

# FRATERNITAS

## INTERNATIONAL HOUSE



INTERNATIONAL HOUSE  
THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE

### FRATERNITAS 2007

## CAFÉ INTERNATIONAL



Café International 2007 was held on the evening of Saturday May 5, and was the first of a number of events to mark the 50th year of International House.

The theme for this year's Café was *The Golden Globe*, celebrating 50 years of movies and television. Café co-ordinator Pamela Tham and her team programmed an eclectic spectrum of acts, ranging from a hair-raising rendition of Michael Jackson's *Thriller* through to a riotously glam-packed tribute to Bollywood. Masters

of Ceremonies, Fraser Bettridge and Naomi Hong, kept the audience guessing with rapid costume changes as they appeared in a number of show-biz celebrity guises throughout the evening.

The event was given excellent publicity, which led to a sell-out evening with over 240 guests shoe-horned into the Dimmick Dining Hall; a

record crowd in the history of Café. Away from a sensational range of acts, one of the other highlights of the evening was the cutting of a giant blue and yellow birthday cake by Melbourne's Lord Mayor John So and five other International House alumni, each of whom represented one of the five decades of the House.

Continued on page 13.

### INSIDE:

pages 2-5

2007: Celebrating our  
Foundation and Planning  
the Future

page 6

2007 President's Goodbye

page 7

International House Masterplan

page 8

Banana Project

page 9

Congratulations to Saw Xiao Rei

pages 10-11

IH Sports Report

pages 12-13

Café International

page 14

Book Launch

page 15

Alumni Report

pages 16-19

IH's 50th Anniversary

page 20

Keep in Touch with IH



## 2007: CELEBRATING OUR FOUNDATION AND PLANNING THE FUTURE

In 2007, we honoured and celebrated the first cohort of students—42 young men—who studied at International House in 1957.

The largest single group, then as now, was the Australian contingent, with the next largest number coming from Malaysia (called Malaya at that time). Apart from Australia and Malaya, ten other countries were represented: Singapore, India, Cyprus, North Borneo, the Philippines, Malta and the USA. As the

years passed, the number of students increased, the range of student activities broadened and in 1972, International House welcomed its first female students.

We have retained our commitment to a large proportion of Australian students, together with

a diverse representation of other countries. At present, we have just under 40% Australian students with over 30 countries represented in the college community, including our American and Canadian friends, who are here on their study abroad programs. The House can proudly say it has never deviated

from its intention to offer a college setting to students from many linguistic and cultural backgrounds, with the aim of achieving international cooperation and understanding through our idealistic mission and practical actions. In recent years, the phrase 'valuing difference' has been introduced, which I think has

# 2007

In our 50th year, we not only look proudly to the past, but also consider how the House's ideals and aims will continue to be protected and fostered by thinking positively and proactively about our future.

great power to enable us to treat each person within our college with dignity and respect.

Café this year was a great event, with a superb show and dinner, a 'sold-out' house, the joyful cutting of the IH Birthday Cake by Melbourne's Lord Mayor John So (an IH alumnus) and past students representing each decade in the life of International House. Our students were very generous, and at their request, all proceeds this year were donated to Interplast.

National Nights also provided lively entertainment again this year and, with Japan and Brazil as their focus, showcased the creativity and wit of our students.

The house play this year—Neil Simon's 'The Goodbye Girl'—was an ambitious but inspired choice featuring music, drama and some telling vignettes of human behaviour. As well as its more serious side, there were some extremely funny and well-executed scenes, as well as some very successful choreography and staging.

In our 50th year, we not only look proudly to the past,

but also consider how the House's ideals and aims will continue to be protected and fostered by thinking positively and proactively about our future. I hope the students at IH today will be coming back for the 75th and the 100th birthday celebrations of International House, and will continue to work for its health and strength.

