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Date: 9 September 2019 at 7:45:09 pm AEST

To: undisclosed-recipients;;

Subject: Kirkby Revisit 2019

Dear Kirkbyites and Friends

On Tuesday 3rd September I returned from an incredibly successful and memorable Kirkby Revisit 2019. After a slow and faltering start, the preparations gathered momentum in June and July and by mid August a significant number of Kirkbyites and relatives signed up to attend this nostalgic Revisit.

1. The final List of participants at the Kirkby Revisit 2019 on Wednesday 28 August 2019 included:

1. V L Kandan (1955-1957)
2. Albert Tay (1955-1957 / 1962)
(Accompanied by (i) Gina Tay (ii) Justin Tay.
3. Zauyah Binti Mohd Nor 1955-1957).
Accompanied by (i) Norzalina Mohd Nor; (ii) Siti Nur Aina Nor Zafri; (iii) Siti Khadhijah Nor Zafri.
5. Ho Chee Eng (1958-1960)
Accompanied by (i) Ho Jee-Lan; (ii) Ho May-Lan; (iii) Cheryl Ho.
6. Goh Ching Chin (1958-1959) {Mrs Ho Chee Eng}
7. Thilagavathy Kanagasabai (1959-1960)
Accompanied by (i) Dr. G. Mohan
8. (i) Jack Lim Yeu Tjek; (ii) Yong Pei Ling; and Baby Celeste Lim.
9. (i) Zaharah Othman.
- 10.(i) Haliza Hashim-Doyle.
- 11.(i) Alex Swan; (ii) Shareena Swan.
- 12.(i) Alice May Gurney

The Knowsley Council, led by Lin Rice, had invited some 21 persons, mainly residents of Granborne Chase in Kirkby Housing Estate. The VIPs included Canon Val Jackson MBE (who recalled her assistance to Kirkby MTTC students who came to Liverpool schools for Teaching Practice in the fifties), Knowsley Council's Assistant Director of Neighbourhoods, Head of Customer Services, and the Cabinet Member for Resources and Education.

There were some fifty of us at the event, including the staff of the ARK and the library.

2. There was a pre-event dinner at the Novotel Hotel, hosted by the Alumni - typical Kirkby High Tea: Tomato soup; Fish & Chips; and Bread & Butter Pudding. All the above persons were present. Also invited were Lin Rice and Jane Owens (Jane was the organiser in Knowsley of the 2017 inaugural event and graced the replicated exhibition in UM, KL on April 7, 2018).

It was Thilagavathy Kanagasabai's 80th Birthday and in true Kirkby tradition we decided to celebrate her Birthday at the Dinner. We had earlier ordered a two-pound cake for the occasion. At the time of celebration, the F & B Manager walked in with a small triangular piece of cake! I was horrified. Jane Owens and Zaharah Othman rushed out of the Hotel and came back within minutes, Jane holding a two pound chocolate cake with "Happy 80th Birthday, Thilaga" on it with 8 candles! Zaharah handed to Thilaga a bouquet of roses. Both the cake and Flowers at their respective expense! Such was the Kirkby spirit that has got on to them!

3. It was a joyous event that started at 1.00pm with a buffet. We viewed the "Malayan Connection" exhibition. We mingled and exchanged greetings.

Lin Rice, who was primarily responsible for the establishment of the link between the Knowsley Council and the Alumni gave the welcome address. She said the exhibits contributed by the students of MTTC Kirkby will feature permanently in the ARK Exhibition. She was pleased with an increase in the number of Residents at this meet.

I responded as follows:

"This Re-Visit to Kirkby should be a day of great rejoicing. Yet, I begin on a melancholy note by quoting Shakespeare's beginning words in 'The Merchant of Venice';" In sooth, I know not why I am so sad."

The anchor of our Kirkby Team, Dato' Mohd Yunus Raiss JP, a British Justice of the Peace, I may add, who was all agog about coming to the place of his Alma Mater, passed away just over two weeks ago, on August 11, 2019. He rose from an illiterate at the age of fifteen,

passed his Senior Cambridge Examination in just three years, got a scholarship to study in the Malayan Teachers' Training College in Kirkby from 1954 to 1956 where he acquired a special kind of love for education. In later years he taught English to the English, until his dying days. An exemplary Kirkbyite, typical of some of those who passed through the portals of the MTTC in Kirkby.

