Theatreworks artistic director, Ong Keng Sen ’88 promised his Dad that he would practise law and so he did — for a year. While he loved the “embryonic environment” of Law School with its bright students, the call of the world of arts was too strong. Never a dabbler Keng Sen always needed to delve deep into his work and admits it would never have been possible for him to straddle both the law and the arts. The 2003 Cultural Medallion winner describes Theatreworks’ new home, ‘72-13′ as an alternative ‘Arts Space’ not just a performance venue. His next production is ‘Gelisla’ at the Singapore Arts Festival in June. Claire and Eleanor believe that Singaporeans simply have more choices these days. Eleanor recalls that, in the past arts was very much sidelined as a possible career ... for many persons interested or talented in theatre, law was a logical substitute — linguistic and dramatic in its own way!” She suspects that the incidence of law grads going into arts will peter out as more and more young Singaporeans go directly into arts studies. “But for those of us in the ‘transition generation’ i.e., those who could not realistically study arts growing up but managed to catch the growth of the local arts scene in our adulthood and (for some) to then leave law practice for full-time arts work, having the legal training certainly helped... it helped get parents off our backs, it helped us make a living for a few years!”

Low Sze Wee ’95, Assistant Director (Collections) at the Singapore Arts Museum decided to pursue a Master’s degree in art history when he realized that job satisfaction was more important to him than financial reward. Daren Shihau ’96, a partner in Allen & Griechill and the National Arts Council’s Young Artist of the Year for Literature in 2002 feels that “the Arts scene is Singapore is much more vibrant than it was in the 70s and 80s. In relation to the literary arts, I just gave a talk to an academic audience recently where I spoke about how different the opportunities are for a young local writer now than in the past. Who would have thought in the 80s that there will come a day when there would be regular readings at downtown cafes, monthly poetry slams at clubs like Velvet Underground; and that Singapore writers would one day be invited guests and keynote speakers at prestigious international writing festivals, and have their works studied by literature departments in Australia, Europe and the United States. It’s happening now.”

Daren and a number of other poets received an unsolicited request by a top Milanese publisher to have their works translated into Italian and the books have since been published and in Europe. Everyone decides for themselves, the journey their lives will take. Sim Mei Ling ’08, a 2nd year law student and President of the NUS Wind Symphony definitely wants to practice law after graduation. “To me, musical pursuits should remain a hobby to supplement my life, and for it to become a job, will change what music essentially means to me.” 3rd year student Melissa Ng ’07, Vice President of the NUS Dance Ensemble harbours a similar idea of the future. “I have seniors who have managed to perform even during their pupillage, so I’ve been assuming that I will be able to continue for at least 2 more years. But the picture after that becomes less clear, and I have been mentally preparing myself to give up dance altogether. Even though the government has been trying to promote the arts in Singapore, it still has a long time to go before a stable market is established. Until then, practicalities will have to come first.” Perhaps more can be done for the Singapore Arts Scene. In the meantime, we continue to applaud our alumni in the Arts!
The audience enthralled.

The Winners: Clinton Emptor
M. Armandariz on vocals & guitar
Adam Mehran on vocals & keyboard
Samuel Lim on guitar
Louis Ng on bass guitar, and
Aofik Rahim on drums

Euphoria’s Jane Liu on vocals & Mandi Ali on guitar

Euphoria’s Sunara Kader, Scott CH, Benjamin Ang, and Mandi Ali
JENNIFER LEE '07 ON THE NIGHT THE MUSIC FILLED THE AIR AT THE FACULTY

The inaugural Law Fraternity Concert was the brainchild of the Law Club's 25th Management Committee. The aim of the concert was to bring together the alumni and current students in a night of fun and music in the outdoors. The organizing committee decided to take it a step further. Why not bring together the law community, practitioners, lawyers, staff and students alike with performances put up by others in the fraternity?

And so it was on a balmy Saturday evening on the 1st of October when the usual peace and silence of NUS on a weekend, was broken. The Law Fraternity Concert was brought underway by the Year 3 and Year 4 bands. With a little bit of hard rock, pop and a few old school classics, they got the crowd warmed-up for the main concert that was to follow. The graduating class was seen swaying in their seats, waving light sticks and cheering up a storm.

The concert proper was opened by alumni Indra Raj '79 who delivered a solo piece on his trumpet, a fanfare played in the last rays of the setting sun. He returned twice more during the concert, playing a variety of pieces ranging from classical to jazz numbers. He was followed by concert pianist David Lim '88 who also flawlessly delivered several classical pieces along with music from famous musicals with dazzling flair. Joining him for a number was classmate and vocalist Sylvia Lim '88.