## Our Academic Programs

With the addition of the new building in 2005, we can now accommodate up to 270 undergraduate students. We have been

pleased to see that we are becoming better-known as a college that welcomes Australian students as well as international students due to our well-focused marketing program, and we are continuing along this pathway. The college has 16 residential and 10 non-residential tutors who conducted 55 academic tutorials per week in 2007. This program provides a wide range of academic support and enables our students to achieve great success academically.

Like other residential colleges affiliated with the University of Melbourne,

we are able to admit up to 15% of our students from other universities. Normally, most of these additional students are studying at RMIT or the Monash Pharmacy College on Royal Parade. We are delighted to have been able to make a significant improvement in the academic support we provide for these students (as well as those at the University of Melbourne), by introducing a mentoring scheme for students to meet with relevant tutors to discuss academic matters.

**Continued on next page.**







#### Continued from previous page.

We believe it is important to maintain an overall ratio of 1 residential tutor to about 16 students. This is generally the case in all but two buildings, Greycourt and the new building. However, in 2008 we will introduce a residential assistant in each of these buildings. Two of our senior students have been selected for these roles, and we look forward to working with them and are pleased to be able to reward and recognize outstanding senior students in this way.

At the end of 2007, we will farewell an outstanding Tutor, Andrew Oppenheim, who has been with us since February 2001. For the last seven years, Andrew has been a wonderful teacher, mentor and friend to many hundreds of International House students, as well as a caring and supportive colleague to his fellow tutors and other members of staff. We thank Andrew for the marvelous work he has done in the House and wish him well in all his future endeavours. He will be sorely missed.

#### How do we build our future?

The cost of education continues to increase. Tuition fees at schools and universities now routinely increase well in excess of the CPI and this situation is exacerbated in a residential setting where all meals are provided. While some students are able to manage both their tuition fees and the costs of living in a residential college, others are very hard pressed. We do offer the opportunity for students to work within the college to defray some of their costs (through the 'self-help' program), and we will expand this initiative in 2008 to allow students to participate in the college's marketing, promotions, and alumni relations programs. In addition, International House has been fortunate to receive gifts from generous individual benefactors and groups over the years, enabling many students to become members of International House, or to prolong their stay in the House.

We are in the process of reviewing our program of

scholarships and financial aid and we will be launching a fundraising drive to support this program. Unless we have a substantial program of scholarships and financial aid, we will not be able to sustain the diversity that is vitally important in the student body at International House. We plan to broaden the range of countries represented, and are strongly committed to maintaining a large proportion of Australian students in our student body.

We would like to encourage all our supporters who believe in this endeavour to contribute to our scholarship funds either by direct donation to International House or in response to appeals from the University of Melbourne but, as a donor, making a specific directive that the financial donation is to be applied to International House. We will be happy to provide you with details of our programs upon request. Otherwise you can make a donation online through the University of Melbourne website at <https://alumni.unimelb.edu.au/awc/MakeaGift.aspx>

Our physical master plan was reviewed in 2005, and the college council has decided to proceed with the re-development of the Greycourt building. The architects FJMT have been appointed. The aim is to retain the valuable and important elements of the Victorian building, while adding new student rooms, study rooms, and large study and communal spaces. These spaces will include study areas designed especially for the students of the 21st century, much of whose learning includes group work and team projects, and all of which requires some measure of technology-based learning.

In our planning for the new Greycourt development, we are taking account of the University of Melbourne's plans for the Melbourne Model and the expectation that over a period of years, there will be more graduate students and fewer undergraduate students. Having given appropriate consideration to these plans, our Council will map out the final designs for Greycourt during 2008.

We plan to broaden the range of countries represented, and are strongly committed to maintaining a large proportion of Australian students in our student body.

I have noticed during the past four years that colleges around Australia, as well as the International Houses Worldwide, have needed to pay closer attention to safety and security than has previously been required. This is for two reasons: first of all, most organizations over the past decade or so have been becoming increasingly conscious of risk of every kind; second, the background awareness of international tensions has led to heightened levels of anxiety in many people, and changes their responses to events. Consequently, visitors to IH will now see fences and locks that were not considered necessary in the past; our whole locking system has been changed to allow greater responsiveness; and we now restrict access by the public. We have also paid closer attention to details of pastoral care support, and are taking a stronger proactive approach to community welfare.

