

**STORYTELLING ASSOCIATION (SINGAPORE)**  
**NEWSLETTER**  
**DECEMBER 2008**

Dear Members,

One year has passed and its always time to look back and reminisce on what has been. For me, it has been a hectic year as President of the Association! Being hectic means having things to organize and get done, which is always a good problem! For a three year old Association we have come a long way with television appearances, regular radio sessions, newspaper mentions and our own website becoming popular. We have not only supported various causes through storytelling, but we have reached out to different audiences this year with performances suitable for children, families and adults only. Our members have benefitted from exclusive workshops and master classes to hone their skills, and myriad discounts and opportunities during the Singapore International Storytelling Festival. Our members have been the first to know about both local storytelling activities and visiting international storytellers. Our pool of storytelling resources has grown from books and audio discs to live dvd recordings and bi-monthly storytelling journals. Our members have had opportunities to tell on trains to children, at an elegant dinner-theatre setting for adult audiences, for charity, and as part of a line-up at various performances organized by the Association. We have seen many of our members attend our regular Socials, initially as shy and reluctant to tell, transform into confident and wonderfully engaging storytellers!

What a year it has been! And I have wonderful news to share with all of you: The Storytelling Association (Singapore) is happy to welcome two new Ordinary Members to its fold, Ms. Helen Tan and Ms. Nancy Leppard. Congratulations to both of them! We look forward to listening to them share their stories at more events!

The year has certainly ended with more reason to celebrate!

I welcome feedback from you and please feel free to contact me at [president@storytellingsingapore.com](mailto:president@storytellingsingapore.com) or on 92732383 with your ideas and suggestions.

A gentle reminder....

**MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS**

As we near the close of the year, it is time to renew memberships. SAS membership year is from January 1 to December 31 of each year. Membership for Associates and Ordinary Members must be renewed by 31 January 2009 to qualify for waiver of the \$10 registration fee. Please Note: Current membership expires on 31 December 2008 and any renewals after 31st January 2009 will incur the \$10 registration fee. Please visit [http://www.storytellingsingapore.com/membership.htm#Join\\_SAS](http://www.storytellingsingapore.com/membership.htm#Join_SAS) for details on how to renew your membership.

**STORYTELLING EVENTS**

**1. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

Date: Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> February 2009

Time: 7.00pm

Venue: Classrooms Upstairs, The Substation, #45 Armenian Street

More details: <http://storytellingsingapore.com/events.htm#AGM&Social>

The AGM is open only to Ordinary Members, who have voting rights.

Associate Members who are present may only observe.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> AGM is just around the corner and we will be electing the new Executive Committee for the year 2009. All Ordinary Members are encouraged to attend as you have voting rights. If you (Ordinary Members only) would like to be on the Executive Committee either as an Office Bearer or a Committee Member, please notify the Secretary before 24<sup>th</sup> December 2008.

## 2. SAS SOCIAL EVENT

Our first Social gathering for 2009 will be held right after the AGM.

Date: Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> February 2009

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Come and share stories or listen to others tell. The theme for our first social for 2009 is "*Transformations: Changes in the Air*". The Social is open only to Associate and Ordinary Members.

## 3. STORYTELLING WORKSHOPS

Organised and Presented by *Storywise* in Collaboration with the Storytelling Association (Singapore)

### **A) *An Introduction to Storytelling: Beginner's Workshop***

Trainer: Sheila Wee of Storywise.

Dates/Times: A 9-hour workshop will be held on Sat 21st February 2009 from 2pm - 5pm and Sat 28th February 2009 from 10am - 5pm (Both dates, not either or).

Venue: Kembangan Plaza - across the road from Kembangan MRT.

Cost: Associate Members of the Storytelling Association - \$270

Friends Member of the Storytelling Association - \$300

Non Members - \$310

**B) Practical Magic: Prop Stories for Young Children**

Trainer: Sheila Wee of Storywise

Date: Sat 7th March 2009, 2pm-5pm

Venue: Kembangan Plaza - across the road from Kembangan MRT.

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**C) Joining In: Participation Stories for Young Children**

Trainer: Sheila Wee of Storywise

Date: Sat 4th April 2009 from 2pm-5pm

Venue: Kembangan Plaza - across the road from Kembangan MRT.

Cost: Associate Members \$100,

Friends Member of the Storytelling Association - \$120

Non-Members \$130

Enquiries for all these workshops to: Sheila Wee

Tel and Fax: 62555007

Email: [sheila@storywise.com.sg](mailto:sheila@storywise.com.sg)

**WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING?**

**1. TALES OF HOPE & SPIRIT**

On Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> November, seven of our members told stories to celebrate the Universal Declaration of Human Rights' 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The overall celebration of UD60 in Singapore was organized by MARUAH and The Online Citizen. Our tellers told for free to the public and the evening was oversubscribed! The Association would like to thank Tan Joo Hymn for coordinating this event and to all the tellers who gave their time and shared their thought provoking stories: Dolly, Verena, Ai Lin, Juriah, Panna, Sheila and Joo Hymn. I have inserted the Online Citizen's article on our event here for your perusal:

***Tales of Rights and Wrong***

*By Liyana Low*

*The simple act of storytelling was used to promote the awareness of the profound issue of human rights in an event organised by the Storytelling Association (Singapore) last Saturday evening.*

*The storytelling session, called 'Tales of Hope & Spirit: From Mouth to Heart', was held to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.*

*"Even though, the stories are simple folk tales and could be easily read to children, when read to adults, these stories take on a different level of understanding," added Ms Kamini Ramachandran, president of the Storytelling Association.*

*The age-old genre of folk tales makes it easy for people of all ages to relate to the stories.*

*"The fact that they are ancient folk tales, passed on from generation to generation, reflects the universality of the issue of respecting somebody's rights," said Ms Kamini.*

Furthermore, the stories that were told originated from different parts of the world, indicating that respecting human rights is a worldwide issue, and not just restricted to some countries, she added.

Thanking the Storytelling Association for their participation in the U60 programme, Mr Choo Zheng Xi, the co-chairperson for the U60 celebrations agreed, saying: "Through stories, people would be able to see the issue of human rights in a wider scope, and hopefully the human rights discourse will be normalized and framed in a positive manner".

U60 is the committee that organises events to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR).

Ms Amy Tan, 34, a teacher at Northlight School, found the storytelling an effective medium because she was able to empathise with the characters in the stories more, and hence, it is a good way for people to start thinking about human rights.

Indeed, the stories that were told appeared to connect well with a responsive audience, many of whom nodded their heads and laughed appreciatively as the storytellers presented their stories.

These old stories were personally picked by each of the storytellers, who volunteered their services once they heard of the event from Ms Kamini.

According to her, the storytellers for the event chose their own stories according to what they felt were most suited for the evening.

"After all, it is the right of the storytellers to choose the stories that are close to their heart," she said.

However, the lack of funding made it difficult for the organisers to publicise the event to a wider audience.

"We are all volunteers, so we didn't have the money to really publicise the event," said Ms Kamini.

Despite these constraints, the room was almost packed with people mainly in their 30s and 40s.

Perhaps as a testament to the power of the spoken word, one factor that did help with the publicity was the word of mouth. Some of the audience members came down to support their friends who were telling the stories.

Said Ms Tan: "I got an e-mail from one of the storytellers asking me to come down for this event, and I'm enjoying my first time at such an event."

More conventional media also had a part to play. According to Ms Kamini, some members of the audience also came down because they heard mentioned on 93.8 Live.

More details about the Storytelling Association (Singapore) can be found at <http://www.storytellingsingapore.com/>.

