

A sense of belonging

Sense



SGS CO-OP
A sense of belonging

SINGAPORE GOVERNMENT STAFF CREDIT CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY LIMITED

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The cover of this issue of Sense is dedicated to the events and activities that made 2015 a spectacular year for both SGSCC and Singapore.

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FROM THE CHAIRMAN

THE NEW AN



REMEMBRANCE AND RENEWAL

2015 has been a momentous year in more ways than one. It was the year that our nation celebrated its Golden Jubilee while SGSCC marked its 90th anniversary. In addition, 2015 was a year of remembrance as we bade farewell to our founding father, the late Mr Lee Kuan Yew.

In honour of both SG50 and SGS90, we were kept busy with a full calendar of events that left us with many memorable moments. Our 90th Anniversary Gala Dinner on 3 October 2015 at Marina Bay Sands saw President Dr Tony Tan personally launching our Heritage Book, a publication that chronicles our history as we grew with Singapore. The book has been distributed to Organs of State, statutory boards, institutional and public libraries as well as distinguished guests and network partners.

For our members, we organised four gala tours, visiting the beautiful Tanjong Pinang Riau and Bali in neighbouring Indonesia as well as the historical city of Chennai in India and majestic Rome in Italy. These moments, and more, are captured in a special pictorial on page 4-5.

You may have noticed that, crossing into the new year, SENSE has taken on a brand new look. This comes as we welcome a new Editorial Committee led by Mr Lim Huan Chiang, together with Mr Ab Majid Sahid, Mr S Mohan, Mr Tan Pin Cheow and Mr Martin Nathan.

Change is inevitable. As the world around us races ahead at breakneck speeds, we need to move forward—to upgrade and update ourselves to stay relevant. But we must also look back. Because as a cooperative that exists to serve your needs, it is important that we never lose sight of our founding mission.



ND THE RENEWED



These activities symbolised a renewal of our commitment—to be a caring and reliable credit cooperative, to help our members save for a brighter future, and to strengthen a sense of belonging for all.

INNOVATION AND IMPROVEMENTS

In 2015, we also laid the groundwork to improve our services to you. A new IT accounting system was operationalised in January 2015 to expedite loans and withdrawals. A GIRO option has also been introduced for retired officers to stay active with extended memberships. In November, we put in place a Virtual Account so that every member can be assigned a unique account number. We expect to roll this out in 2016.

On the financial front, we continued to put 30% of our investable surplus to good use. Within the allowable investment perimeters, we found good yielding investments. These, in addition to the six properties we own, have been a steady source of income for the cooperative. As the collective sale of Peace Centre

“Once again, I would like to thank you for being part of a momentous 2015 with us. I trust that you are having a good start to 2016 and that the year ahead looks set to be a happy and healthy one. To all our Chinese friends, please accept my wishes for a prosperous Year of the Monkey!”

in March 2015 did not materialise, we chose to spruce up our office premises to make it a more productive and welcoming place.

The past 12 months have also seen us ramping up our membership

recruitment efforts. From our current strength of 7,000 members, we plan to progressively grow to 10,000 in the near future.

MAKING THE BEST OF 2016

Once again, I would like to thank you for being part of a momentous 2015 with us. I trust that you are having a good start to 2016 and that the year ahead looks set to be a happy and healthy one. To all our Chinese friends, please accept my wishes for a prosperous Year of the Monkey!

John Raghavan PB, PBS
Chairman



2015: THE YEAR

THANK YOU FOR SHARING A

90th Anniversary Gala Dinner



Annual General Meeting



Sinnathamby Memorial Bursary Awards



IN PICTURES

MOMENTOUS YEAR WITH US!

Bali Tour



Tanjung Pinang Tour



Chennai Tour



Rome Tour





REMARKABLE ROME

Members enjoy an unforgettable tour of the ancient Italian city

Rome—once the seat of ancient civilisation, now the modern capital of Italy—is a mesmerising mix of history and heritage, art and architecture. Forty members, led by SGSCC Manager (Business Development, Marketing & Communications) Ms Prabha Seth, had the chance to retrace the footsteps of emperors and popes in a special SGS90 tour. For four days in October 2015, the group took in the sights and sounds of the Eternal City while enjoying its wonderful cuisine, lovely wines and the cool, crisp autumn weather.

