Manager in 1988. The College conducts a professional theatre dance course which incorporates two higher education programmes validated by Middlesex University - a diploma in higher education and BA (Hons) in Theatre Dance. My job description is fluid as besides ensuring that the College functions efficiently, I am also lecturer in Benesh Movement Notation and Professional Practice (Copyright, Performing Rights and Contracts), ballet teacher and assessor for the examinations.

### How do you manage to balance your commitment to both ballet and your dogs?

With great sacrifice! I am obsessed by both these passions and therefore have little time for any other forms of leisure. Only in the last 5 years have I had the opportunity to go on holidays and it was only possible because I have given up showing and breeding dogs. I now am owned by only two dogs.

### Do you keep in touch with your classmates? What are your fondest memories of Law School days at Bukit Timah?

LawLink has done precisely that, enabling me to re-establish contact! I now receive emails from Morris Lee i63, Lim Ho Inn i61 and Polly Wu i69 regularly - what a delight. I still keep in touch with former working colleagues met during the 10 years working in Singapore (1968-1978) as Legal Officer, URA dept. of the Housing and Development Board (1970), Legal Officer, DBS (1972-1975) and Senior Legal Officer, PUB (1975-1978).

### What's next for you?

Now that I am reaching retiring age - I am embarking on a new passion! I am studying part-time and more that half-way through my MA in Ballet Studies at the Roehampton, University of Surrey. My dissertation will be on the subject of the author of dance and his rights. Any useful articles or case law will be gratefully received!

Francis can be contacted at [Francis.Yeoh@London-Studio-Centre.co.uk](mailto:Francis.Yeoh@London-Studio-Centre.co.uk)





*(Opposite page)* Francis with Longcoated Chihuahua Yeosinga Tomahawk, a champion in three continents, shown here with the Best of Breed Cup won at Crufts 1989.

*(This page)* Francis with ballerina Patsy Urquhart in the pas de deux Pas de Ruban from the ballet "La Fille mal gardée" performed by the Harlequin Ballet Company in 1967.



**I was delighted to have been one of four students from the Royal Ballet School to be chosen as pages in the Royal Ballet production "Cinderella" which featured Margot Fonteyn in the title role.**



## Niels Reder LLM '97 considers the future of legal practice in Singapore, and the role of the legal industry in Singapore's evolving economy

A lot has changed since I arrived in Singapore in February 1996. At the time, Singapore was one of the Asian tigers with a booming economy. Barely two years later, the Asian currency crisis struck the region, followed by a global economic downturn, the 9/11 attacks, the Iraq war and the SARS crisis. Today, I hear a lot about the "restructuring of Singapore" which stands as a synonym for repositioning the country's economy in a changed global economic environment. The question that strikes me in the context of the ongoing discussions about Singapore's competitiveness is what we as lawyers can contribute to the restructuring process and its success. No doubt, legal services form an integral part of Singapore's business infrastructure and are therefore an important component of the overall competitiveness of the country's economy. Similarly, no doubt, the prosperity of the legal industry in Singapore is closely intertwined with the prosperity of Singapore's economy.

Given these important interrelations, how can lawyers contribute to make Singapore's economy more competitive? I believe that, aside from striving to improve the legal system, lawyers can contribute to the competitiveness of the economy in two areas: the selection of their practice focus and the management of their clients.

In view of the changes in Singapore's economic environment, many lawyers may ask themselves on which practice areas they should focus in future. In order to find the right answer to this question one would have to take a long term view and foresee how the markets will develop. This can be a daunting task.

According to Michael E. Porter, the world's leading expert in competitive strategy, strategic positioning means performing different activities from rivals' or performing similar activities in different ways. Following this formula, it may pay out for lawyers to focus more on niche practices rather than to join the crowd in its effort to succeed in domains that have been traditionally popular. Insofar, individual interests appear to be perfectly aligned with the national interest.

Since the quality of any service industry depends heavily on its human resources, a stronger focus on niche practices is likely not only to improve the competitive position of individual lawyers, but also to strengthen the competitiveness of the respective industry as a whole. Identifying suitable niches is less difficult than it may appear. The trust industry in Singapore, for instance, has in recent times been unable to find enough qualified trust and estate practitioners - and that despite the fact that experts predict an increase in future demand for wealth management services in Singapore.