We have renewed our structural connections with Rotary International—involved with us since our inception—with a new program of working relationships assisted by a special committee of District 9800 and International House.

The International House Law Auxiliary also continues in its outstanding support of the house and I would like to specially thank Mrs Judy Adam for her leadership in this endeavour.

The 50th anniversary dinner held in August this year has been the stimulus for a whole new program of alumni engagement, with very specific plans for alumni reunions and activities to be held in 2008. I am happy to announce that a committee has been established that will realise our dream of a future-oriented alumni association. The committee consists of Dr Ian Tho (1982-1986, 1990-1991), a member of our International House Council; Dr Steven Berveling (Student Club President, 1977); and Mr Anton Alers (Student Club President, 1980). Dr Tho has kindly agreed to chair this group for a two-year period, with a view to establishing a strong alumni association which will incorporate the Friends of International House.

Working together, we plan to hold four alumni reunions in 2008: for students who were here in 1968, 1978, 1988 and 1998. We will repeat this pattern in 2009 for alumni from 1969, 1979, 1989 and 1999 thereby commencing a program of 'Decade Reunions'. We will invite our alumni from 25 years ago, i.e. 1983 next year, to make a special effort to attend Café. We will host a lunch during the early part of Semester 1, and we also hope to see many alumni at the afternoon Garden Party and Market Fair on May 24th, 2008.

We are asking all our alumni and friends to contact us and help us find 'lost' alumni so

they can be invited to attend events. Please use our website:

[www.ihouse.unimelb.edu.au](http://www.ihouse.unimelb.edu.au)  
(Alumni and Friends section) to contact us, or email Ms Tamra Keating at [tkeating@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:tkeating@unimelb.edu.au)

As a department  
of the University  
of Melbourne,  
International  
House has a  
very special  
relationship with  
the University.

Nevertheless, without the wise guidance and active support of our International House Council, we would not be in a position to operate as we do and nurture or sustain our core mission. I thank our Chairman,

Mr Peter Bobeff, and all Council Members for their dedication to this cause.

In celebrating the past at International House, we are also looking to a future in which we aim to see an international house that fulfills its core mission to develop international understanding and cooperation, provides a true community of scholars with a gradual addition of graduate students to the undergraduate mix, and enables academic success and personal growth for all members of its community. We aim to have a strong and vibrant alumni community who are strongly committed to sustaining International House, and aim to keep inclusivity, care, open-mindedness and a good sense of humour at the core of what we do.

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR  
JANE MUNRO,  
HEAD OF COLLEGE





# 2007 PRESIDENT'S GOODBYE



I will never forget my first morning trip on Royal Parade - my destination was of course International House.

On that morning, the gentle street was lined with large beautiful trees as far as the eyes could see. Such amiable trees they were - offering kind and generous shade as their leaves filtered the morning radiance. Royal Parade's Princes Park and Greycourt were handsome too, with soft but temperate hues of greens and yellows - below the blues and whites of the sky. The street was beautiful. The dull overtones of Wadham and the insipid red bricks of Scheps, however, were not inconspicuous. They looked ordinary, and their appearance would blind any observer to their estimable qualities. Yet, the street didn't hide such noticeable flaws. What a noble street Royal Parade was - such good qualities it had, such depth of character. Such is International House.

Before O-week, when you first come to IH, the first people you meet are the other 130 people just like you - the freshers. However, your eyes search for only one thing. In the very first glance you take, you notice the ladies - such is the nature of man - the attractive ones - stunning eyes, long hair, perfect body - the

articulate and flirtatious ones, and the ones with smiles like sunshine. They demand your attention. You think you've hit the jackpot at the pokies. You barely notice the others.

And such was the preconceptions you held when you first arrived. You were flawed. But IH accepted you.