UP CLOSE WITH THE COLOSSEUM

The Colosseum may stand in ruins today but it is still an imposing sight. Built from blocks of travertine stone, the historic Roman amphitheatre spans over half a kilometre in circumference and was designed to seat 45,000 spectators, with additional standing room for 5,000 more. As we walked around the structure and marvelled at the ingenuity of ancient Roman architecture, we could almost imagine crowds cheering as gladiators walked into the arena, ready for combat.

VISITING THE VATICAN

When in Rome, do as the Romans do—and visit the Vatican City! Strictly speaking, The Vatican is a sovereign state, so entering its gates meant that we were no longer in Italy. Instead, we had been transported to the spiritual headquarters of the Holy Roman Church, where some of the world's top tourist attractions reside. We toured St. Peter's Basilica, which is one of the largest churches ever built, and had the opportunity to attend mass there. The itinerary also gave us sufficient time to admire some of Michelangelo's most famous works like the dome of St. Peter's Basilica and Pietà, his marble sculpture of Mary holding the body of Christ.

STREAMING TO TREVI FOUNTAIN

We also made our way to the Quirinale district for a photo opportunity with the Trevi Fountain. With a history dating back to ancient Rome, it is the city's largest Baroque fountain and one that attracts an endless stream of camera-toting crowds. Legend goes that an aqueduct was constructed in 19 B.C. to bring water from the Salone Springs, located over 20km outside Rome, to the city centre.



Trevi Fountain was given its name from its location at the end of this aqueduct where three streets (tre vie) intersected. It was mainly built from travertine stone, the same material that gave us the Colosseum. This beautiful fountain and its rich history was the perfect backdrop for a fun photo-taking session!

RIDING THE SPANISH STEPS

Like its name suggests, the Spanish Steps is a steep flight of stairs that starts at the Piazza di Spagna and ends over 130 steps later at the Piazza Trinità dei Monti. With its irregular butterfly design reminiscent of the Roman Baroque style, it has been an icon of the city since it was completed in the 1700s. Today, it is a hive of creative activity with artists, painters and poets regularly gathering here. At the base of the Spanish Steps is also a well-known shopping street with rows of Italian and international boutiques that tempted our wallets.

TRAVELLING TO TIVOLI

Leaving the bustle of Rome, we visited Tivoli, the ancient hilltop town. Located just an hour's drive from the capital, Tivoli is famed for its beautiful natural scenery and two UNESCO World Heritage Sites, Villa Adriana and Villa d'Este. The open landscaped gardens, lavish fountains and rich history captivated us as we enjoyed leisurely strolls around the town. A lovely day trip for any visitor to Rome, in our opinion!

The tour was an exciting and enjoyable way to bond over Italian cuisine and culture. If you missed out, be sure to join us on our next tour! Vacancies fill quickly so be sure to visit www.sgs.coop for details.



EDUCATION FOR ALL

SGSCC CONTINUES TO PROVIDE FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO ITS MEMBERS' SCHOOL-GOING CHILDREN

"I believe that education is an important stepping stone to a better future—and a better life," said Mr Tan Pin Cheow, who, as Chairman of the Education Sub-Committee, oversees the disbursement of the Sinnathamby Memorial Bursary Awards. The annual initiative seeks to help members defray the rising cost of putting their children through school. Last year, 252 students from

primary to tertiary levels received bursaries from SGSCC amounting to some \$52,000.

School and ancillary fees, textbooks and supplies as well as food and transport can add up to a significant amount in the typical 13 to 16 years that it takes to get a tertiary education in Singapore.



Mr Tan Pin Cheow, Chairman, Education Sub-Committee

"We are well aware that education can be financially tough on members from low-income families. Through the bursaries, we hope to support children in need and give them the resources to continue their education without worry," said Mr Tan. "In return, all we ask is that they study hard and create a brighter future for themselves."