At the Global Entrepreneurship@Singapore a few months ago one of Singapore's most prominent entrepreneurs and speakers noted that lawyers often charge horrendous fees and produce documentation which is too complex and contains too many pitfalls. Everybody who has been in legal practice has probably heard similar complaints at some stage. In the past, lawyers may have often been able to ignore such criticism. However, in a new economic environment with increased competitive pressure, lawyers will likely have to reconsider their traditional ways of doing business and find ways to improve their ability to understand their clients. In order to overcome the stigma that lawyers are often more an obstacle than a facilitator of business ventures, lawyers may have to develop more entrepreneurial spirit and increase their willingness to put themselves into their clients' shoes. Increased cross-cultural and cross-disciplinary education may play a key role in this respect. Furthermore, lawyers may have to implement more flexible, if not totally new, fee structures that complement the government's efforts to reduce the costs of doing business in Singapore. Such structures could entail long-term "partnership" systems under which lawyers charge start-ups lower fees than established and profitable companies or undertake a certain percentage of pro-bono work to promote entrepreneurship in Singapore.

In a restructured Singapore, lawyers will have to be more akin to entrepreneurs than ever before. In order to stay ahead of the competition lawyers will have to be more creative and innovative than their competitors in other markets. Given the importance of legal services for the overall competitiveness of Singapore's economy, lawyers should be at the forefront of the nation's effort to question existing structures with a view to identify new opportunities. There will be room for improvement - always and everywhere.

# 'Restructuring' Lawyers?



Cher (left, seated),  
with a friend from NUS

# Cher Weixia Chen LLM '01

Cher writes from the University of Southern California, where she is enrolled in the PhD program for Political Science.

As two years go by, my study experience in NUS becomes increasingly more important and precious to me. NUS is where I fell in love with comparative law, started the first-time ever life in a totally foreign country, learned how to do research that I still use to this day, was blessed to work for Dr. Ramraj, and formed life-long friendships from all over the world. I must say that I learnt and changed a lot during my studies at the NUS. I became much more mature and independent than before.

For me, that was the first time I ever lived on my own in another country. It really took me a while to adapt to the new surroundings and to the new life. It was a new culture, a new way of life, new challenges and experiences. It was well worth the effort to meet other international and local students. I still remember my international friends and I hung out at Arab Street, Little India, Orchard Road and Bugis Village. Los Angeles reminds me of that.

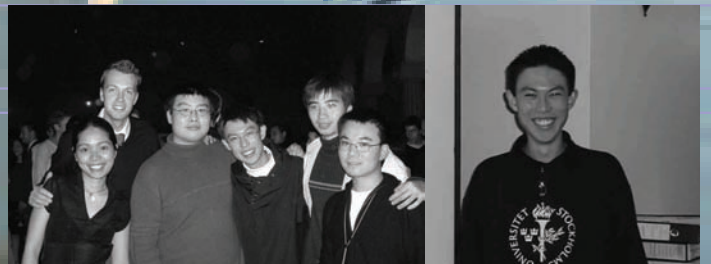
I've loved the close, working relationships I've had with my fellow LLM students and professors in Faculty of Law, and have always felt it an honor and a privilege to be a part of this community. As an international student right now in America, it's difficult for me to explain how grateful I feel for those days in NUS. The communication difficulty in an English environment other than my mother language, the struggle of living abroad, the challenge to finish both coursework and thesis in a short time, all taught me how to 'fight' and provided me a solid foundation to go on.

Here at USC, when I found out that one of the students in my Teaching Assistant discussion session was from Singapore and lived close to NUS, I felt so excited and amazed. I realised that those days in NUS are close to my heart. I miss NUS! The memory of the MRT and SBS buses were particularly precious when I first came to Los Angeles, a city which pays little attention to public transportation!

In NUS, the international students make a great contribution towards enriching the intellectual and social life of NUS; and make NUS a more interesting place to study and help create a dynamic diverse community. The thing that most impressed me about Singapore is its diversity. Ethnic shops and restaurants are available throughout the city. There is a mixture of religions, with the main religions of the world practiced there: Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Sikhism, Judaism, Taoism. Places of worship in multi-religious Singapore are dotted all over the island. It is quite interesting to see a church, mosque and/or temple side by side. That mental picture reminds me that the world is full of different people, and never to judge others with your own standard only.