However, on your second glance, you notice the competition. And, unfortunately you realise some men are also attractive; at least, way more attractive than you (smugness nevertheless blinds most men). Some are also more articulate, more fun AND also have smiles of sunshine. Regrettably, half of the men in the room also know they've hit the jackpot. You then realise you've experienced minimal relative gain. You sob. But you don't notice the others.

And such was the childish rivalry you held when you first came. You were flawed. But IH accepted you.

After the initial two glances, you decide you should try your luck with one of the ladies. You say 'Hi, my name is Joe. How are you liking IH so far?' She smiles her sunshine and you build a conversation. Gradually, however, you realise she is tone deaf and, for some peculiar reason, finishes every sentence with 'lah!'. You think: 'What a random lady!'. She then tells you that you have an awkwardly deep accent. You think, 'She must be crazy!'. She finally comments that strangely, your sentences DO NOT end with a 'lah!'. You get scared.

And such was the prejudice you held when you first came. You were flawed. But IH accepted you.

And then O-week started.

And then O-week ended.

And then those random, odd-looking people with odd accents

are suddenly your good friends - in time, they will be your best friends, but of course you don't know it yet.

And then you realise how much of a narrow-minded fool you were. IH was too generous - it shouldn't have accepted you.

I'm so proud to have lived in IH. I thank the irony of realising that respect and friendship will often lie behind a veil of prejudice and intolerance. Undeniably, we are all different, with different ideals and different prejudices. However, you can't refute that we also favour our own values - we are in fact oblivious to our own flaws. An example: if you've never had mee goreng, you would swear on your mother's life that some other noodle is the best. But as soon as you have tried mee goreng, you know you're wrong.

As I look back at my time in this lovely place, I realise there were many moments when my ignorance blinded me from seeing the admirable qualities of others. Many people that I now admire would definitely not have been in that book three years ago. I must have had an awakening somewhere. IHers that I've ultimately looked up to, like Rylez, Omar, Parky, and Sarah are not by my book conventional. They are different. They knew they were flawed. They are not the standard (in my eyes anyway) - but they should be. If they were, the world would be a better place.

Let us never forget the noble qualities of IH.

Profoundly, IH makes us aware of our prejudice (we can choose not to change ourselves, but at least we are humbled by knowing that we are far from perfect). It teaches us a discipline of questioning ourselves before we question others. It taught me that mee goreng is the best noodle in

the world, that I'm rarely 'right', that I must learn, I must show respect, I must show tolerance, I must be kind, I must love others and that I am flawed. Just like IH accepted me and my abundant imperfections, I must do so with others. We are all flawed, we just didn't know it until we came to IH. The gift that is this knowledge has made us better people.

Although the miserable and undeniable fact is that I won't be here next year, I gain solace from the thought that I have come out a better person than the 17 year-old that went in. I might even be a good person now.

**I think IH has built character in me.**

**I've become a better person**

**because of IH.**

**We've all become better people because of IH.**

Farewell my friends. Thank you for giving me the privilege to serve IH. I wish you all well in your future endeavours. Thank you to the 2007 outgoing IHSC, the staff serving IH - especially Jane and Peter - and the tutors. Thanks also to Oppenheim for not busting me this year. Good luck to Rei and her IHSC. Congratulations my fellow valedictorians. Thank you May Lin.

To Fraternitas,

**JOE ZHANG**

*Outgoing IHSC President of 2007*

P.S. Donate money to IH once you are rich.

# INTERNATIONAL HOUSE MASTERPLAN

In October 2006, the International House Masterplan prepared by Daryl Jackson Architects was accepted and approved by the International House Council.

The aim of this Masterplan is to redefine and consolidate International House as a residence of premium importance to the University of Melbourne. The key objectives are to create a clear delineation between private and public space, giving privacy to students and tutors, and maintaining appropriate access for guests. An understanding of internal and external circulation needs to be realized to minimize unwanted crossing of paths and emphasize direct access to handsomely scaled and landscaped open space and courtyards. In so doing, IH's significance as a residential college with world-class facilities and residents will be enhanced.