## **2. SAS RESOURCES new items available!**

The Association is a member of the National Storytelling Network (USA) and their bi-monthly magazine 'The Storytelling Magazine' is available for loan to Ordinary and Associate Members. We also have Doug Lipmann's 'The Image Riding Toolkit' and 'The Professional Storyteller's Collection' comprising of audio CDs. Please contact Sheila Wee, our Resource Librarian at [sheilamwee@yahoo.com](mailto:sheilamwee@yahoo.com) if you would like to find out more about this magazine or any other materials available for loan. New issue of *The Storytelling Magazine* is here now! New! Abbi Patrix's wonderful live recording dvd of his English storytelling performance "To The End Of The World" as well as several other recordings in French are available for loan.

## **3. SAS WEBSITE**

Our website has up to date information on storytelling events, benefits offered by our partners as well as contact details for storytellers. Archived newsletters are also available for your perusal at [http://storytellingsingapore.com/about\\_us.htm#Newsletter\\_Archives](http://storytellingsingapore.com/about_us.htm#Newsletter_Archives)  
Do visit [www.storytellingsingapore.com](http://www.storytellingsingapore.com) for more information on your Association.

It has been a wonderful year of harnessing the power of stories as well as the storytellers. There will be no *Story Vein* this month. Happy holidays! Merry Christmas! Happy New Year! I wish all of you a peaceful year ahead.

Happy telling!

*Kamini Ramachandran*

President

Storytelling Association (Singapore)

**STORYTELLING ASSOCIATION (SINGAPORE)**  
**NEWSLETTER**  
**JANUARY 2009**

A Happy New Year to all members! And welcome to our many new members who have joined us in the last month! Holidays are over and now it's back to work and back to school! How did you prepare to welcome the New Year? While each culture's New Year celebration has its own flavour, there are certain common threads that bind us all. The period leading up to New Year's Day is a time for setting things straight: a thorough housecleaning, clearing our debts, returning borrowed objects, reflecting on one's shortcomings, mending quarrels, giving alms.

In some cultures, people jump into the sea or body of water to literally wash the slate clean. It seems to be that nearly everything you do on New Year's Eve and New Year's Day is full of significance for the future. In Rio de Janeiro, more than a million people gather on the beaches on December 31st to honour *Yemanjá*, the "Mother of the Sea," who brings good fortune. In Ecuador, people make effigies stuffed with straw, to represent the events of the past year. These are burned at midnight, thus symbolically getting rid of the past. In Greece, it is customary to throw a pomegranate wrapped in silver foil on the threshold, to spread the seeds of good luck for an abundant year. In Spanish-speaking countries, people put twelve grapes into their wine or champagne glass at midnight. The grapes represent the months of the old year and the new one. At the stroke of midnight, after toasting each other with the wine, people eat the grapes as quickly as possible, making a wish on each one. Food eaten on New Year's Day is said to affect the quality of the coming year. The ancient Romans exchanged bay and palm branches hung with sweets, dates, figs and gilded fruits. The items hung on the branch expressed hopes the New Year would be sweet, fertile, and prosperous.

Although many of these customs may seem like superstitions, they all stem from a similar belief: by ending the old year with respect and beginning the new one in the way we would like it to begin, we establish our intentions for the new year ahead of us. Whatever it is we do in our own way, we are acknowledging an important transition and welcoming a fresh start. May your New Year be rich with blessings.

I welcome feedback from you and please feel free to contact me at [president@storytellingsingapore.com](mailto:president@storytellingsingapore.com) or on 92732383 with your ideas and suggestions.

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#### ***a) An Introduction to Storytelling: Beginner's Workshop***

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Enquiries for all these workshops to: Sheila Wee

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#### **4. STORYTELLING PERFORMANCE FOR ADULTS**

*MoonShadow Stories* present "What's Love Got To Do With It?" on Friday 13 & Saturday 14 February at 8.00pm at The Substation. Does love really make the world go round? Or is it something else: lust, passion, hate, anger or some other intense feeling? Sit back, listen and ponder upon our selection of tales from around the world... Then decide for yourself whether indeed love has got anything to do with anything... To find out more about this event and to register please visit:

[www.moonshadowstories.org](http://www.moonshadowstories.org)

#### **WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING?**

##### **1. SAS RESOURCES new items available!**

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#### **STORY VEIN**

Last month, I spent a lot of time on the sea, with my family, on a cruise ship to Phuket. Standing on the balcony of our room, and gazing at the sea each day and each night, made me think of all the sea myths and legends. My sons asked for sea-stories; their favourites are stories of fantastic aquatic creatures, lost lands below the waters, sirens that lure sailors and ships to their death, and myths of Sea Gods and Goddesses. The vastness of the sea and the powerful waves made me recall the African sea goddess *Yemanja*. Her name, in the Yoruba language stands for 'mother whose children are like fishes' and she is a mother goddess, patron to all women, especially pregnant women. She is fecund and reigns over all living things. The African slaves brought with them their myths, legends, Gods and Goddesses to the coast of South America. In Brazil, she is also the Goddess of all water and thus is sometimes represented as a mermaid. *Yemanja* married *Oddua*, the first man on Earth and their marriage was the union of The Earth and The Water. People believe that their love still lasts to this very day, and if it ends, the earth and water will separate and the world will come to an end. Every 31st of December, in Brazil, *Yemanja's* followers practice the tradition of lighting candles on the beach at midnight for the Goddess. Paper boats and flowers are cast into the sea. If *Yemanja* accepts your boat and carries it out to the sea it is a good omen for the coming year. If your offering is refused, and your boat is washed back upon the shore, then it is a bad omen. We made our small offerings of fruits, flowers and paper items and with silent

wishes, we cast them into the sea, hoping Yemanja would hear our wishes for a peaceful year ahead.

Happy telling!

*Kamini Ramachandran*

President

Storytelling Association (Singapore)

**STORYTELLING ASSOCIATION (SINGAPORE)**  
**NEWSLETTER**  
**FEBRUARY 2009**

Another year has passed and I thank all of you for your continuous support and I look forward to serving you as your President for another term. Our third Annual General Meeting was held on February 7<sup>th</sup> and I would like to introduce our new Executive Committee for 2009/2010 to all members:

President: Kamini Ramachandran  
Vice-President: Sheila Wee  
Secretary: Chuah Ai Lin  
Treasurer: Panna Kantilal  
Assistant Secretary: Dolly Leow  
Assistant Treasurer: Nancy Leppard  
Membership Secretary: Jessie Goh  
Committee Member: Rosemarie Somaiah  
Committee Member: Helen Tan

The Association is now in its fourth year and I would like to thank all those who have served tirelessly and given freely of their time and talent to promote storytelling in Singapore. A special thank you to Mabel Lee, our Treasurer for the past two consecutive years! I am also happy to welcome our new Ordinary Members, Nancy and Helen on to the Committee. It was a smooth-sailing AGM that carried on in the form of our first Social Evening for the year. I welcome feedback from you and please feel free to contact me at [president@storytellingsingapore.com](mailto:president@storytellingsingapore.com) or on 92732383 with your ideas and suggestions.

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Tel and Fax: 62555007 Email: [sheila@storywise.com.sg](mailto:sheila@storywise.com.sg)

**2. STORYTELLING PERFORMANCE FOR ADULTS**

"Women's Stories" is a special line-up of six of our professional tellers performing stories about women and women's issues on International Women's Day, Sunday March 8<sup>th</sup> for 2 hours from 8.00 – 10.00pm at The Substation Theatre. Tickets are at \$15 and \$3 from each ticket will go towards the SCWO's 'The Star Shelter' charity. For more information, please view:

[http://www.storytellingsingapore.com/events.htm#Womens\\_Stories](http://www.storytellingsingapore.com/events.htm#Womens_Stories)

Do book early to avoid disappointment! Do support this event and pass on the information to your friends and family!