I heard Faculty of Law now has an amazing graduate program. It must be wonderful to have so many fellows and to live such a diverse community. I firmly believe that building on the glory NUS has enjoyed over the past decades, we are just on the verge of even greater things. As proud as we are today of being NUS alumni, in the future we're going to feel even more blessed.

A Year Abroad:



(Left) With friends at City Hall  
(Right) Daryl Lim '04

# The Stockholm Experiment

## Daryl Lim '04 shares his thoughts on a year spent at Stockholm University on the Student Exchange Program

Our exchange programme with Stockholm University is our first exchange agreement with a Scandinavian country, and with Continental Europe as a whole. It is also the first exchange programme to immerse common law students in an alien civil law jurisdiction for an entire academic year. The competition at Stockholm ranks closely with universities like Oxbridge, Maastricht and Strasbourg.

Two points stand out about my academic experience there. First is an emphasis on a multifaceted legal training. Study trips to legal institutions provided invaluable experience of how abstract legal concepts and traditions were given practical application in Swedish society.

Further, though the courses focused predominantly on EU laws and policies, cross-jurisdictional comparisons with the US were made for a more complete international perspective. This exposure, I believe, provides a crucial advantage in predicting the path Singapore's laws are likely to take in the years ahead. Second, students benefited from a wide range of expertise in classes there. The practical perspective provided by international giants like Linklaters was evenly balanced by European Union officials as well as former UN judges, prosecutors and delegates.

Classes made up only half the rich learning experience there. In autumn, the university hosted a model United Nations conference. The large number of resident exchange students and delegates, who came from as far away as Spain and Argentina, made the event truly international. I had the honour of sharing Singapore's hopes for a well-tempered global order before this international community through the delegation's opening address.

At least as memorable was the opportunity to interview Lord Phillips, Master of the Rolls, at the Royal Courts of Justice in London, for the Singapore Law Review. Our meeting was perhaps the only exclusive student interview ever done with a bearer of this office. We spoke at length about highlights of a most remarkable life. This meeting was to lead to a return visit, where I had the privilege to be taken on a private tour of the Courts by his Private Secretary, a treat normally reserved for visiting judges and dignitaries.

To say that the year away was extraordinary would be an understatement. Words cannot describe the camaraderie formed by enduring a virtual six-month winter so cold that boiling water left outside sometimes freezes within minutes. Or the glorious joys of ice-fishing in the frigid wilderness and skating on a frozen pond in the city centre. Or the picturesque summer picnics and sunset cruises on the archipelago in spring.

It is only by living and learning together in the melting pot of an overseas exchange programme that one can truly understand the motives that drive the actions of people who are different from ourselves. Bound by a colonist past, we may feel inhibited to share our culture and insights with the West. But I believe that it is only with this willingness and ability to see the world through each others eyes as equals, that a global renaissance can be set in motion. I would like to think that at least in this respect, the Stockholm experiment was a phenomenal success; one that certainly would not have been possible without the willingness of the Faculty to take a chance with this most unlikely candidate. For this I am truly grateful.

Stockholm University in Winter  
(Inset) Ice fishing - yes, it's cold!

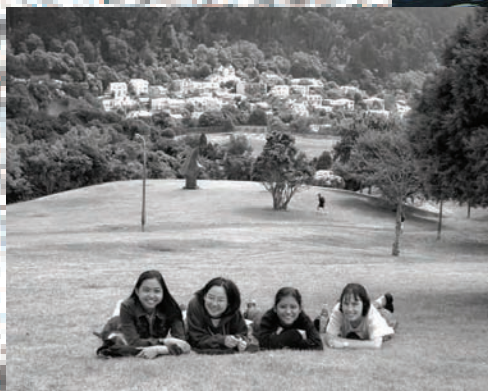


# The Antipodean Experience

Dawn Voon '04 waxes lyrical on her year spent immersing herself in New Zealand life and 'Kiwiana' culture, during her year abroad under our Student Exchange Program



(Above) Mitre Peak at Milford Sound



(Left) With friends at the Wellington Botanical Gardens



It is a common joke in New Zealand that Singapore has the same population as New Zealand, but is merely the geographical size of its largest lake, Lake Taupo. It is thus not surprising that Wellington, the political capital of New Zealand, is far less cosmopolitan and crowded than Singapore.