One of the features of the Masterplan is the possible incorporation of a multifunctional conference centre in the north-east corner of the property. This multi-level centre will have conferencing and meeting facilities on its first two levels and accommodation on the third.

Greycourt is a building needing a significant

upgrade. By moving all guest requirements to the north, and with the recent addition of the library and computer room in the new building, Greycourt is an ideal central location for a student resource hub. The intention is to provide tutorial facilities, meeting rooms and study space on level 1, with student accommodation on levels 2 and 3.

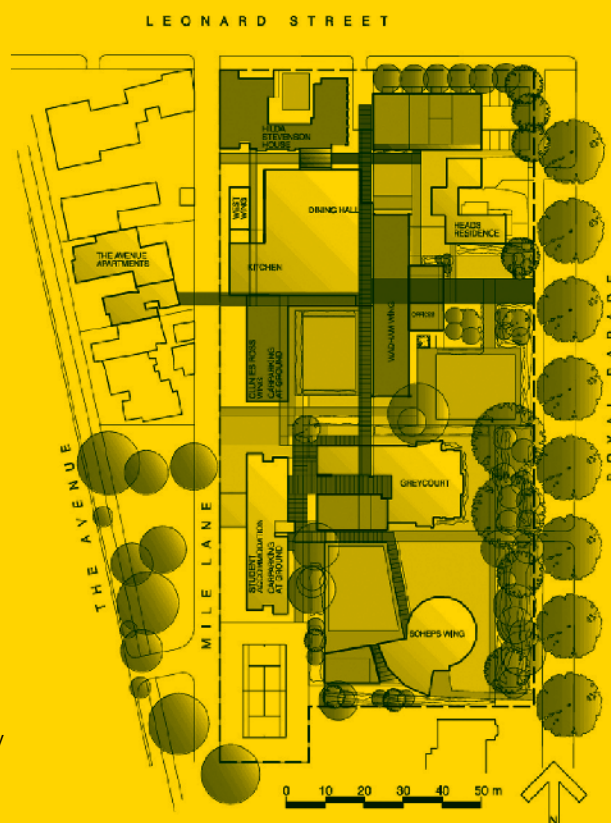
While consideration was given to moving the administration area to Greycourt, it was finally agreed that the current location in Wadham best suits our needs. In the Masterplan, the expansion of the administration area involves going up one level and integrating the office area into level one of Wadham.

Implementation of the Masterplan started in 2007 with the appointment of architects to develop plans for the Greycourt building. The plan will take into account the new Melbourne Model being introduced by the University of Melbourne in 2008, and accommodation in Greycourt will be suitable

for graduate students. This project will be developed further in 2008; however, construction will depend on the availability of funds.

The 2006 Masterplan reflects the present situation at International

House and the plan will adapt as circumstances change. The Masterplan is a guide and its implementation will depend on a variety of factors, not the least of which is funding.



# BANANA PROJECT PHASE 11 (2007)

For eleven years, with the help of Rotary International, IH has run a student-organized program called the Banana Project.

Each summer, a group of four IH students travel to North Eastern Thailand to teach English to severely underprivileged children in Buriram Province. Last year, Giri Ramasubramanian, Alex Browning and I were lucky enough to go from IH, along with Sophie Chueysai, a Thai girl who acted as our translator. As well as the teaching, another major aspect of the project is fundraising for development projects in Buriram. While we receive generous support from both Rotary and IH, we are always on the lookout for extra funding. This money enables projects such as vegetable gardens, libraries and sick bay facilities to be built at primary schools, as well as providing university scholarships to children who would not be able to attend university without them.