Mr Tan and the Education Sub-Committee are now calling for applications for the 2016 Sinnathamby Memorial Bursary Awards. He is keen to extend this helping hand to as many students as possible, saying with a smile that "it would be great if the past recipients told all their friends and schoolmates about the bursaries!"



2016 SINNATHAMBY MEMORIAL BURSARY AWARDS APPLY NOW!

Members are welcome to submit their applications from 1 January to 30 April 2016. Your children must be studying in government schools or educational institutions, and at any of the following levels:

- Primary 4 to 6 students
- Secondary 1 to 'O' Level candidates
- Junior College, ITE, Polytechnic students
- University students

You will be notified if your application is successful. The Sinnathamby Memorial Bursary Awards Ceremony will be held on 20 August 2016, Saturday, from 3pm to 6pm at the Civil Service Club. Please visit www.sgs.coop for more information.

Say Hello To Carol!

The newest staff member of SGSCC introduces herself



"Now, as part of the SGSCC team, I hope to put my accounting experience with trading, manufacturing and shipping companies as well as non-profit organisations to good use."



"My name is Carol Tan and I came on-board on 21 October 2015 as Accounts Executive. I was previously a Case Officer with Singapore Credit Counselling, where I processed cases and provided financial counselling to clients who had difficulties with bank debts. During my stint there, I came to learn about SGSCC and the meaningful work that it does. Now, as part of the SGSCC team, I hope to put my accounting experience with trading, manufacturing and shipping companies as well as non-profit organisations to good use.

Throughout my career, I have sought to grow and develop as a professional by pursuing lifelong learning. I have an LCCI certification in accounting and costing, a degree in business administration and a diploma in counselling psychology. In my spare time, I enjoy travelling the world to experience different cultures and histories. But I am always glad to return to Singapore after each trip—because there really is no place like home!"

DIY MASTER!

Give old t-shirts a new lease of life — as grocery bags!

Join the eco-friendly movement by bringing your own shopping bag to the supermarket. With this easy DIY trick, you won't need to spend a cent. Just grab an old t-shirt, a pair of scissors and a ruler, and follow our lead!

Step 1 ▶

Start with an old t-shirt of any size. The bigger your t-shirt, the bigger your eco bag will be.

◀ Step 2

Trim off both sleeves along the seam, then flip the t-shirt inside out.

Step 3 ▶

At the bottom of the t-shirt, make vertical cuts that are 2 inches deep and 1.5 inches wide. You can use a ruler to keep your cuts even. Remember to slit the side seams of the t-shirt as well.

◀ Step 4

Tie a set of cuts together by knotting the top and bottom together. Double knots will give you a nice and secure base for your bag. Once you've knotted all the cuts, turn your bag right side out and you're done!

talk of THE TOWN

A calendar of good health

The Singapore Health Promotion Board has produced 2016 Health Calendars in four languages, available for download at their website (www.hpb.gov.sg/womens-health). The colourful, informative calendars are filled with healthy recipes, simple office exercises, stress-busting advice and other tips to help you stay fit and well throughout the year.

Plus, share your feedback on the calendars via www.hpbhealthcalendars.sg by 31 March 2016 and you could stand to win \$50 supermarket vouchers.

CPF: What's changed from 1 Jan 2016

Higher CPF contribution rates for older workers between 50 and 65 years of age

Employee's Age (Years)	Increase in CPF Contribution Rates (% of Wages*)		
	Contribution by Employer	Contribution by Employee	Total
Above 50 to 55	+1	+1	+2
Above 55 to 60	+1	-	+1
Above 60 to 65	+0.5	-	+0.5

* For employees earning wages of \$750 or more. For those earning wages of more than \$500 but less than \$750, the employee contribution rates will continue to be phased in.

Increase in Ordinary Wage Ceiling

	From	To
Private sector employees	\$5,000	\$6,000
Public sector non-pensionable employees		
Public sector pensionable employees (with pensionable component only)	\$6,666.67	\$8,000

To learn more, contact CPF Call Centre at 1800 227 1188 from Mondays to Fridays, 8am to 5.30pm. You can also request for a CPF officer to contact you by sending an SMS to 94242767 in the following format: CPF<space>CC<space>contact number<space>name. You should receive a call within two working days.