**3. STORYTELLING WORKSHOP FOR ASSOCIATE MEMBERS**

An exclusive and comprehensive workshop tailored just for our Associate Members! "Beyond Storytelling 101" is back one more time, after a round of success last year. Facilitator Verena Tay will be conducting this special 14-hour workshop in July. For more information about the workshop please view:

[http://www.storytellingsingapore.com/courses\\_&\\_resources.htm#BS101](http://www.storytellingsingapore.com/courses_&_resources.htm#BS101)

**4. WINE, WOMEN & WORDS**

An intimate evening of good wine paired with local food, and be feted with a spellbinding story, a delightful play, inspiring songs and dance, belly-aching comedy, a poignant short film and a passionate talk about wine.

For more details please view:

<http://www.storytellingsingapore.com/events.htm#WWWII>

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Special audio disc collection of Children's Stories available for loan! Take a look at our complete list of storytelling resources available at:  
<http://www.storytellingsingapore.com/SAS%20Library%20Contents-100209.pdf>

## **2. SAS WEBSITE**

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## **3. SAS MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS**

Our partners, Good Books, Bookaburra and September 21 offer various discounts on storytelling books and teaching resources. For more details please view:

<http://www.storytellingsingapore.com/membership.htm#Discounts>

## **4. SAS SOCIAL EVENING**

The first Social Evening for this year was held right after the AGM on Saturday February 7<sup>th</sup>. It was a lovely gathering of members both old and new! All of us were treated to some fabulous stories told by most of our new Associate Members. David Bok had us in stitches with his spoonerised version of *Cinderella*; Geok Lee charmed us with her operatic voice and the tale of the *Butterfly Lovers*; Fei Mee regaled us with the story of the illiterate caretaker who ended up a millionaire; Joo Hymn's story of *Nesoowa and the Chenoo* inspired Denise to share with us the personal story of how she got her name '*Starbird*'; and Heather ended the evening with a wonderful recounting of the power of prayer! Well done to all our new members who bravely shared stories and kept us entertained all evening. Thank you to all who told stories and to Dolly for the fabulous meal that we all shared. Our next Social Evening is scheduled for 31<sup>st</sup> July, hope to see more of you there sharing stories!

## **STORY VEIN**

Well it is February and how can we not think of love and all matters of the heart! In 269 AD a priest was put to death for secretly marrying couples in Rome. During this time, the Emperor Claudius banned all marriages, in the hope that more young men would join the army and not be tied down to marriage, love and relationships. But of course, the young people who were in love were most unhappy, and this kind priest, named *Valentine*, married some of them in secret ceremonies under candle light. Valentine was jailed and then beheaded. During his time in jail, many of the couples that he'd married came to visit him and threw flowers and notes of gratitude up towards his small cell-window. Valentine also made friends with the jailor's daughter, who gave him comfort in his last hours. Before he died, Valentine wrote a note of thanks to her, signed, '*from, your Valentine.*' And that is the story of how February 14<sup>th</sup> is celebrated nowadays by all who are in love and believe in the power of love.

I have been telling stories about love for a long time now and just recently completed a weekend devoted to telling stories about the matters of the

heart. Love stories do not always have to be about happy endings, though it is nice! Stories that begin with two people attracted to each other and then falling in love can end unusually, for example, the Bolivian folktale of the *Condor Seeks A Wife* results in how the world came to be proliferated with parrots! In some love stories, a man can literally fall head over heels for a woman and be left forever kneeling beside her, as in the Kashmiri legend of the mountains that fell in love, *The Glacier Queen Gwashbrari*. Lessons in love, real love that transcends time and space can be found in many stories about the teachings of the Buddha, and *The Moon Cuckoo* is one of my favourites about the transmigration of souls and eternal love. Wishing all of you love in your lives.

Happy telling!

*Kamini Ramachandran*

President

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**STORYTELLING ASSOCIATION (SINGAPORE)**  
**NEWSLETTER**  
**MARCH 2009**

It has been a busy month, as always, right after the AGM, it is time to submit various reports and pay your taxes on time too! The Executive Committee just had our first meeting for the term 2009/2010 with our two new Committee Members. It's great to have Nancy and Helen on board but we all do miss Mabel Lee! Mabel just completed her handover of Treasurer's duties to Panna, our new Treasurer, and we thank her for two years of consecutive hard work and balancing accounts! We also said good bye to our website manager, Verena Tay, and we welcome our new web manager, Neoh Khoon Lye. We thank Verena for her efficient and ultra quick work uploading data and maintaining the SAS website for more than two years.

We have some new members who joined us early this year, and we welcome all of them to the storytelling family! Just to keep everyone updated, we currently have two separate Sub-Committees for all membership categories to join in and give of your time and support; the Community Day Sub-Committee and the Scottish Exchange Sub-Committee. For new members who would like to find out more about these, please contact me.

I welcome feedback from you and please feel free to contact me at [president@storytellingsingapore.com](mailto:president@storytellingsingapore.com) or on 92732383 with your ideas and suggestions.

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B) Organised by the *Asian Storytelling Network*

**a) *Storytelling to Build Character and Values***

Two 3-hr workshops in English and Mandarin on Thursday 4th June and Friday 5th June 2009.

Morning and afternoon sessions are available.

**b) *Building Bridges - Bilingual Tandem Telling for Multicultural Audiences***

FREE public performance with a talk-back session on Saturday 6th June 2009.

Enquiries for these workshops: 6352 2009 / 9788 6975

Or email: [admin@asianstorytellingnetwork.com](mailto:admin@asianstorytellingnetwork.com)

**C) *Storytelling Workshop for Associate Members: 'Beyond Storytelling 101'***

An exclusive and comprehensive workshop tailored just for our Associate Members! "Beyond Storytelling 101" is back one more time, after a round of success last year. Facilitator Verena Tay will

be conducting this special 14-hour workshop in July. For more information about the workshop please view: [http://www.storytellingsingapore.com/courses\\_&\\_resources.htm#BS101](http://www.storytellingsingapore.com/courses_&_resources.htm#BS101)

## **2. STORYTELLING PERFORMANCE FOR ADULTS**

'*Happiness in Hard Times*'- What is happiness and why do we always seek it? Is permanent happiness ever possible? Come listen to Verena Tay as she explores themes of happiness in her solo storytelling performance on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> & Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> April at The Substation at 8.00pm. For more information and bookings please visit: [www.moonshadowstories.org](http://www.moonshadowstories.org) or call 92732383

## **WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING?**

### **1. SAS RESOURCES new items available!**

The Association is a member of the National Storytelling Network (USA) and their bi-monthly magazine '*The Storytelling Magazine*' is available for loan to Ordinary and Associate Members. We also have Doug Lipmann's '*The Image Riding Toolkit*' and '*The Professional Storyteller's Collection*' comprising of audio CDs. Please contact Sheila Wee, our Resource Librarian at [sheilamwee@yahoo.com](mailto:sheilamwee@yahoo.com) if you would like to find out more about this magazine or any other materials available for loan. New issue of *The Storytelling Magazine* is here now! New! Abbi Patrix's wonderful live recording dvd of his English storytelling performance "*To The End Of The World*" as well as several other recordings in French are available for loan. Special audio disc collection of Children's Stories available for loan! Take a look at our complete list of storytelling resources available at: <http://www.storytellingsingapore.com/SAS%20Library%20Contents-100209.pdf>

### **2. SAS WEBSITE**

Our website has up to date information on storytelling events, benefits offered by our partners as well as contact details for storytellers. Archived newsletters are also available for your perusal at [http://storytellingsingapore.com/about\\_us.htm#Newsletter\\_Archives](http://storytellingsingapore.com/about_us.htm#Newsletter_Archives)  
Do visit [www.storytellingsingapore.com](http://www.storytellingsingapore.com) for more information on your Association.