Taking the stage later in the evening was acclaimed local jazz singer Rani Singam '94 accompanied by Andrew Lim. With her trademark smooth yet powerful vocals reminiscent of jazz greats, but melded with her own unique style, she easily captivated the audience, both young and old.

Next up was local band Reverie, with Year 3 student Shane Low '07 on bass. They easily upped the beat with accustomed ease and the great style that has won them many followers in the local pub scene. Following them was alumni band Euphoria, with Benjamin Ang '93 and former Law School mates Jane Lau '93 (now Mrs Ang), Sunari Kateni '93, Sunil Gili '93 and Mohd Asri who continued to work the crowd.

By this time, there was anticipation buzzing amongst the current students in the audience. It was time for the three finalists of the "Face The Music" Band Competition held in conjunction with the concert. While Year 1 band Jeyn, and Nouveau (fronted by Singapore Idol contestant David Yoo '07), put up great performances, it was the Year 2 band - and crowd favourite - Caveat Emporium that took the top prize that night.

And finally, renowned local band, Lunari with lead singer Linda Ong '01, Lee Eng Teck '03 and Ho Kah Wye (classmates from Dunman high school who have just released their first album "The Crystalites") brought the evening to a close with their edgy, distinctive sound that has made them a mainstay in the local music scene. Even though it was late in the night by that time, many still lingered till the end, mellowed by wine that was kindly provided by California Wine as well as the ice-cream sold at the event by the local ice-cream vendor.

The inaugural Law Fraternity Concert 2005 has paved the way for more of you joining us for a rollicking good time next time!
DISTINGUISHED VISITORS TO THE FACULTY

The Right Honourable The Lord Woolf of Barnes (pictured) visited the Faculty on 19 August 2005.

Reflecting the strength of the Centre’s reputation, the Faculty’s Asia-Pacific Centre for Environmental Law (APCEL) hosted distinguished visitors. On 25 November, a group of Indonesian PhD students in Environmental Law, led by Prof Dr Koesnadi Harjadjasoemantri, Emeritus Professor of Environmental Law, visited the Law Faculty. On 9 January 2006, a delegation of eight judges and lawyers from Nepal visited the Faculty to study the status of environmental law in the Asia-Pacific region.

WELCOMING OUR NEWEST FACULTY MEMBERS

Dr. Woei Meng Seng ‘83 and Yvonne Lou Ching Ling ‘96 recently joined the Faculty as Asst. Profs. Meng Seng teaches Corporate Insolvency and Company Law at the Faculty. He presented a seminar on "The Companies (Amendment) Act 2005: Law Reform & Doctrinal Implications" on 15 November 2005 at the Supreme Court Auditorium. Yvonne teaches Company Law and Public Law at the Faculty.

CONGRATULATIONS AND CITATIONS

The 4th edition of Emeritus Professor Peter Ellingham’s leading work ‘Modern Banking Law’ was recently published.

Co-editors Prof Michael Hor ’84, Assoc Prof Victor V. Ramraj and Prof Kent Roach from the University of Toronto published their book ‘Global Anti-Terrorism Law and Policy’. Other contributors from the Faculty are Assoc Prof Lim Chin Leong, Assoc Prof Alan Tan ’93, Assoc Prof Robert Beckman and Assoc Prof Simon Tay ’86. The book arose out of a specialist symposium on anti-terrorism law held in Singapore and organised by the Faculty in June 2004. It has been a good year for Michael who has just been promoted to a full professorship at the Faculty.

Assoc Prof Ho Rock Lai ‘89 was a Visiting Fellow of the Law Program, Research School of Social Science, Australian National University in November 2005. Professorial Fellow Koh Kheng Lian ’68 LLM ’86 PH.D. ’72 taught Environmental Law at the University of Mexico and the University of Hawaii. At the University of Hawaii, her course focused on ASEAN and she also addressed the Natural Resource Section of the Hawaii Bar Association including a talk on "Avian Flu and SARS: Biosecurity, Conservation and Sustainable Development - The Role of ASEAN and other Organisations".