I spent a year at Victoria University of Wellington (Vic). The Vic Law Faculty was located in a beautiful building that is apparently the second largest wooden building in the world. It was a refurbished historic building which previously housed the government. In Kiwi-speak, it was very 'flash'!

I enjoyed many of my classes there, which were conducted by some lively and articulate lecturers. One of the subjects I took was seemingly offbeat: Law & Sexuality. It was basically about how the law portrays sexuality. This subject was highly subjective, emotional and at times downright dramatic; especially since we had some guest lecturers who were intersexed (persons born with physical characteristics that are neither male nor female), transsexual or homosexual discussing their life experiences and discrimination issues.

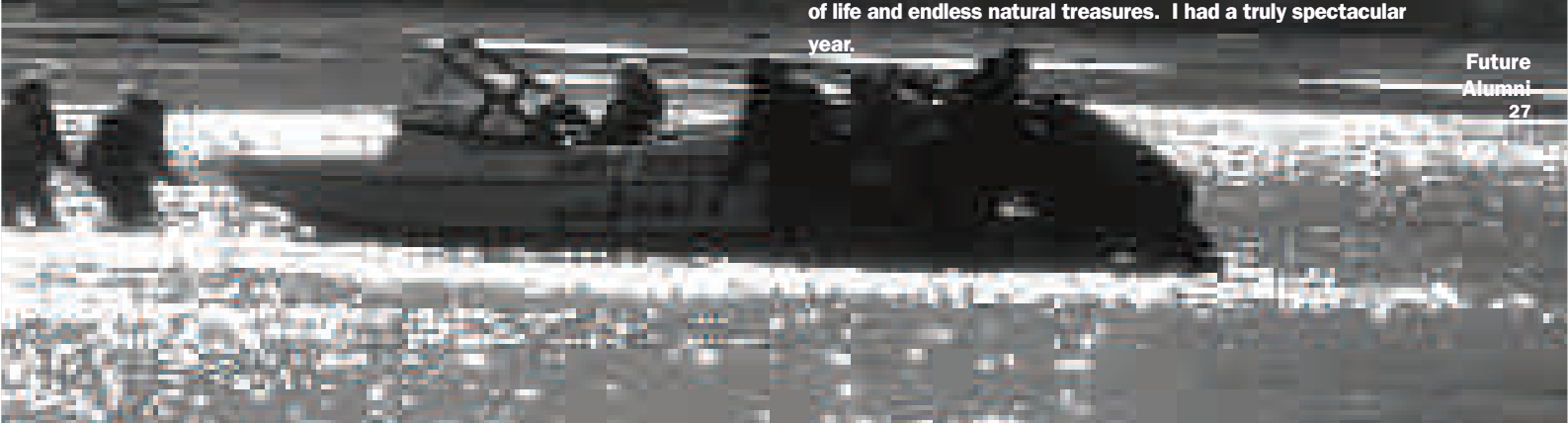
During my year in Wellington, I lived in two different student halls, both located in downtown Wellington. In my first hall, the fire alarm went off three times in four months – all false alarms! The alarms often conveniently went off at unearthly hours. The residents then had to drag themselves out of bed and assemble out in the freezing cold. Some groggy residents would forget their shoes, some were too sleepy to put on coats so they lugged their heavy blankets along with them, while others had the misfortune of being caught in the shower and were dressed in only foam and bathrobes.

Wellington is the second windiest city in the world. There were days that the wind got so strong, it was hard to walk in a straight line and I had to grab a traffic light to prevent from getting blown away.

Most Kiwis take sports seriously and belong to some sports club or other. Tramping (or trekking) is a particularly popular activity, and there are some superb trails surrounding Wellington. New Zealand has a particularly astounding variety of terrain compacted into two moderately sized islands. There are golden beaches, volcanic landscapes, glacial formations, ancient forests, mountain ranges, and other types of landscapes, all contained within New Zealand. And you can be sure that where there is a river, odds are that you can raft through it, and where there is a mountain range, there is a pass you can follow.