### **3. SAS MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS**

Our partners, Good Books, Bookaburra and September 21 offer various discounts on storytelling books and teaching resources. For more details please view: <http://www.storytellingsingapore.com/membership.htm#Discounts>

### **4. WOMEN'S STORIES**

On Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> March, six women storytellers from the SAS celebrated *International Women's Day* with a special storytelling evening in collaboration with The Substation called *Women's Stories*. A percentage of the night's takings will go towards The Star Shelter, run by the SCWO. We had a wide range of both women and men in the audience of close to 60 persons. Everyone was full of compliments for the tellers and some were so touched by the various stories told that they wrote to me afterwards to express their feelings. Sheila had the audience wondering who the real Mr. Fox was and if Lady Mary could escape his bloody clutches. Dolly took us all to Scotland with her sad tale of a daughter lost to the sea-folk. Kamini moved everyone to Punjab with the rustic folktale of brave Bopoluchi who outwitted her kidnapper. Rosemarie continued the Indian thread of tales with a story based on true events surrounding the royal house of Arakkal in Kerala. Verena drew sighs of empathy from nearly all the women in the room when she told us of the suffering and all-enduring mother in her African story. Ai Lin finished the evening with her original version of the classic Grimms tale, Ashputtel, making the young girls squirm and exclaim when the shoe was being fitted! A big thank you to all the tellers who enthralled the audience and we hope to make this an annual celebration of IWD.

## STORY VEIN

Each year the Association organises a charity storytelling event as well as a family-audience targeted public performance. We have had successful sell-out events in the past and this year we continue the tradition with **'Silver & Gold: Precious Stories for Young and Old'**. On Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2009 we will have a Community Day Event at The Arts House for selected Seniors and Teens from the Tan Chin Tuan Foundation's beneficiaries. This is a closed-door event especially for this group of beneficiaries. The Association will be celebrating the links between the different generations, mainly the Seniors and the Teens. Our Ordinary and Associate Members will be telling stories that touch on this theme of inter-generational connections and we will also be organizing special story reminiscing activities for them. Using objects from the past, like old newspaper clippings, kerosene lanterns, *tumbuk* mortal-and-pestle, and any other olden-days object, our team of facilitators will guide the Seniors into storytelling through reminiscing. Remembering their old days and triggering their memory using an object, and encouraging them to share their stories!

In the evening, there will be a public ticketed storytelling performance suitable for family audiences of ages 7 years and above. Seven of our members who are professional storytellers will entertain and regale the public with selected stories for the evening. Please hurry and make your bookings for yourself and your family! The Screening Room at The Arts House is a wonderfully intimate venue for storytelling and tickets are only \$10 for Adults and \$6 for a Child (aged 7 – 16 years). For more details on tickets and bookings please view:

<http://www.storytellingsingapore.com/events.htm#Silver&Gold> Do come with your friends and family and listen to stories told by Singapore's best tellers!

Happy telling!

*Kamini Ramachandran*

President

Storytelling Association (Singapore)

**STORYTELLING ASSOCIATION (SINGAPORE)**  
**NEWSLETTER**  
**APRIL 2009**

Welcome to our new members who recently joined the Association! Every month you will hear from me through my e-newsletter, with updates about workshops, performances and anything related to the storytelling world. Currently the various ExCo and Sub-Committee members are busy working on our annual Community Day Event for 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2009. Many of us are rehearsing for the family audience storytelling performance 'Silver & Gold' for that evening. If you have not already done so, please book your tickets for this wonderful performance with 7 of our professional storytellers geared to entertain you with tales that revolve around grandparents, children and family ties. More details below.

April always starts with that first day that celebrates Fools! And many of you know of the long-standing oral narrative tradition of Fool Stories from various countries. In last year's April 2008 Newsletter, I wrote about *Jack* (from the British Isles) and *Tenali Raman* (from South India) and the Malaysian *Pak Pandir*, *Lebai Malang* and *Si Luncai*. See [http://storytellingsingapore.com/archives.htm#Newsletter\\_Archives](http://storytellingsingapore.com/archives.htm#Newsletter_Archives) for archived Newsletters. But what about the 'wise fools'? Those who have an innate wisdom about them that only shines through when they are put under duress of some sort? This, of course, brings to mind the infamous *Mullah Nassruddin* of the Middle Eastern storytelling tradition. Nassruddin was considered a fool, yet many a time has he exhibited a certain deep wisdom in his simpleton foolhardiness. One day, a Philosopher came to Nasruddin's house as they had arranged to meet on that day, at that time. When he found nobody at home, the Philosopher was very angry and took a piece of chalk and wrote on the wooden door "Stupid Oaf" and left, upset and fuming. When Nasruddin returned to his house, he saw the scribbled message on his door; he quickly dashed off to the Philosopher's house. "Dear friend, I apologize for not having been at home. But when I got home, I remembered the appointment as soon as I saw that you had left *your* name on my door!" For a detailed study of the 'Exploits of the Incomparable Mulla Nassruddin' please refer to the book by Idries Shah of the same title. Nasruddin is also known as *Nasruddin Hodja* or just *The Hodja*. In Arab nations and in Egypt he is known as the character *Goha*. I welcome feedback from you and please feel free to contact me at [president@storytellingsingapore.com](mailto:president@storytellingsingapore.com) or on 92732383 with your ideas and suggestions.

**STORYTELLING EVENTS**

**1. STORYTELLING WORKSHOPS**

**A) *Storytelling***

***to Build Character and Values*** In unpredictable and difficult times the world returns to age-old values such as strength of character, resilience, care and compassion. Discover how the gentle persuasive art of oral storytelling can be an effective tool in values education. This 3-hr workshop is suitable for teachers, counsellors, volunteers, parents, senior citizens and others working in education and personal development. Presented by: Asian Storytelling Network Trainer for English workshops: Rosemarie Somaiah Dates for English workshops: Choice of either Thu, 4 June 2009, 10.00am - 1.00pm or Fri, 5 June 2009, 2.00pm - 5.00pm. Trainers for Mandarin workshops: Mary Lim Bee Lay and Geok Lee Thong Dates for Mandarin workshops: Choice of either Thu, 4 Jun 2009, 2.00pm - 5.00pm or Fri, 5 June 2009, 10.00am - 1.00pm Venue: The Little Arts Academy, City Campus, 1 Selegie Road, #05-01/02, PoMo, Singapore 188306

Cost: Associate Members of SAS: \$100

Friends Members of SAS: \$120 Non Members of SAS: \$130

Contact: 6352 2009 / 9788 6975 or email: [admin@asianstorytellingnetwork.com](mailto:admin@asianstorytellingnetwork.com) B)

***Storytelling Workshop for Associate Members: 'Beyond Storytelling 101'***

An exclusive and comprehensive workshop tailored just for our Associate Members! "Beyond Storytelling 101" is back one more time, after a round of success last year. Facilitator Verena Tay will be conducting this special 14-hour workshop in July. For more information about the workshop please view: [http://www.storytellingsingapore.com/courses\\_&\\_resources.htm#BS1012](http://www.storytellingsingapore.com/courses_&_resources.htm#BS1012).

**STORYTELLING PERFORMANCES**

**A) *Building Bridges - Bilingual Tandem Telling for Multicultural Audiences*** Whatever language you are comfortable with, come with family and friends to enjoy the exploits of Mousedeer and friends in this unusual, interactive storytelling performance that shows that all of us in Singapore can care for each other and share the same values. Presented by: Asian Storytelling Network Date: Sat, 6th 2009 Time: 4pm Venue: Bishan Library, Level 2. Recommended for: Families and general audiences.

Contact: 6352 2009 / 9788 6975 or email: [admin@asianstorytellingnetwork.com](mailto:admin@asianstorytellingnetwork.com)

***B) FREE Storytelling session for children and families***

Kamini will be conducting a series of storytelling sessions at The Little Arts Academy this year. She will be at the LAA usually on the last Saturday of each month, however please do check with the LAA for updated information on actual dates and timings. These 1-hour sessions for children (ages 4 and above) are FREE for the public. Please contact: Johnson Kee on 6513 3017 or view <http://baf.sg/aboutthelittleartsacademy.htm> for location details.