Assoc Prof Kumaralingam Amirthalingam’s works have been cited by the courts. "The Sunrise Crane - Shedding New Light or Casting Old Shadows on Duty of Care?" [2004] SJLS 551 was cited in Travel Compensation Fund v Robert Tambree & Sons R Tambree and Associates [2005] HCA 69 (16 Nov 2005). While "Negligence and Public Authorities: A Pearl in the Oyster or another Greek Tragedy?" (2003) 11 Torts Law Journal 197, was cited in SB v State of New South Wales [2004] VSC 514. He was also appointed as an Executive Committee Member for Southeast Asia, Commonwealth Legal Education Association.
Assoc Prof Joel Lee has been appointed Deputy Director of the Graduate Division from 1 August 2005. He has also been appointed Associate Editor of the Asian Journal on Mediation, a publication of the Singapore Mediation Centre.

Assoc Prof Lim Lei Theng '92 was appointed Editor of the Asian Journal on Mediation. Together with Alexandra Otis, an instructor in the Legal Writing Programme, Lei Theng also ran a Workshop on Interactive Teaching for Law Teachers for the National University of Laos.


Assoc Prof Dora Neo was appointed to the Service Mindset Working Group of the "Go the Extra Mile for Service" Movement (GEMS) to raise service standards in Singapore.

Assoc Prof Stephen Phua '88 was appointed a member of the OECD's Bureau of International Network of Tax Research, Centre for Tax Policy and Administration.


"Vessel-Source Marine Pollution - The Law and Politics of International Regulation" by Assoc Prof Alan Tan '93 was published by Cambridge University Press as part of its Cambridge Studies in International and Comparative Law series.

The Faculty has joined the American Society of Comparative Law (ASCL). Prof Tan Yock Lin is now a director of the ASCL while Assoc Prof Gary Bell will act as one of the editors of the American Journal of Comparative Law.

Assoc Prof Teo Keong Sood's books were cited in cases on both sides of the Causeway. 'Strata Title in Singapore and Malaysia' was cited by the Singapore Courts in Choo Kook Lin & Anor v MCSR No 2405 [2005] 4 SLR 175 and the Malaysian Courts cited 'Land Law in Malaysia' in Pritam Kaur Sidhu v Robert Francis & Ors [2004] 7 Current Law Journal 208

The Governing Board of the Foundation for the Development of International Law in Asia (DILA) has appointed Assoc Prof Thi Le Anh as one of three General Editors of the Asian Yearbook of International Law.

Assoc Prof Hans Tjoe has been appointed to the Competition Appeals Board.

VISITING PROFESSORS
Assoc Prof Paul Ali from the Faculty of Law, University of New South Wales taught an intensive course in Commercial Finance, Prof Chang Seung Wha from the College of Law of Seoul National University taught an intensive course Trade & Competition Law. Prof James Hu Zhengliang from the Shanghai Maritime University is this year's MPA Distinguished Visitor in Maritime Law. He taught an intensive course in Chinese Maritime Law. Dr Kriangsak Kittichaisaree, Ambassador at Large, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand, taught an intensive course in International Criminal Law. Prof Pierre Larouche, a Professor of Competition Law at Tilburg University, Netherlands, returned to NUS to teach an intensive course in European Union Law. During his visit, Prof Larouche organised a series of seminars on law and economics. Prof Neil Morgan from the University of Western Australia returned to NUS to teach an intensive course in Administration of Criminal Justice.

Prof Tan Sook Yee bid us a final goodbye with a ‘Farewell Doodle’ after over 40 years at the Faculty.

farewell
doodle

The years have flown
Oder I have grown.
When fifty, these lines I wrote:
Time to retire
To husband and home.

After two score years and one,
At the academic tunnel's end,
I bid you all a farewell fond
As colleague, but hope
To remain, your friend.

No longer is law taught, black letter
Laced with some philosophy,
Peppered with public policy,
Now subjects are interdisciplinary.
With Sociology, Economics and even Literature.

So my friends, regardless as to tenure,
If you wish high to climb...
To the top of the ivory tower,
You'll have no time
To enjoy sweet roses in the bower...

So end the lines of whimsy.
So signs off,

Yours truly,

* the first part of Prof Tan’s email address at NUS

* lacrimas
Arriving in Singapore as an exchange student from McGill University in Montreal, Canada, Heather Robertson's '07 first thought as she emerged from Changi Airport was "it's so manicured, beautiful and green!" Now over a year later, Heather still feels the same way and it appears her love affair with Singapore is far from over. Currently, Heather is pursuing a Master of Laws (LLM) by Research at the Faculty, focusing on Intellectual Property (IP) law.