In Thailand, we stay and teach at Suksasongkroh High School near the remote town of Nang Rong. All the children at the school are orphans, have been abandoned by their parents or, if they are lucky, are simply very poor. One boy we met had no mother. His father made a living by walking around Thailand with an elephant that passersby paid to feed. During the school holidays, the boy would walk around Thailand with his father,



sleeping by the side of the road because they couldn't afford anywhere to live. We stay at the old nurse's house at the school, sharing it with hundreds of mosquitoes, thousands of ants, a couple of snakes and a rather inquisitive cat. There is no hot water, a squat toilet, a bucket for a shower and no appliances whatsoever. The mattresses are rock-hard (stuffed with coconut fibre) and we woke up at about 6am most mornings. It may sound tough, indeed, it is tough, but you will never feel so rewarded if you live to be 100. We fell in love with all the children, all 860 of them. We played countless games with them, taught them Australian football, laughed with them,

embarrassed ourselves completely by singing and dancing boy-band songs for them, and when we had to leave them after a month we cried our eyes out.

The children there have no money, no family and sometimes even no shoes, but they have the most beautiful smiles you will ever see. So little from you can make such a difference for them. Alex and I have been organizing fundraising events this year, along with the team we have selected for Phase 12 of the project: Mikhaila Clemens, Damian Kennedy, Eugenie Chung, Apple Kitaphanich and Frances Goh. We have held a trivia night, sold t-shirts, visited Rotary clubs and conducted many other

fundraising activities around the college. Alex and I will both be visiting the school again in January to catch up with the kids and teachers there, and we are looking forward to seeing how the new group of Bananas are getting on. No matter how much money we raise, there are always more projects to fund and people to help. If you can assist us, please do so, because you really can change people's lives for the better.

If you feel that you can help with the Project in any way, please contact Alex, Mikhaila or myself, care of International House.

**CHARLIE PARKES**



# CONGRATULATIONS TO SAW XIAO REI

## INTERNATIONAL HOUSE STUDENT CLUB PRESIDENT 2008

We congratulate Saw Xiao Rei on being elected the 51st President of the International House Student Club.

Rei is currently completing her second year of a Commerce course at the University of Melbourne, majoring in Accounting and Finance, and has been at International House since February 2006.

She was born in Malaysia, and studied in a Chinese school system throughout her primary and secondary school years before coming to Australia in 2005 to further her studies at Trinity College Foundation Studies.

She enjoys performing, having participated in many performances both in Malaysia and Australia, accompanying singers on the piano or singing herself, either as part of a choir or solo. She has also contributed to student art exhibitions in Malaysia. Furthermore, she enjoys writing in her free time.

Before International House, Rei had had no contact with people of different cultures, and upon her arrival was surprised at diversity that is representative of International House. She has since fallen in love with walking through International House, being greeted

by people from Kenya, Hong Kong, America, Chile, Australia and other wonderful countries, and the mutual understanding and acceptance that forms between the students.

She wishes to further the efficiency of cultural integration in the college, and her Committee is enthusiastic about doing so as well. The Committee also hopes to work closely with the administration to improve communications and understanding between people from such diverse cultures.



Most importantly, she and her committee wish to make the difficult task of adapting to life in a foreign country a little easier.



## IH SPORTS REPORT, 2007

The highlights were victories in the inter-college Volleyball and Table Tennis; second place finishes in Badminton and Tennis; and an unlucky third place in the Men's Soccer.

2007 was International House's best year in the inter-collegiate sporting competition in recent memory. This, as ever, was for the most part due to the amazing commitment, talent and efforts of the college's students, who surpassed themselves in making IH a force to be reckoned with on the sporting field. I am delighted to report that after years as a cellar-dweller in the ICSC rankings, IH was this year able to finish fourth overall in men's competitions, and seventh overall for women's sports.

As Randeep Singh, reporting on the year-opening volleyball, wrote:

"In the end, IH walked away having made some enemies, even more friends, and the unexpected glory. However,

the most important consequence of the volleyball was that it truly set the tone for IH sport in 2007. It let everyone know that IH was no longer

here to play, but here to win."

The highlights were victories in the inter-college Volleyball and Table Tennis; second place finishes in







Badminton and Tennis; and an unlucky third place in the Men's Soccer.