One of my favourite places to visit was Kaikoura, a place for spotting sperm whale and swimming with wild dusky dolphins. At five in the morning (apparently the best time for swimming with dolphins), we were shown an introductory video telling us that Kaikoura has rich marine life was because it had a vast continental shelf, which at some point, plunges drastically to reach great depths. On this reassuring note, the guides then proceeded to take us out into the open ocean, and deposit us right where underwater cliff dips. But it was well worth it, to see hundreds of dolphins leap in and out of the water. I was able to swim in circles with a pod of them – however, the circling combined with the strong currents made me really dizzy, and I spent the journey back to land hurling into a bucket!

New Zealand is a beautiful country with a comfortable pace of life and endless natural treasures. I had a truly spectacular year.



(Left) Queenstown  
The Remarkables

(Below) At Kaikoura with  
a New Zealand fur seal



# class action

Congratulations to **Giam Chin Toon SC '67**, who has been appointed as Singapore's next High Commissioner to the Republic of Ghana. Lest anyone think that he is packing his bags and moving to Africa, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs highlights that he will remain resident in Singapore, where he is a Senior Partner of M/s Wee Swee Teow & Co. Mr Giam is also Chairman of the Inquiry Panel of the Law Society of Singapore. He has been Singapore's non-resident Ambassador to the Republic of Peru for some years now, and will continue in that post.

**Judge Abdul Hamid Mohamed '69** was elevated to the bench of the Federal Court of Malaysia on 1 August 2003, another illustrious achievement in a long and distinguished career in the Malaysian Legal and Judicial Service. The Federal Court is the highest Court in Malaysia. You can view more information on Judge Abdul Hamid in the 'Alumni In The News' section of our website, at: <http://www.law.nus.edu.sg/alumni>



**Laina Raveendran Greene '86** sends greetings from Silicon Valley area in the US, where she lives with her husband and 2 children. She also runs a business in Singapore. Laina runs GetIT Multimedia- a business solutions company offering communications and learning services ([www.getitmm.com](http://www.getitmm.com)). Says Laina, "Life has been very

interesting. Besides the online company I run, I also do policy and regulatory consulting in the telecom and Internet arena through the UN. I have done some interesting work such as conduct ICT policy training for the governments of Afghanistan, Iran, Mongolia, China, Laos, and created multimedia training content such as 'The Internet for Policy Makers' and 'Easy Guide to E-commerce'." Laina has chalked up lots of airtravel miles accumulated over the last 5 years of commuting back and forth between the US and Singapore. But she says, "The constant travelling has taken a toll on my ability to keep in touch with my friends. I certainly do hope to reconnect with old friends through this alumni network. Do drop me a line at [laina@getit-multimedia.com](mailto:laina@getit-multimedia.com) as I would love to hear from you."

Congratulations to **Koh Juat Jong '88** on her appointment as Registrar of the Supreme Court. Many of our alumni will remember appearing before her at the Subordinate Courts, and most recently when she was Principal District Judge, Family and Juvenile Justice Division.

**Han Cher Kwang '89** joined NTUC Fairprice Co-operative Limited as a legal officer on 19 Aug 2003. He would like to hear from former classmates and friends! You can e-mail him at [han\\_ck@yahoo.com](mailto:han_ck@yahoo.com).

**Jonathon Tan '92** sends his greetings from Cincinnati, Ohio: "I emigrated to the United States in 1996, obtained my Ph.D. in Religious Studies in 2002, and am now an Assistant Professor in Minorities' Studies & Religion at Xavier University in Cincinnati." Classmates wanting to get in touch with Jonathon can reach him at: Xavier University Dept. Of Theology, 3800 Victory Parkway, Cincinnati, Oh 45207-4442, United States of America; or email him at: [tan@xavier.edu](mailto:tan@xavier.edu)

## Reunions!

Calling all members of the **Class of '94!**

Sandra Seah '94 and Chiang Ming Y u '94 are heading up your **10th Anniversary Reunion committee**. Wanna join in? Email us at: [lawlink@nus.edu.sg](mailto:lawlink@nus.edu.sg)