Deciding to come to NUS on exchange was a relatively easy decision for Heather. While still at McGill, Heather did a paper on counterfeit in China. This piqued her interest in IP law and influenced her to consider Asia for her exchange programme as, like many others, she believes that the region will see much development in IP law in the years to come. Singapore's common law jurisdiction (McGill's students graduate with both a Common Law and a Civil Law degree) and the fact that there is no language barrier, (everyone in McGill is effectively bilingual in both English and French) coupled with the prospect of studying in a country she had never been to, yet heard so much about, lead Heather to the NUS Law School. She did not know then that a year later, she would be sharing an apartment in Queenstown with a fellow Canadian and enjoying Singapore's perpetual 'summer' while studying as a 'serious LLM student', which she confesses is really not the same as the carefree holidaying exchange experience.

Commenting on the differences in the classrooms of NUS and McGill's Law Faculty's, In Heather's opinion NUS students seem a little more shy and concerned about giving the wrong answer in class and less willing to challenge their professors. Studies aside, Heather has taken full advantage of Singapore's convenient location in Asia and benefited from the new budget airline industry. She has travelled widely in Asia though she protests that she has definitely not travelled as much as some of the other exchange students in her year.

Being a biotech hub for Asia, Singapore was a logical choice for Heather especially as NUS is a reputable university and offers an LLM by research which many US Law schools do not allow for. Another major plus point is the delightful lack of winter in Singapore. While others may count Singapore cuisine as a top draw, Heather somewhat reluctantly admits that she greatly misses Canadian goodies like licorice, Kraft macaroni and cheese (dinners in a box), sourkids (sweets) and particular Canadian brands of soup. While hawker centres do not quite serve the food she is used to, thankfully Singapore offers a smorgasbord of choices. Heather has discovered a real love for pomelos and enjoys Thai food, Vietnamese food, her favourite Japanese restaurant at the Espanade and the Night Safari.

Heather is currently a research assistant at the IP Academy and hopes to work in the region after she completes her LLM. One day she may return to Canada and work on IP law and policy in Canada. For now, Heather, who aims to take Mandarin classes very soon, remarks, "the landscape of IP law in the region is highly dynamic and constantly developing which makes studying here very interesting indeed."
Coming Full Circle
LAWLINK SPEAKS WITH ADJUNCT PROFESSOR DR TAN NG CHEE WHO HAS RETURNED TO TEACH AT THE FACULTY AFTER A BANKING CAREER THAT SPANNED OVER 30 YEARS

BANKING BECKONS
In 1973, Dr Tan’s banking career received a kick-start from Mr S Dhanabalan, then the President of DBS Bank, who introduced him to an opportunity to work at JPMorgan. This was after he had completed his work as a consultant to DBS Bank on the reorganization of the then Sembawang Naval Base into a commercial enterprise. Dr Tan was soon on a plane to New York to begin his life as a banker. For the then 29 year old bachelor the thought of working in New York was a very exciting prospect. He subsequently left 10 years later for Hong Kong to take up a new position as Asia regional head of JPMorgan’s ship and oil rig financing group, and later as regional head of Morgan’s trust and investment business in Asia.

Moving from law to banking was not an easy task and JPMorgan’s intensive first six months of training was much like doing a MBA course for the lawyer unaccustomed to thinking numerically. Over 20 junior bankers from diverse backgrounds including historians and sociologists joined Dr Tan in training sessions taught by famous American Professors from elite business schools.

Over the years, his legal background has stood him in good stead especially when handling the voluminous documents involved in the financing of ships and oil rigs and dealing with construction and charterparty agreements. His work has involved loan syndication, corporate finance, project finance, ship financing, private banking and investment management.

Should lawyers follow in his footsteps? Dr Tan reckons that a law degree provides much flexibility and would recommend a banking career to those who are very good at numbers and who have an interest and passion for banking as “you have to work your tail off” because of the incredible pace of change.

Dr Tan finally decided to return to Singapore and left JPMorgan to join Overseas Union Bank (OUB) in June 1989 as Executive Vice President in charge of the Treasury & International Division and concurrently served as Chairman of OUB Buillion & Futures Ltd. and CEO of the International Bank of Singapore. He retired from banking in 2001 and now serves as an independent non-executive director of a number of companies.

THE CHINESE CULTURAL QUEST
Never one to rest on his laurels, Dr Tan’s growing dissatisfaction with his lack of in-depth knowledge on ancient Chinese history led him to spend a full year (after his retirement from banking) exploring Chinese history. Numerous trips to China over the years had left him frustrated as he felt that he did not know enough to truly appreciate all he was seeing. Thus began a spirited quest to learn all he could about ancient Chinese history.