***C) OKTO TV Storytelling Clips*** Some of our professional members have worked on very short story-clips with MediaCorp Studios, suitable for television transmission. The first clip was targeted at pre-schoolers with Rosemarie Somaiah sharing a simple Face Rhyme with actions for young children to follow as they recite the Rhyme. These short clips come under the 'Okto Bites' programming and last just about one-minute. So do tune in, with your children or students, and enjoy the stories on television! Look out for the next clip, also suitable for pre-schoolers: Story Clip: 'Little Rabbit Foo-Foo' story rhyme Dates: Daily from Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> April – Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> April at 11.25am – 11.30am Dates: Daily from Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> April – Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> April at 2.55pm – 3.00pm Channel: OKTO Channel 8

***D) Family audience storytelling performance: "Silver & Gold: Precious Stories for Young and Old"*** Date: Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2009-04-08 Time: 7.30 – 9.00pm Venue: The Screening Room, The Arts House, Old Parliament Lane.

Ticketing Info: <http://storytellingsingapore.com/events.htm#Silver&Gold>

Every year, the Association organizes a storytelling performance suitable for family audiences (ages 7 years and above). This year, the theme is on inter-generational bonding. Come and listen to 7 professional storytellers entertain you with stories about grandparents, children, the wisdom of the

aged and stories that touch our hearts and connect us to our loved ones. This year's venue is at The Arts House, in their wonderful Screening Room. The performance starts at 8.00pm and lasts 90 minutes. Bookings have already started, so do hurry and book your tickets at <http://storytellingsingapore.com/events.htm#Silver&Gold> All booking and payment details can be found on our website at this web-link. Tickets are affordable at only \$10 for adults and \$6 for children (ages 7 – 16 years qualify as Child). Hurry and book your tickets now!

**E) Good Books' Clearance Sale -children's books and some storytelling resources** Prices: \$2, \$5, \$10. Everything MUST go! Date: Tuesday June 2nd 2009 Time: 10.00am – 4.00pm. Location: Block A King's Mansion #09-01 (Entry is via 12 Amber Gardens Rd only. Park in the uncovered lots.)

Contact: Kiran after May 18th at 91731354 or via email [kiran.gdbooks@pacific.net.sg](mailto:kiran.gdbooks@pacific.net.sg)

## **WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING?**

### **1. SAS RESOURCES new items available!**

The Association is a member of the National Storytelling Network (USA) and their bi-monthly magazine *'The Storytelling Magazine'* is available for loan to Ordinary and Associate Members. We also have Doug Lipmann's *'The Image Riding Toolkit'* and *'The Professional Storyteller's Collection'* comprising of audio CDs. Please contact Sheila Wee, our Resource Librarian at [sheilamwee@yahoo.com](mailto:sheilamwee@yahoo.com) if you would like to find out more about this magazine or any other materials available for loan. New issue of *The Storytelling Magazine* is here now! Abbi Patrix's (renowned French storyteller) wonderful live recording dvd of his English storytelling performance *"To The End Of The World"* as well as several other recordings in French are available for loan. Special audio disc collection of Children's Stories available for loan! We also have a copy of acclaimed storyteller Ramon Royal Ross' book *'Storyteller: The Classic that Heralded America's Storytelling Revival.'* Take a look at our complete list of storytelling resources available at: <http://www.storytellingsingapore.com/SAS%20Library%20Contents-100209.pdf> **2.**

### **SAS WEBSITE**

Our website has up to date information on storytelling events, benefits offered by our partners as well as contact details for storytellers. Archived newsletters are also available for your perusal at [http://storytellingsingapore.com/about\\_us.htm#Newsletter\\_Archives](http://storytellingsingapore.com/about_us.htm#Newsletter_Archives)

Do visit [www.storytellingsingapore.com](http://www.storytellingsingapore.com) for more information on your Association. **3.**

### **SAS MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS**

Our partners, Good Books, Bookaburra and September 21 offer various discounts on storytelling books and teaching resources. For those interested in special storytelling cards, OH Cards are also available at a discounted rate for SAS members. For more details please view:

<http://www.storytellingsingapore.com/membership.htm#Discounts> **4.**

### **SAS COMMUNITY DAY EVENT 2009 FOR TAN CHIN TUAN FOUNDATION BENEFICIARIES** Date:

Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2009 Venue: The Arts House Note: this is a closed-door event organized by SAS for the beneficiaries of the TCT Foundation.

The Sub-Committee for this annual event has been working very hard in the past few months to organize, plan and execute! We have had various meetings and rehearsal sessions for different activities. Just to update all members, the Volunteers for this Community Day Event will be telling

stories to groups of Teens and Seniors sourced from the TCT Foundation's beneficiary list. Many of our Associate Members have showed interest in using this Event as a platform for them to experience public storytelling to a large audience in a professional setting. We have been working closely on story selection and rehearsals and fine-tuning the programme. Other Volunteers have been busy working on the special Reminiscing Activity for Seniors. This Activity uses objects to trigger memories, and the aim is to use the object as a catalyst for the Seniors to tell their own stories related to that object. Jessie Goh and Helen Tan have also discovered a fabulous set of cards specially created for Seniors. These cards have images of local items from the past, for instance a spittoon, rattan basket and steam-boat wok! Our Facilitation team will be using these cards for the Reminiscing Activity. We are also planning on Mini-Storytelling Workshops for the Teens using story games, word games, OH Cards and other techniques to introduce storytelling to them. The different groups of Teens and Seniors come from various schools, homes, centres and associations that fall under the Foundation's beneficiary list.

### **STORY VEIN**

It is April with Good Friday, Easter Sunday and Easter Monday just around the corner. What is the story of Easter? Easter is the celebration of Jesus' victory over death and mankind's hope for eternal life. The highlights of the Easter story include Jesus' execution (or crucifixion on the Cross), His burial and, most importantly, His rising from death (or Resurrection). The Rabbit and Eggs are symbols associated very much with Easter. But why? What is known is that the Egg, like the Rabbit, was a symbol of the constant renewal of life and therefore a logical symbol for the celebration of Easter. The Greeks dye their Easter Eggs red to symbolize and honour the blood of Christ, while in Germany and Austria, they traditionally give green eggs on Maundy (or Holy) Thursday, the day commemorating Christ's Last Supper. In Slavic countries, decorating eggs in special patterns of gold and silver adds lustre to the shell and to the sharing. The Armenian tradition is to decorate hollowed out eggshells with religious images significant to the holiday. There is a story about Mary Magdalen bringing hard-boiled eggs to the Tomb and the Eggs becoming brilliantly coloured as her tears fell upon them. In Asian cultures the Rabbit is revered as a sacred messenger of the Divine; to the Chinese, he is in the Moon, pounding rice (the Staff of Life) in a Mortar. In Buddhism, the Rabbit was placed in the Moon as a result of his self-sacrifice in offering himself as food to the tired and hungry Buddha disguised as a poor traveller. In a Hindu second version, the Rabbit cooks himself in Lord Indra's fire since he had no food to offer Him and the Lord placed him in the Moon as a reward. In Egypt, the Hare was known as 'un', which meant "to open," or "the opener." This was because the Hare, unlike his cousin, the Rabbit, is born with his eyes wide open. " Even in North America, the Rabbit/Hare is revered. To the Native American peoples, he was the Trickster/ Transformer who either plays the Fool or, in some instances, has brought about a benefit for mankind (i.e., the story of Rabbit bringing fire to the people). The Mayan culture credits Rabbit for inventing the Mayan writing. These traditions undoubtedly spread to the indigenous tribes of Western Europe. This also blended well with Celtic tradition, which viewed the Hare as a symbol of fertility and new life, and the Germanic tradition that the Hare brought new life each spring. In truth, the Rabbit has remained the same over time; He is a messenger of a season when all things are possible and all things can again be new. Happy Easter!