Dato' Yunus was slated to read his poems about MTTC Kirkby: KIRKBY – A Many Splendoured Thing. That role will be taken over by his son, Mr Alan Swan who is here with his wife Shareena Swan.

P. Ramakrishnan from the 1959-1960 Batch keeps track of Birthdays of Kirkbyites so that the whole Kirkby Family can celebrate them. He also keeps us informed of those who pass on - reminding us of our dwindling number, that seems to have gained momentum of late. Of the 1439 graduates from MTTC Kirkby, less than a third of that number is left, almost all in their eighties and some who are nonagenarians. We are a diminishing fraternity. In the Reunion of 2014, considering our diminishing numbers, it was decided that some form of permanent remembrance of our lives and times in Kirkby be established.

A chance meeting with Lin Rice here in the Kirkby Library, on 7 August 2015, paved the way for, firstly, establishing a depository of MTTC Kirkby memorabilia in The Archive Resource of Kirkby, (The ARK); and, secondly, marking the spot where our first Prime Minister, Tunku Abdul Rahman, first announced to the world, in the Great Hall of the MTTC Kirkby, that Malaya would become an Independent Nation on 31st August 1957. On that very spot, on Granborne Chase in Kirkby Village, now stands a Plaque which we will visit after this. The Plaque unveiling ceremony on 31st August 2017, sixtieth anniversary of Malaya's independence, was officiated by the then Mayor of Knowsley, the Honourable Frank Walsh, and I as the President of the Kirkby Alumni. It was a joyous and memorable occasion. The Alumni Association of MTTC Kirkby is very grateful to the Knowsley Council, especially Lin Rice and Jane Owens, for that initiative. That memorial will be a permanent pilgrimage spot for us Kirkbyites.

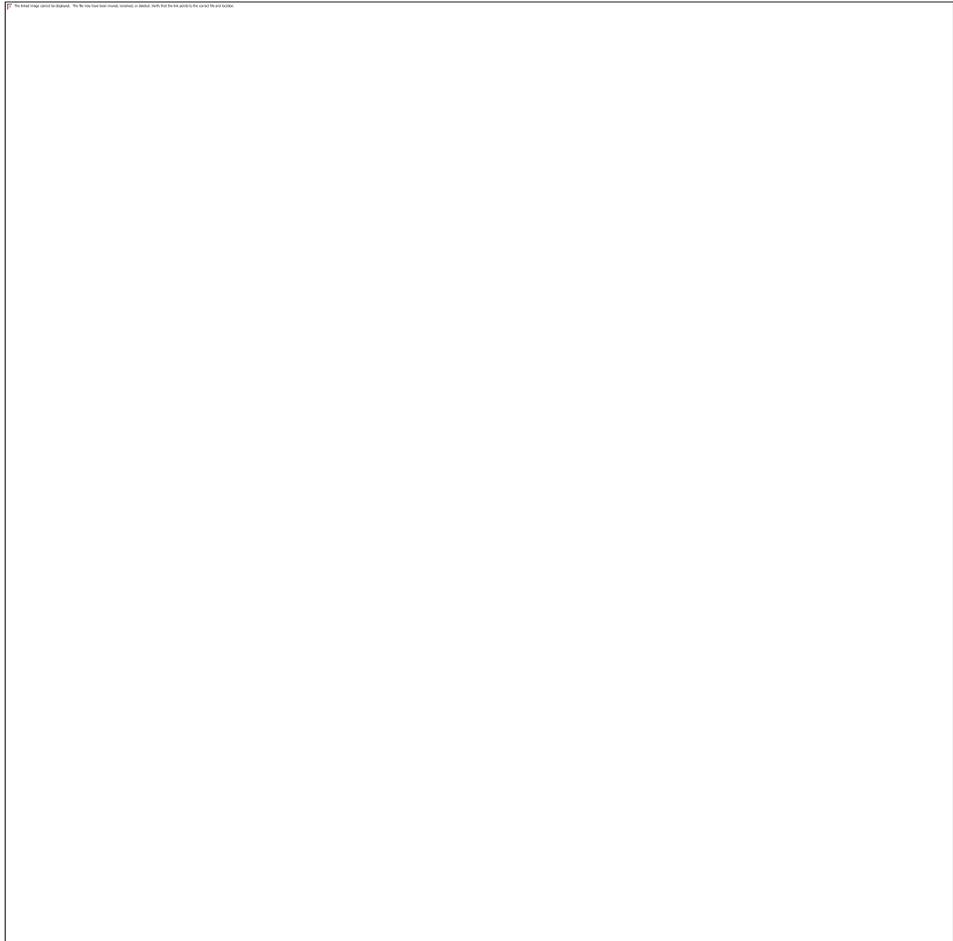
The exhibition held here in the ARC on that day was replicated in the Faculty of Education in the University of Malaya in Kuala Lumpur on 7 April 2018. The exhibits were subsequently deposited with the Sultan Idris Education University Museum in Tanjong Malim, Perak. On 6th November this year we will deposit with the National Archives of Malaysia more of the Kirkby memorabilia.