He read numerous books by scholars from the Chinese Departments of Harvard, Princeton, Yale and Columbia University where he found an “unbelievable depth of scholarship”. Unhindered by his lack of proficiency in Mandarin, Dr Tan read almost everything available in English on the subject. Not content with just textbook knowledge, Chinese history from 500 to 1800 AD truly came to life as he travelled and visited the museums and ancient sites in China. The year of learning left him feeling greatly enriched.

It is unsurprising then that his last words of advice are to read as much as you can and reflect and think carefully about what you have read to gain new knowledge and insights.

Coming back to teach law after over 30 years as a banker might not have been a viable option for many who leave the legal field for over three decades. But truth be told, Adjunct Professor of Law Dr Tan Ng Chee, who now teaches Comparative Corporate Governance at the Law Faculty, never really left the law throughout his banking career. Over the years, the former research student of Professor Sir Otto Kahn-Freund of Oxford University retained his intellectual interest in law and continued to read legal works on a broad spectrum of topics, including especially writings on legal philosophy, constitutional law, contracts and company law, often updating himself on the latest research though the law reviews and the Social Science Research Network (a website devoted to the promotion of scholarship in various fields including finance and law). In his spare time, he would read and re-read the works of the legendary Oxford legal philosopher Herbert Hart and the American legal philosopher Ronald Dworkin and the criticisms and counter criticisms of their writings. Declaring American Constitutional Law as fascinating and “more enjoyable than reading a novel”, Dr Tan clearly never lost touch with the legal world.

Dr Tan taught Contract Law, Company Law and the Law of Torts at the Law Faculty from 1970 to 1973. While he remembers his students, including Justice Judith Prakash ’74, Helen Yeo ’74, Deborah Barker ’76 and Carla Barker ’75 fondly, he remarks that the students in his classroom today are a lot bolder. Commenting on his life as an academic, Dr Tan remarks that he greatly enjoys the intellectual rigour of academic life and the classroom discussions which often generate lively debate. He likens his teaching style to story-telling with students often naturally chiming in to interrupt his ‘story’ with questions and comments. He encourages them to think of practical and not just theoretical issues and to focus their minds on the useful ideas. All the experiences gleaned from the business world enable him to provide his students with a different perspective on the law.
Dr Andrew Phang Boon Leong S.C. '82 was sworn in as High Court Judge on 8 December 2005 by President Nathan, in a ceremony witnessed by Chief Justice Yong Pung How LLD '01 and Supreme Court Registrar Koh Juat Jong '88. The Faculty fondly remembers Dr Phang, not only as a student of NUS but also as a teacher. He taught at the Faculty for 18 years.

Sng Hwee Lee Agnes '84 writes to send her "Greetings from Bucharest, Romania. In the past 8 years, I've been traipsing from one country to another, wherever my husband's job takes us: Egypt, Germany and now, we are in the land of Dracula. To keep myself occupied, I've worked in NGOs and taught English. It has not always been peaches and cream, but definitely an eye-opening experience. It has been a road less travelled, and it has made a lot of difference.

Mohan Reviendran Pillay '85 an Adjunct Associate Professor at the Faculty has been appointed as Visiting Professor at King's College London, Centre of Construction Law & Management. Over the last 3 years he has been teaching the NUS-KCL MSc in Construction Law and Arbitration.

Philomena Paulian '86 has been in India for many years and enjoys reading LawLink to feel connected once again. "I am one of those who took a detour and have been involved in Christian mission work in India for the past 12 years, unrelated to law. However I decided to take a dive back into practice in KL in 2004/2005 while continuing with a strategising and consultative role in the work in India."

Calling all alumni from the Class of '86 - Look out for an invitation to your 20th anniversary reunion on 5th August 2006 - Block the Date!

Kevin Lee '89 has completed his trilogy of bicycle rides from Singapore to Thailand (featured in the Jul-Dec 2004 and Jul-Dec 2005 issues of LawLink). First, via the east coast of Peninsula Malaysia (1,043 km, in 2003). Second, via the west coast (1,502 km, in 2004). Third, straight up the middle (1,028 km, in 2005), along the Titiwangsa Mountain Range, doing justice to his mountain bike. Story and photos at http://home.pacific.net.sg/~kevklee/bikelog.html

Reunions!
Are you celebrating a landmark year in 2005/2006? If you are from the following classes:
Class of '66 - 40th Anniversary
Class of '76 - 30th Anniversary
Class of '81 - 25th Anniversary
Class of '86 - 20th Anniversary
Class of '96 - 10th Anniversary
we would like to help organise (and subsidise) your reunion! If you would like to find out more, drop us an email at: lawlink@nus.edu.sg or give us a call at: 6516-3181