At the end of the year, some fantastic individual efforts saw us snatch fifth place in the swimming, traditionally a watery grave for IH aspirations. Progress was made in other sports as well, and while the women's netball, basketball and soccer teams were all knocked out in the quarter-finals, these efforts represented vast (and, in the case of netball, stunning) improvements.

2007 was a year when funding cuts, the drought and some ill-considered scheduling combined to create a nightmarish sports fixture. With many matches being played at 7am during busy times of the academic year (and, unfortunately for the

guys' footy team, the morning after the River Cruise), it is a testament to the commitment and enthusiasm of the students that they made it to training sessions and matches, often on limited sleep, and performed in the manner that they did. I must also say a special thanks to Kat Labrum for her tireless work as sports rep this year.

I have never read a more ringing endorsement of sport at IH than the words of Pat Tan, IH's self-described 'most petite' soccer captain, in this year's Satadal, who wrote:

"If I had to say anything about the 2007 IH soccer team though, it would be that through some form of magic this group of boys were brought together from all over the world and had the time of our lives playing soccer as a



team, as a unit, and as friends. Thank you Charlie and Dil for the time and effort you put in, thank you my brothers for making the season as great as it was, and thank you IH for making such experiences possible day in and day out."

If ever there was uncertainty about the true meaning of Fraternitas, those in doubt should look no further than these words.

**CHARLIE PARKES**



# CAFÉ INTERNATI

Continued from page 1.

The support given to the evening by our alumni, friends of the House and Rotary International was marvellous, and helped ensure the success of the evening from a fund-raising perspective. To commemorate our Golden Anniversary, the Café committee decided that, for the first time, all profits from the evening would be donated to our nominated charity, Interplast Australia, which sends small teams of volunteer plastic surgeons and support staff into various Pacific-rim countries. The students were delighted to present Interplast with a cheque for \$7696.85.

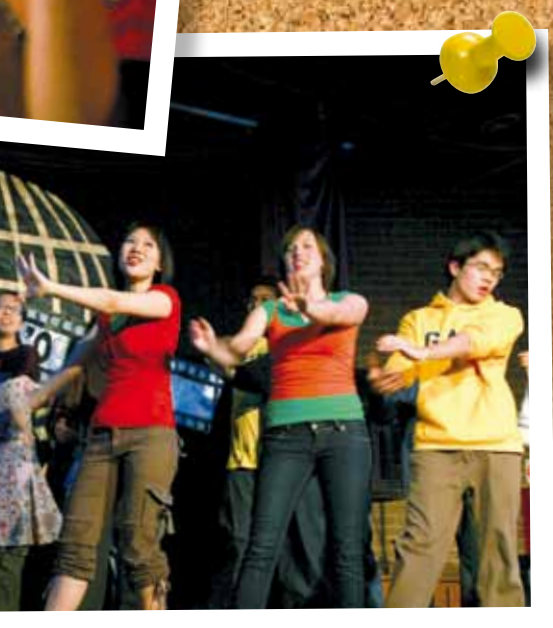
It was fitting that Café, which has been held every year since 1962, opened our year of birthday celebrations. Café is much more than a simple manifestation of the extraordinary depth of artistic and musical talent in the House. From those under the bright lights strutting and fretting their hour upon the stage through to the back stage crew and those waiting on guests' tables, Café is a coming together of young men and women from all over the world in a spirit of co-operation, fun and amazing creativity. Pamela Tham puts it quite succinctly, 'This sounds like the regular spiel about the importance about intercultural communication....well, it is. The amazing thing is that we have achieved that, within the little golden globe that is IH. Woohoo!'

Café is a coming together of young men and women from all over the world in a spirit of co-operation, fun and amazing creativity.





# ONAL







# BOOK LAUNCH AT INTERNATIONAL HOUSE

## INDONESIA: DEMOCRACY AND THE PROMISE OF GOOD GOVERNANCE

The success or failure of democratic reform in Indonesia is a key question for both Indonesia itself and the surrounding region. Although Indonesia's transition to democracy holds out the promise of good governance, this cannot be taken for granted. This book examines the challenge of making democracy work in Asia's third-largest nation.