Happy telling!

*Kamini Ramachandran* President  
Storytelling Association (Singapore)

**STORYTELLING ASSOCIATION (SINGAPORE)**  
**NEWSLETTER**  
**MAY 2009**

It's the month of May! Our annual family audience storytelling performance is here! Every year we organize a special storytelling performance with some of our best professional storytellers to entertain and enchant you with their stories. I hope you've booked your tickets for yourself and your family, students or friends! Prices are really affordable, so hurry and make your bookings now!

***Family audience storytelling performance:***  
***"Silver & Gold: Precious Stories for Young and Old"***

Date: Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2009.

Time: 7.30 – 9.00pm

Venue: The Screening Room, The Arts House, Old Parliament Lane.

Ticketing Info: <http://storytellingsingapore.com/events.htm#Silver&Gold>

Every year, the Association organizes a storytelling performance suitable for family audiences (ages 7 years and above). This year, the theme is on inter-generational bonding. Come and listen to 7 professional storytellers entertain you with stories about grandparents, children, the wisdom of the aged and stories that touch our hearts and connect us to our loved ones. This year's venue is at The Arts House, in their wonderful Screening Room. The performance starts at 8.00pm and lasts 90 minutes. Bookings have already started, so do hurry and book your tickets at <http://storytellingsingapore.com/events.htm#Silver&Gold> All booking and payment details can be found on our website at this web-link. Tickets are affordable at only \$10 for adults and \$6 for children (ages 7 – 16 years qualify as Child). Hurry and book your tickets now!

Come and listen to the tale of how the *Wombat Goes Walkabout*. Find out what the family did to *The Old Man in the Corner*. What happened to the rescued *Eagle Chick* who grew up in a farmyard surrounded by chickens? Deep in the forests of Korea, a *Woodcutter* becomes lost and finds refuge in a cottage; but is the woman who offers him shelter all that she seems to be? A young girl grows up facing her fears side by side with her *Grandmother's Songs* that build her confidence and give her courage. When the King of the Alligators wanted to find out what exactly *Trouble* was, he was left with a reminder that lasted way beyond his lifetime! Are old people any less wise than the young? Listen to the Japanese tale of the *Wise Old Woman* and decide for yourself.

Do come with your friends and family! Listen to these timeless tales that transcend age! It's a once-a-year chance for you and your children to bond over stories selected especially for family audiences.

I welcome feedback from you and please feel free to contact me at [president@storytellingsingapore.com](mailto:president@storytellingsingapore.com) or on 92732383 with your ideas and suggestions.

**STORYTELLING EVENTS**

**1. STORYTELLING WORKSHOPS**

***A) Storytelling to Build Character and Values***

In unpredictable and difficult times the world returns to age-old values such as strength of character, resilience, care and compassion. Discover how the gentle persuasive art of oral storytelling can be an effective tool in values education. This 3-hr workshop is suitable for

teachers, counsellors, volunteers, parents, senior citizens and others working in education and personal development. Presented by: Asian Storytelling Network

Trainer for English workshops: Rosemarie Somaiah

Dates for English workshops: Choice of either Thu, 4 June 2009, 10.00am - 1.00pm or Fri, 5 June 2009, 2.00pm - 5.00pm.

Trainers for Mandarin workshops: Mary Lim Bee Lay and Geok Lee Thong

Dates for Mandarin workshops: Choice of either Thu, 4 Jun 2009, 2.00pm - 5.00pm or Fri, 5 June 2009, 10.00am - 1.00pm

Venue: The Little Arts Academy, City Campus, 1 Selegie Road, #05-01/02, PoMo, Singapore 188306

Cost: Associate Members of SAS: \$100

Friends Members of SAS: \$120

Non Members of SAS: \$130

Contact: 6352 2009 / 9788 6975 or email: [admin@asianstorytellingnetwork.com](mailto:admin@asianstorytellingnetwork.com)

## **2. STORYTELLING PERFORMANCES**

### ***A) Building Bridges - Bilingual Tandem Telling for Multicultural Audiences***

Whatever language you are comfortable with, come with family and friends to enjoy the exploits of Mousedeer and friends in this unusual, interactive storytelling performance that shows that all of us in Singapore can care for each other and share the same values.

Presented by: Asian Storytelling Network

Date: Saturday June 6th 2009

Time: 4pm

Venue: Bishan Library, Level 2.

Recommended for: Families and general audiences.

Contact: 6352 2009 / 9788 6975 or email: [admin@asianstorytellingnetwork.com](mailto:admin@asianstorytellingnetwork.com)

### ***B) FREE Storytelling session for children and families***

Date: Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> May 2009. Kamini will be conducting a series of storytelling sessions at The Little Arts Academy this year. She will be at the LAA usually on the last Saturday of each month, however please do check with the LAA for updated information on actual dates and timings.

These 1-hour sessions for children (ages 4 and above) are FREE for the public. Please contact: Johnson Kee on 6513 3017 or view <http://baf.sg/aboutthelittleartsacademy.htm> for location details.

### ***C) Family audience storytelling performance:***

#### ***“Silver & Gold: Precious Stories for Young and Old”***

Date: Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2009-04-08

Time: 7.30 – 9.00pm

Venue: The Screening Room, The Arts House, Old Parliament Lane.

Ticketing Info: <http://storytellingsingapore.com/events.htm#Silver&Gold>

### ***D) Good Books' Clearance Sale -children's books and some storytelling resources***

Prices: \$2, \$5, \$10. Everything MUST go!

Date: Tuesday June 2nd 2009

Time: 10.00am – 4.00pm.

Location: Block A King's Mansion #09-01 (Entry is via 12 Amber Gardens Rd only. Parking space is available in the uncovered lots.)

Contact: Kiran after May 18th at 91731354 or via email [kiran.gdbooks@pacific.net.sg](mailto:kiran.gdbooks@pacific.net.sg)

**E) Storytelling performance for children aged 6 years and above**

'Jungle Jamboree' as part of the ACE Festival 2009 (Arts & Creativity for Everyone)

Date: 19, 21, 22, 24 May 2009

Venue: Drama Centre Black Box and the main National Library

Workshops available too. Bookings: SISTIC [www.sistic.com](http://www.sistic.com) or call 63485555

More Information/Enquiries: I Theatre call 63415960 or [ACEF@itheatre.org](mailto:ACEF@itheatre.org) or [www.itheatre.org](http://www.itheatre.org)

**F) Storytelling Performance for Adults**

"The Untold: A Revealing Night of Indian Stories Collected by A.K.Ramanujan"

Presented by: Kamini Ramachandran as a solo storytelling performance.

Date: Friday 26<sup>th</sup> and Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> June 2009.

Time: 8.00pm

Venue: The Substation

More details / Booking Information: [www.moonshadowstories.org](http://www.moonshadowstories.org) or click on

<http://www.storytellingsingapore.com/events.htm#Untold>

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Do visit [www.storytellingsingapore.com](http://www.storytellingsingapore.com) for more information on your Association.