We are also planning reunions for the following classes:

**Class of '64 – 40th Anniversary**

**Class of '74 – 30th Anniversary**

**Class of '79 – 25th Anniversary**

**Class of '84 – 20th Anniversary**

If you would like to be on the **Reunion Committee** for your Class, drop us an email or give us a call at:

**6-874-1305.**

**Cheng Kwong Wing '93 and wife Pamela recently brought their 3 children – Laura (4 yrs), Emma (2yrs) & Michael (1 month 4 days at the time!) – on a 3-week holiday along the Gold Coast in Brisbane, Australia, together with Pamela's parents. He has these words of wisdom to share on planning a holiday with 3 little tykes: Multiple Child Holiday 101**

**Alan Tan '93 and Sun are delighted to announce the birth of their daughter, Kai Ryn, on 18th August 2003.**



Kai Ryn in her father's pink (!) tunic

**Sun and Alan are absolutely thrilled to be first-time parents. Alan reports: "Ryn's a great bundle of fun, and is developing quite a personality. She was born with a lovely tan, chuckles and gurgles**

**constantly, and has an in-built motion detector which sets her wailing whenever the car stops at traffic lights (!). For her traditional one-month-old celebrations, we dressed her in a pink tunic with Chinese buttons, the very same outfit worn by her father 34 years ago during his one-month-old celebrations!" Alan: you wore a pink tunic?**

**Leslina Toh '93** says a big 'Howdy' from Austin! "I am now living in Austin, TX where my husband is pursuing a PhD in Political Science at the University of Texas. The University has an excellent law library, and I am usually lost amidst its foreign law collection. "Austin is the capital of The Lone Star State, Texas. Life here centres around state politics, and the University of Texas (and its football games). It is also home to Dell Computers, and a sizeable tech sector which as you can imagine is anything but booming in recent years. It is extremely hot here in the Summer, nice and cool in the 'Winter'. The weather is great though for plants that flourish in a Mediterranean climate ... there is nothing quite like cooking with fresh herbs from your garden. Texas is famous for its barbeque and chili, but herbivores would be equally happy with the quality of the fruit and vegetables here.

We lived in New York before moving to Texas, so we appreciate the space and the laid-back lifestyle here. The downside is that we are not able to walk everywhere like we used to in Manhattan. A while ago we walked 4 miles in 100 degree Fahrenheit weather to get to the annual Hot Sauce Festival, and that was the end of our NY-style walks. When I write to you to report that I am driving around Austin in an SUV with a super-sized Coke in the cup-holder, you will know that my assimilation is complete."



Laura, Michael and Emma Cheng

- Aim for a night flight so that the kids will conk off during the flight and leave some time for the parents to watch the in-flight movies
- Rent a big car - we had a mini bus
- Check the age of the vehicle before you leave - we got an old clunker and also had a flat tyre after leaving Movie World, but it got us around
- For Australia - sleep early at night and try to set off early in the mornings - most attractions close at 5 or 6 pm
- Bring along activity books, colouring stuff, games, etc. to occupy the kids
- Be prepared to eat a lot of chips at every meal, we cooked porridge and brought it along in a food warmer for the 2 older kids
- Buy travel insurance - we had 2 claims, 1 for an eye problem, and another for Laura who fell out of the car whilst trying to climb over a car seat
- Take plenty of photos for LawLink
- Enjoy the trip!!!

**Geoffrey Dedieu '94** spent 4 years as Asia Counsel with the Danone Group, based in Singapore and covering 14 countries including China, India, Indonesia, Pakistan and the Philippines. He obtained an MBA from INSEAD in 1998 and joined Marakon Associates, first in London, then back here again in Singapore. Geoffrey is now in charge of expatriate clients at Credit Lyonnais Private Banking Asia (Singapore), handling financial and estate planning issues for large investors. He married in Singapore in September 1993, under the bougainvilleas of the French Embassy. His two kids are now five and six years old.