All that will be material reminders of our sojourn in Kirkby. I am told that Kirkby Village has a thousand-year history. But it became prominent significantly because of the Malayan Teachers' Training College here. So, what we would like to establish is a more poignant, enduring memory of our beloved Kirkby College. We wish to leave with you, the present occupants of the hallowed grounds of MTTC Kirkby, a verbal history, an oral memorial if you like, of our lives and times in Kirkby. I thank you, the residents in Kirkby Estate, for attending this function to know more about the place where our alma mater stood. We hope you will take our story to your families and to your children, and they to their children, that they live in a place that was once a beautiful spot that was Camelot to 1439 young Malaysians. We also plan to hand down our heritage to our children and their children through their membership in the Alumni.

I recognise the presence here today many dignitaries. May I single our Canon Val Jackson MBE who supported us during our teaching practice days in and around Kirkby. Our special and grateful thanks to Lin Rice who is responsible for the events today."

4. The euphoric post-event press coverage as set out below says it all:

NST on 01.09.2019



<https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0?ui=2&ik=71d6af7e4e&attid=0.1&permmsgid=msg-f:1643933640251185198&th=16d06cef957c982e&view=att&disp=safe>

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TV 3

The Kirkby Revisit was covered by TV3 Nightline. It lasted just over 4 minutes, from 10-22 to 14.26.

This is the link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xLI9qrD2X3U>