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**4. SAS COMMUNITY DAY EVENT 2009 FOR TAN CHIN TUAN FOUNDATION BENEFICIARIES**

Date: Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2009

Venue: The Arts House

Note: this is a closed-door event organized by SAS for the beneficiaries of the TCT Foundation. The Sub-Committee for this annual event has been working very hard in the past few months to organize, plan and execute! We have had various meetings and rehearsal sessions for different activities. Just to update all members, the Volunteers for this Community Day Event will be telling stories to groups of Teens and Seniors sourced from the TCT Foundation's beneficiary list. Many of our Associate Members have showed interest in using this Event as a platform for them to experience public storytelling to a large audience in a professional setting. We have been working closely on story selection and rehearsals and fine-tuning the programme. Other Volunteers have been busy working on the special Reminiscing Activity for Seniors. This Activity uses objects to trigger memories, and the aim is to use the object as a catalyst for the Seniors to tell their own stories related to that object. Jessie Goh and Helen Tan have also discovered a fabulous set of cards specially created for Seniors. These cards have images of local items from the past, for instance a spittoon, rattan basket and steam-boat wok! Our Facilitation team will be using these cards for the Reminiscing Activity. We are also planning on Mini-Storytelling Workshops for the Teens using story games, word games, OH Cards and other techniques to introduce storytelling to them. The different groups of Teens and Seniors come from various schools, homes, centres and associations that fall under the Foundation's beneficiary list. I will be updating all members once this Event is over.

#### **5. STORYTELLING WORKSHOP 'BEYOND STORYTELLING 101'**

Verena Tay's exclusive and comprehensive workshop especially tailored for Associate Members is now full! The workshop begins this July and culminates in a public ticketed performance scheduled for October this year.

[http://www.storytellingsingapore.com/courses\\_&\\_resources.htm#BS101](http://www.storytellingsingapore.com/courses_&_resources.htm#BS101)

#### **6. UPCOMING EVENTS! SCOTTISH NIGHT AND MASTER CLASS**

Do keep the below dates free as the SAS is organizing an evening of Scottish stories and songs featuring Ruth Kirkpatrick from Scotland. We are also planning a Master Class session with Ruth for our OMs and AMs. Ruth is part of the line-up of international storytellers featured at this year's Singapore International Storytelling Festival organized by the National Book Development Council of Singapore. Ruth was selected by the NBDCS to be a part of this year's SISF based on the Association's recommendation. We are pleased that Ruth will be coming to Singapore this September!

*Scottish Night date:* Friday 4<sup>th</sup> September 2009 from 8.00pm onwards

*Master Class date:* Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> September 2009 from 10.00am to 5.00pm

More details on venue, ticket prices etc will be available on our website soon.

#### **7. AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL STORYTELLING GATHERING OF STORYTELLERS 2009**

The Association was invited to participate in the upcoming National Gathering of Storytellers to be held in Sydney on 24 -26 July 2009. The SAS is happy to announce that Kiran Shah (Pro-tem President of SAS 2006) will represent the SAS at this Gathering.

#### **STORY VEIN**

Recently we have all been exposed to news about the terrible flu virus wreaking havoc across the globe. It made me think about the various diseases and illnesses that have caused worldwide fear and destruction over the past many years and I decided to look up folktales and

myths that explained the origin of sickness. Of course, there are many versions of such stories that come from different cultures. But I was really intrigued by the Cherokee (Native American Indian) explanation for Disease. It all started with Man living in harmony with Nature; the Animals, both large and small, all lived together with Man peacefully. But soon, man began to cultivate land and invent bows, arrows, knives and spears. Man then used his new inventions to hunt for food and for pleasure. So all the Animals gathered to discuss what they could do to protect themselves. Their biggest complaint was that whenever Man killed one of them, he did not even ask their pardon. So the Deer decided to send rheumatism to Man to punish him for his arrogance. Next, the Fishes and Reptiles decided to cause nightmares that would result in foul fumes that would cause Man to lose his appetite, slowly sicken and eventually die. Then the Birds, Insects and Smaller Animals gathered and began to devise so many new illnesses that would afflict Man. Their list was endless for they suffered the most, being preyed upon easily and trodden to death by numerous feet each day. At this point, the Plants heard what the Animals had planned for Man. The Plants were friends of Man, so every Tree, Shrub, Herb, Grass and Moss agreed to provide a cure for each of the illness or sickness that the Animals had created. And thus was born Medicine; when man is sick, it is the Spirit of the Plant that cures him.

Happy telling!

*Kamini Ramachandran*

President

Storytelling Association (Singapore)

**STORYTELLING ASSOCIATION (SINGAPORE)**  
**NEWSLETTER**  
**JUNE 2009**

Dear Members,

Hello again, and a warm welcome to our new members. This month's newsletter is being written by me, Chuah Ai Lin, the Secretary of SAS, as the President, Kamini Ramachandran, is away.

When the first week of June passed, and you did not receive the newsletter, did you miss us? From this month onwards, the newsletter will be coming to you around the middle of the month. This is because ExCo now meets in the second week of the month, instead of in the first week.

May was a busy month for the SAS, culminating in **Community Day 2009**, on 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2009 at The Arts House (TAH). That Saturday afternoon, TAH was the scene of storytelling performances, guided reminiscing activities and mini storytelling workshops. The staff and volunteers of Tan Chin Tuan Foundation brought seniors and teens from various beneficiary organisations to the venue. The teens came from organizations such as the Muhammadiyah Welfare Home and Care Singapore. The Guest-of-Honour was Mr. Chew Kwee San, Council Member of the TCTF and grandson of the late philanthropist Tan Sri Dr. Tan Chin Tuan. TAH kindly waived the fees for usage of the space for the community service part of the event.

At TAH, the visitors were met by 20 SAS volunteers (OMs and AMs), without whom the event would not have been possible. The Community Day team consisted of:

Kamini Ramachandran, Sheila Wee, Panna Kantilal, Rosemarie Somaiah, Helen Tan, Jessie Goh, Dolly Leow, Kiran Shah, Mabel Lee, Verena Tay, Ignatius Ng, Kala Sundaram, Karen Lee, Peck Soo Hoong, Thong Geok Lee, Wong Swee Yean. Tan Joo Hymn, Beatrice Tay, Serene Tan, Juriah Atan. The evening public performance entitled *Silver and Gold: Precious Stories to Inspire Young and Old*, was sold out, with enquires coming in even after all the seats were taken. Sadly, although 69 people paid up, only 59 people actually attended. Based on the feedback received from the guests, seniors, teens and volunteers and the patrons of the evening performance, the day's events were a success.

If you feel you missed out by not being at the event, come to the **second SAS social of the year on Friday, July 31**, to get a taste of the AHAA! Cards used in the Reminiscing Activity for Seniors. Details are in the **Events** section.

## **1. STORYTELLING EVENTS**

### **A. SAS SOCIAL**

Theme: "**Tales That Tickle: Laugh Out Loud!**"

Date: Friday 31 Jul 2009

Time: 7.00 – 7.45pm: Socializing and Refreshments (light refreshments will be served) 8.00 –

9.45pm: Story Swapping Session (please limit stories to less than 10 minutes)

Venue: Classroom 2, The Substation (2nd Floor), No: 45 Armenian Street

Location/ Parking/Directions: [http://www.substation.org/about\\_us/contact\\_us.html](http://www.substation.org/about_us/contact_us.html)

*Registration: This Story Swap cum Social is open only to Ordinary and Associate Members.*

Please contact our Membership Secretary at [jessgoh77@yahoo.com](mailto:jessgoh77@yahoo.com) to indicate your attendance with your full name and contact number. If you wish to tell a story, please provide the title and

approximate duration of your story. Please note that all stories shared MUST be less than 10-minutes in length.

**B. The Singapore International Storytelling Festival** will be on from Aug. 31 - Sept. 12. Visit <http://www.bookcouncil.sg/sisf/index.html> for workshops, seminars, and performances. Only one show of the International Storytellers Showcase is open to the public (Sept. 12). No local tellers are performing in the International Storytellers Showcase. *Tickets for the Showcase are almost sold out.* SAFRA is hosting the International Storytellers Concert, for which the public may buy tickets.