Hey all you gaming buffs out there: how's this for a dream job? **Chiang Ming Yu '94** was Chairman of the World Cyber Games 2003 – Singapore's largest cybergaming tournament to date. Says Ming Yu, "The Singapore Finals were held from 28 to 31 August, and saw almost 1,000 participants and an estimated 60,000 visitors. The champions represented Singapore against the champions of 55 other countries at the Grand Finals in Seoul from 12 to 18 October. Airfare and hotel rooms are all sponsored,



so start training for next year, you guys! One of Singapore's champions made it to the quarter-finals of the Xbox Halo tournament, and is ranked among the top eight Halo players in the world.

I took lots of leave to attend the WCG Organising Committee meetings, and am glad that I have supportive bosses, and a very supportive wife! I am still keeping some leave to spend on my wife and kids, and hope they don't feel short-changed!

Work wise, I am still doing compliance work with the local branch of a global investment bank. I have recently been asked to support the legal team in the regional HQ for all legal matters arising from Singapore, so I guess my job scope will be enlarged and I will be in touch with legal matters again." Incidentally, Ming Yu was recently featured in The New Paper, declaring that he would never let his children view violent computer games, much less play them! Apparently he will only let them start gaming when they are in secondary school ...

What's **Sherman Ong '95** been up to lately? Well, if you liked LawLink's new-look cover, you have Sherman to thank for the photos in our 'Women At The Top' cover story, featuring Halimah Yacob '78 and Indranee Rajah SC '86.

Sherman recently made a dance film entitled 'Exodus', with the Indonesian Contemporary Dance Centre (ICDC). According to Sherman, the film "deals with the unspoken nuances of human emotions. An encounter between a lower-class ethnic Chinese shampoo girl and a Javanese court dancer sparks an awakening that manifests the dialectics of obsession and the transient nature of human affection." The film has been invited to make its International Premiere at the Rotterdam International Film Festival in Jan 2004; and is also in the finals of the Hive Festival, a Singapore digital film festival. Most recently, Sherman travelled to Brazil, for the showing of his short film 'The Ground I Stand' (see LawLink's Jan-June 2003 issue), which explores life in Singapore's heartland, race relations and the virtues of an existence beyond material wealth, through the memories and personal impressions of a 75 year-old Malay woman. His film was showcased at VideoBrazil: the International Electronic Art Festival run by the



Sherman at work on our last LawLink cover photo

Associação Cultural Videobrasil. According to the organisers, VideoBrazil was started in 1991 by "by a group of artists interested in the vitality of Brazilian experimental video. (It) is a pole of a large exchange network involving producers, curators and researchers in the field. Every two years, it runs the Festival, which is currently approaching its 14th edition and is considered the most prominent of its kind in Latin America." Wondering what a Singaporean filmmaker was doing at a Latin American festival? The Association is a non-profit institution that works to promote the electronic art of the 'southern circuit'; which includes Brazil (of course), Portuguese-speaking

countries, Latin-America, the Caribbean, Africa, Eastern Europe, Middle East, Oceania ... and South-east Asia. That's one big circuit!

Yet another tecchie dream job: **Eric Lie '96** is completing his second year with the International Telecommunications Union in Geneva, Switzerland. The ITU is part of the United Nations system, and works with governments and the private sector to ensure that the latest technological advances are rapidly integrated into the telecommunication networks of countries all around the world. Eric is in the ITU's Strategy and Policy Unit. Part of his job apparently involves having long and involved debates with his boss about whether Kazaa or eDonkey have faster download rates ... But lest you think that's all he does, he also runs international workshops and has presented a number of papers on various telecoms issues. Eric most recently co-authored a 200-page tome entitled 'Birth of Broadband', which "examines the emergence of high-speed, dedicated Internet connections that will greatly expand the world's access to information, and looks at how broadband will also facilitate the long-expected convergence of three previously distinct technologies: computing, communications and broadcasting." You can find out more about the book from the ITU's website at: [www.itu.int/birthofbroadband](http://www.itu.int/birthofbroadband)



Jared and Jaime Song

Congratulations to **Marcus and Janice Song (both '96)** on the birth of their daughter Jaime. Big brother Jared is a conscientious babysitter, as can be seen in the photo which they sent us. Marcus is still with the International Affairs Division of the Attorney-Generals' Chambers. Janice is in charge of Home Affairs in the Song household.