10.22 -14-26 minutes

With very warm regards,

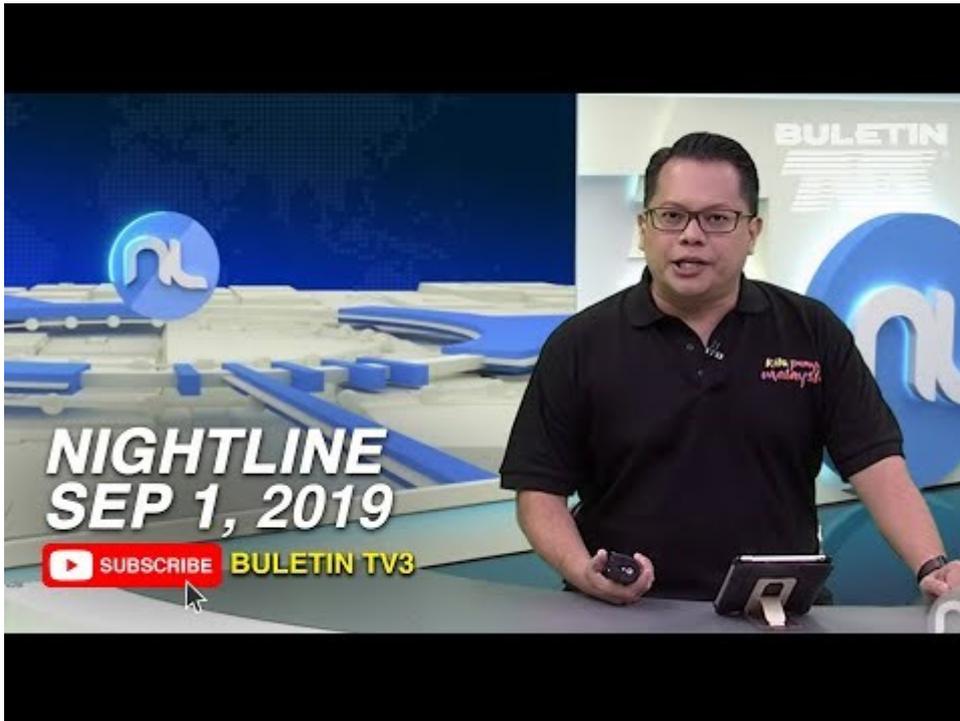
RAMA

Sent from my iPhone

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From Lin Rice: "Please find below links to the Liverpool Echo article and the Radio Merseyside broadcast featuring your good self"

Preview YouTube video Nightline (2019) | Sun, Sep 1



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<https://www.liverpoolecho.co.uk/news/liverpool-news/former-malayan-students-return-merseyside-16820809>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/p07jz8pr>

[Runs from 26:25 – 31:18]

5. I handed over to Lin Rice, for the ARK, the following:

i. From K. Kesavapany (1955-1957) - His Biography: "From ESTATE To EMBASSY".

ii. From Angeline Ong Siok Hong (1958-1959) - Post Card Dated 21.10.1958 from Siew Hoon to Goh Ching Chin'.

iii. From Ho Chee Eng (1958- 1959) - a copy of his "Fond Memories of the MTTC Kirkby, Liverpool, England"

iv. From Lolita Thuraingham Gonzaga (1961-1962) - 4 Photos taken in front of (a)Block 8 of the Students' Residence; (b) Kirkby Stores; (c) Walker's Carter's Arms and (d) the 92 Bus-Stop

6. All in all the Kirkby Revisit 2019, to the spot where our beloved Malayan Teachers' Training College once stood, which is now permanently identified by a Plaque unveiled on 31 August, 2017, was a tremendous success. I have to singularly pick out for a big 'Thank you' Lin Rice of the Knowsley Council for her passion, commitment and hard work in making this biennial pilgrimage to our Alma Mater so nostalgically memorable.

7. Before I conclude I wish to touch on the FLU: Friendship, Love and Understanding, that has 'infected' and pervaded amongst so many non-Kirkbyites:

Firstly, Zaharah Othman, who, after her first visit to Kirkby in 2017 to cover the event on Merdeka Day that year has become a kind of honorary Kirkbyite! She is so knowledgeable on a wide spectrum of matters relating to MTTC Kirkby. She was responsible for the NST's extensive coverage of the event. At very short notice she summoned a group of Malaysians, long time residents in Liverpool, led by Haji Mohd Nor, with Malaysian Flags to give the celebration in Granborne Chase the Merdeka slant.

Secondly, Haliza Hashim-Doyle, introduced by Zaharah, who mingled nice

and easy with us, and at the same time filming and editing the clip that appeared the very next day in our TV3, and NTV7!

And there were others, like the couple from the Housing Estate who befriended Zauyah Mohd Nor on her earlier visit to Kirkby and they are still in close touch with each other.

Our Greatest Thanks must go to Lin Rice, who, from the first time I met her in the Kirkby Library on August 7, 2015, has made it her passion to build a permanent memorial in Kirkby for us to make nostalgic biennial trips to the place of our Alma Mater.

I left with a clear impression that, although the barracks and the hot water pipes are no longer there, the Kirkby MTTC Spirit is very much present and flourishing, in Kirkby, thanks to Lin Rice and the Knowsley Council.

V L Kandan (1955-1957)

The Persatuan Alumni Malayan Teachers' Training College, Kirkby, Liverpool, England.