*Early bird offers for the SISF end July 31.*

Last year the International Storytellers Showcase included local tellers Dolly Leow, Jessie Goh, Mabel Lee, Sheila Wee, Rosemarie Somaiah and Roger Jenkins, while Verena Tay and myself (Chuah Ai Lin) appeared in the Asian Storytellers Concert, which also featured international tellers. Kamini Ramachandran wrote a special report on those who appeared in the Showcase in the SAS September 2008 issue of the Newsletter, which are in the website newsletter Archives: [http://storytellingsingapore.com/SAS%20Newsletter%20Archives%20\(Jul-Nov%202008\).pdf](http://storytellingsingapore.com/SAS%20Newsletter%20Archives%20(Jul-Nov%202008).pdf) Past SAS President Roger Jenkins is mounting his own show *Dark As Night, Colourful As The Rainbow*, under the SISF 2009 umbrella, as well as performing in the SAFRA show.

**Special:** SAS has arranged for Scots teller Ruth Kirkpatrick to conduct a masterclass (see Workshops), and treat us to an evening of Scottish stories (ticketed, see Performances).

## 2. STORYTELLING WORKSHOPS

**A. Storytelling Masterclass** by visiting Scots teller Ruth Kirkpatrick.

Sept. 5, 2009, full day. NOT FOR BEGINNERS

Limited to 20 participants, places going fast!

For more information:

[http://www.storytellingsingapore.com/courses.htm#Other\\_courses](http://www.storytellingsingapore.com/courses.htm#Other_courses)

**B. Storytelling Workshop for Associate Members: 'Beyond Storytelling 101'**

July 2009. FULL.

An exclusive and comprehensive workshop tailored just for our Associate Members! "Beyond Storytelling 101" is back one more time, after a round of success last year. Facilitator Verena Tay will be conducting this special 14-hour workshop in July. For more information:

[http://www.storytellingsingapore.com/courses\\_&\\_resources.htm#BS101](http://www.storytellingsingapore.com/courses_&_resources.htm#BS101)

## 3. STORYTELLING PERFORMANCES

**A. Maidens, Mayhem and Murder!** An evening of Scottish stories and songs with Ruth Kirkpatrick, who will be here for the SISF 2009.

Audience: Age 16 and above. Date: Friday 4 September 2009 Time: 8.00pm Venue: A delightful Peranakan shophouse at No: 28 Petain Road, Singapore 208098 Tickets: \$25 Inclusive of 1 drink and light refreshments.

Reservations: [bookings@storytellingsingapore.com](mailto:bookings@storytellingsingapore.com)

**B. The Untold:** A Revealing Night of Indian Stories Collected by A.K. Ramanujan, with Kamini Ramachandran, Moonshadow Stories.

Audience: Adults

Date/Time: Friday 26 & Saturday 27 Jun 2009, 8 pm

Venue: Classroom 2 (2nd Floor), The Substation, 45 Armenian Street

Payment: \$12 (at the door)

Bookings: [www.moonshadowstories.org/#Booking\\_Information\\_for\\_Substation\\_Performances](http://www.moonshadowstories.org/#Booking_Information_for_Substation_Performances)

### **C. FREE Storytelling session for children and families**

Kamini Ramachandran will be conducting a series of storytelling sessions at The Little Arts Academy this year. These 1-hour sessions for children (ages 4 and above) are FREE for the public. She will be at the LAA usually on the last Saturday of each month. However please do check with the LAA for updated information on actual dates and timings. Please contact: Johnson Kee on 6513 3017 or view <http://baf.sg/aboutthelittleartsacademy.htm> for location details.

## **WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING?**

### **1. SAS RESOURCES**

The complete list of storytelling resources available is at:

<http://www.storytellingsingapore.com/SAS%20Library%20Contents-100209.pdf>

The Association is a member of the National Storytelling Network (USA) and their bi-monthly magazine '*The Storytelling Magazine*' is available for loan to Ordinary and Associate Members. Available soon:

*Remember When...How to unlock your life story.* by John Hockney, a source book on reminiscing.

"The Storyteller", Newsletter of The Australian Storytelling Guild (NSW branch).

2 issues: Spring 2008 and Summer 2008.

*The Singing Top.* Margaret Read Macdonald; a collection of Asian stories.

Several SAS members contributed to this book. It is also available in the National Library.

### **2. SAS WEBSITE**

Our website has up to date information on storytelling events, benefits offered by our partners as well as contact details for storytellers. Archived newsletters are also available for your perusal at [http://storytellingsingapore.com/about\\_us.htm#Newsletter\\_Archives](http://storytellingsingapore.com/about_us.htm#Newsletter_Archives)

Do visit [www.storytellingsingapore.com](http://www.storytellingsingapore.com) for more information on your Association.

### **3. SAS MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS**

Our partners, Good Books, Bookaburra and September 21 offer various discounts on storytelling books and teaching resources. For those interested in special storytelling cards, OH Cards are also available at a discounted rate for SAS members. For more details please view:

<http://www.storytellingsingapore.com/membership.htm#Discounts>

## **STORY VEIN**

Here, in Singapore, the weather has been hot going on hotter. On May 28, the 5<sup>th</sup> day of the 5<sup>th</sup> moon, Chinese celebrated the festival of dumplings and dragonboats. I hope you renewed your acquaintance with the stories associated with that occasion. Time passes, now the Summer Solstice is approaching. Each year, on June 21 or 22, the sun's apparent path takes it as far north of the equator as it is going to get, directly over the Tropic of Cancer. We call that time the Summer Solstice (midsummer). It is the longest day of the year in the northern hemisphere (and the shortest in the southern hemisphere). The word *solstice* derives from the Latin for *sun*

*standing still*, for this is a turning point on the sun's journey. Thereafter, it sweeps southward, and the days grow shorter.

Lives and stories too, have turning points. As the summer solstice approaches, my thoughts turn to sun stories, tales of light, fire, and Life.

Many people know the story of the Titan "*...Prometheus, who, with the aid of Minerva, went up to heaven, and lighted his torch at the chariot of the sun, and brought down fire to man.*"

[Bullfinch's Mythology]. From the Native American tradition comes the story *Grandmother Spider Steals The Light*, which is also a *pourquoi* tale explaining why Buzzard is bald, why Possum has a naked tail, and why no one should ever underestimate a Little Old (Spider) Woman! Let us also remember the magic and mayhem of Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

A Pueblo Indian tale begins: "*Long ago, the Lord of the Sun sent the spark of life to earth. It travelled down the rays of the sun, through the heavens, and it came to the pueblo. There it entered the house of a young woman. In this way, the Boy came into the world of men. ...*"

[Arrow to the Sun; by Gerald McDermott].

In a Chinese creation myth:

*"Before the heavens and the earth were opened, the universe was all in darkness, a mass of confusion in the shape of the great egg. And there, in that egg, was the one called Pan Gu. He had been sleeping and growing in that egg for eighteen thousand years..."*

The egg cracks, Pan Gu proceeds to open up Heaven and Earth. Then, job done, he dies, and in dying,

*"First, his breath became the winds and the clouds, and his voice turned into the thunders. His left eye became the sun, and his right eye became the moon..."*

[Dragons and Dynasties, an introduction to Chinese mythology; by Yuan Ke]

The myth of Pan Gu continues:

*"His soul...reached Fu-yu T'ai. There it saw a saintly lady named T'ai Yuan, forty years of age, still a virgin, and living alone..... (on)... air and variegated clouds.....she daily scaled the highest peak of the mountain to gather there the flowery quintessence of the sun and the moon. P'an Ku, captivated by her virgin purity, took advantage of a moment when she was breathing to enter her mouth in the form of a ray of light....."* Twelve years later, a child was born, through her spinal column.

[Myths and Legends of China, E.T.C Warner].

Have fun discovering more stories of the season!

Bring your **Tales That Tickle** to the social on July 31<sup>st</sup>! Sunny Summer is the season of Laughter! Remember to email [jessgoh77@yahoo.com](mailto:jessgoh77@yahoo.com) if you are coming, with details if you plan to share a story.

Chuah Ai Lin

Secretary

Storytelling Association (Singapore)