Priscilla Soh '96 (now Priscilla Chang) writes: "Greetings from Tokyo! I'm currently residing in Tokyo as my husband, Kim Sai, who is with the Air Force, has been sent here for a course. We



have a 6 month old son, Ethan, who has recently sprouted two new teeth. I am a full time mom here. I have my hands full with these two boys at home! My Japanese is ok ... It's so much easier to pick up a language when you are living in that particular country. We'll be returning to Singapore in 2004. Ethan is a real ladies' boy...very friendly and smiles at everybody." We believe you, Priscilla – look at the photo she sent us as proof!

Azlena binte Khalid '97 is now teaching at the Law Faculty of University Teknologi Mara. She writes: "As I live in Kuala Lumpur now, I miss all things uniquely Singaporean in nature. I'm not the only Singaporean here; the current Dean, Associate Professor Ramiah Mohd Noh '77 is also an NUS Law faculty Alumnae, so we share fond memories of the Law Faculty. To the LLM Class of '97, do keep in touch – especially Maria Sarmiento '97 (Phillipines), Eva Loetscher-Jaggi '97 (Switzerland) and Elisa Kristiina Erkkila '97 (Finland), hope you're all in great health and in good spirits." Classmates can write to Azlena at: [azlena\\_khalid@hotmail.com](mailto:azlena_khalid@hotmail.com)

After more than 5 years at Drew & Napier, Siraj Omar '97 is now with the Singapore office of UK-based international law firm DLA. As part of the firm's Indonesian practice, he spends a good part of most weeks in Jakarta. Contrary to popular belief, he does not spend his time avoiding demonstrations and dodging bombs, but is relishing spending time enjoying the many things Jakarta has to offer.

Send us your updates and photos! Email us at [lawlink@nus.edu.sg](mailto:lawlink@nus.edu.sg), or call us at: 6-874-1305

Aaron Lee '97 and Namiko Chan '97 were married at a small, intimate ceremony on 7 June 2003 at Alkaff Mansion. Namiko is now at NIE, having chosen to be an art educator as well as practitioner. Aaron is still legal counsel at an aviation company; and and is working on his second collection of poetry, which



is scheduled to be published in 2004. In their free time, this artistic couple cook and sing with AGAPPELLA, a contemporary Christian music acapella group. Says Aaron, "We praise God that He has brought us together ... he makes everything wonderful in His time!" Namiko has been a busy woman this year – in addition to getting married, on 12 November 2003 her second solo exhibition, Friends/Phases: Portraits and Nudes, opened to critical acclaim at The Art Gallery, National Institute of Education. Says Namiko: "As an artist, I have always had an interest in the portrayal of the figure,

and in those artists who found their creative voice in the expression of the figure and the human condition. The drama of the quiet gesture, the chiaroscuro of light falling on an outstretched arm, the intrigue of a face registering only the slightest of expressions- these are attributes of the artworks by artists I admire. My figurative work operates in the traditional field of the nude. Not only is the human anatomy one of the most beautiful things God created, but in painting it, there is the liberation of expression without the technical problems that cloth and drapery pose."



If you've been watching the Channel 5 drama series 'First Touch', you may have seen a familiar Law School face in 2 episodes. Our very own Haslynda Dahlan '97 played the long-suffering 'Madam Hanisah'. Her character was originally named 'Mrs. Chan', but the director realised pretty fast that she needed a name-change! And yes, she does get recognised in the streets

– people stare at her, trying to figure out where they know her from ... not to mention the ribbing she gets from her students! (Haslynda still has her day job: teaching in a secondary school.) In addition to garnering fame on the goggle box, Haslynda reports that she has taken up wakeboarding, together with Tan Wuen Lin '97 and Harvonne Yap '97. How's that going? "So far, I've gotten to squatting position only. Very sad. And we go in the evenings - I'm dark enough, thank you - no need for further suntan."

Ernest Lim '02 sends his greetings from Boston: "Hi! Right now I am doing my LLM at Harvard Law School. Harvard, especially the Law School, is an amazing place - intellectually, politically and socially vibrant and exuberant! There are so many daily talks, forums and workshops initiated by diverse people of different views and with different goals. You can just spend a year here not taking the courses but participating in these wonderful initiatives." Hmm, hope that's not all you're doing, Ernest!