Have you collected your SG50 Seniors Public Transport Voucher?

As part of the SG50 Seniors Package, those aged 60 and above will receive \$50 in public transport vouchers! Redemption began in June 2015 and will continue until 31 December 2016.

Eligible seniors would have received a letter about this together with their SG50 Seniors Package in June 2015. Simply bring that letter, your NRIC and Senior Citizen Concession Card or any other stored value travel card and visit any TransitLink Ticket Office or Concession Card Replacement Office to get your free \$50 top-up. You can also use the Add Value Machines by selecting 'SG50 Voucher Redemption' and following the instructions on screen.

Understanding MediShield Life subsidies

From 1 November 2015, MediShield Life has replaced MediShield as the basic health insurance plan that provides protection for all Singapore citizens and Permanent Residents. Several types of subsidies have been put in place to help keep MediShield Life premiums affordable. **These include premium subsidies for lower-to-middle income families as well as special Pioneer Generation subsidies.**

No application is required to enjoy the subsidies as these will be extended automatically based on information in government databases. To check your eligibility and to learn more, please visit <http://medishieldlife.sg> or call 1800 222 3399.

Get active, stay healthy!

As a Singapore citizen or Permanent Resident, you can register for a free ActiveSG membership! For a limited period only, this will give you \$100 in ActiveSG credits that can be used to offset admission fees to swimming complexes, gyms and more.

With ActiveSG credits worth \$100, you can:

- Pay for swimming complex and gym admission fees
- Offset up to 30% of ActiveSG fitness programme and activity fees
- Book ActiveSG sports facilities (except Dual-Use-Scheme/MOE facilities)
- Purchase MyActiveGYM™ and MyActiveSWIM™ schemes

ActiveSG offers programmes for people of all ages and fitness levels, including parent-child and senior-friendly activities.

Three easy ways to register now!

- Download the ActiveSG mobile app on your smartphone, or
- Visit members.myactivesg.com or
- Register at any Guest Services Office at all ActiveSG Sports Centres and swimming complexes

Need help?

Call the ActiveSG hotline at 1800 344 1177 (Mondays to Fridays, 9am to 6pm) or visit www.myactivesg.com.

Quiz Time!

Take our challenge and win!
Prizes await 10 lucky submissions!

Win
a multi-purpose
mini rice cooker
& Steamer
worth
\$50!



Submit your answers by fax to 6339 6772 by 23 February 2016.
Editorial Committee's decision is final.
Winners will be named in the next issue.

Did you enjoy reading this issue of Sense?
Find the answers to the following questions in the magazine!

On what date was the SGSCC 90th Anniversary Gala Dinner held?

Which two destinations in Indonesia did SGSCC members visit in 2015?

Name any two attractions on the Rome tour itinerary in October 2015.

How many students did the Sinnathamby Memorial Bursary Awards help in 2015?

When was SGSCC's new IT accounting system operationalised?

Name: _____

NRIC: _____

Contact No.: (M) _____

(H) _____ (O) _____

Address: _____

Email Address: _____



SGS CO-OP
A sense of belonging

Singapore Government Staff Credit Co-operative Society Limited

**We are recruiting you to be
financially resilient**

**Be a
SGS Co-op
Member & enjoy
privileges**

Privileges

- **Effortless Savings**
High interest yields
- **Financial Security**
- **Financial Assistance for**

- * Studies
- * Renovations
- * Weddings
- * Financial education
- * Thrifty spending
- * Buy at our Co-op shops and save
- * Be an owner member stake-holder
- * Hospitalisation Benefits
- * Bereavement Benefits

**Good Interest for
your Fixed Deposits
& Savings – no
time limit, no early
withdrawal penalty**

- Members receive good dividends

We are a Family Co-operative

- Family membership
- Educational awards and bursaries – no income ceiling
- Subsidised tours
- Subsidised annual Dinner & Dance

Recruitment Drive

Introduce your family and colleagues as members!
Be rewarded with **\$20** credited to your Specific Deposit Savings for each new member!

Transactions through salary check-off and GIRO

- Assist to attain a more secure financial future
- Talk to us to build your financial strength and resilience

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