The Australian launch of the latest in the Indonesia Update series of books was held in the Julian Gardner Room at International House on Tuesday 24 July, 2007. Both the book's editors, Ross

McLeod and Andrew MacIntyre, were in attendance.

The book was launched by Professor Tim Lindsey, Director of the Asian Law Centre in the Faculty of Law at the University of Melbourne.

Further information about the book is available on the publisher's website, at <http://bookshop.iseas.edu.sg/>

Ross McLeod is an alumnus of International House (in 1964), and we were delighted to host the launch of this important publication.





# INTERNATIONAL HOUSE ALUMNI REPORT

Two thousand and seven has been nothing short of an extraordinary year for past and current IHers.

We celebrated 50 glorious years at a dinner, after a stupendous effort by the House led by Associate Professor Jane Munro. The event was a resounding success to say the least, and memorable by any standard. Those who attended were overcome with a sense of homecoming and nostalgia mixed with excitement of renewing past connections. Overwhelmingly, consensus was that we needed to get people associated with IH together more often, and on a more regular basis. It is estimated that the House has over 5000 alumni, both in Australia and overseas. Recognising the unique challenges facing the ex-IH community—namely the very wide range of interests,

geographic diversity and busy schedules—a small group of us are attempting to revive Fraternitas.

**There have been many ideas, some wild and wacky, about how would organise the alumni group.**

Some of the early ideas discussed include activities for alumni who reside and work around the Melbourne area to get together regularly for events at the House. Recognising also that most of the alumni do not live in Melbourne, virtual events have been proposed to connect distant alumni. The virtual events would take the form of sessions organised

around Webcast and Email discussions. “Class Notes” was suggested as the topic for the first virtual event, with news from the Warden/Head from previous years, notable events and random essays also included.

To support alumni in and around Melbourne, we plan to organise breakfast and lunch gatherings with alumni speakers presenting interesting topics. Other activities include ‘decade reunions’, where groups from each of the five decades of our history would come together for dinner at the House at High Table or for the annual Café International. Other less formal events include an IH Golf Tournament, which could ‘tour’ the different states and countries. Another thought was to organise an IH Melbourne museum, where treasured memorabilia like the Trike, glass

paper weight, sticky door notes, old Mac computers, bottles from Naughton’s, squash rackets etc. could be displayed. Any other wild ideas are most welcome.

We would be delighted to hear from you should you be keen to support this effort by getting involved. Drop us an email to share your thoughts and ideas, or even just to let us know how you are. And remember to come by the House when you are next in the neighbourhood.

**IAN THO**

(IH 1982-86, 1990-91)

**Any alumnus who wants to be involved please contact Ian at [driantho@gmail.com](mailto:driantho@gmail.com) or to update your contact details [tkeating@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:tkeating@unimelb.edu.au)**

## TUTORIAL PROGRAM

In describing the benefits of college life to prospective students and those unfamiliar with university colleges, it is often necessary to underline the fact that we are an educational institution.

International House is indeed a community of scholars and our tutorial program is central to this community.

The summary of results for 2006 is testament both to the calibre of our students and the

quality of our tutorial program. 25% of all subjects attempted by students were graded H1; 17%, H2A; and 18%, H2B. This is an exceptional achievement.

In semester 2, 2007 our sixteen residential tutors and twelve non-residential tutors provided tutorials in fifty-five different subjects for approximately one hundred and twenty students. Many of these students also availed themselves of individual consultations with tutors, which are provided at no extra cost.

Providing support for students attending institutions other than the University of Melbourne can be difficult. This year an academic mentoring program for these students was introduced with the outcomes proving most positive.

Appraisals of tutors’ performances take place at the end of each semester, with feedback from students being an important part of this process. Particular mention should be made of the role played by

Sarah Richardson, our Senior Tutor, who is responsible for the not inconsiderable task of time-tabling the program and ensuring it runs smoothly.

Our tutorial program is a significant budget item and is one of the vital dimensions that makes International House a lot more than simply a place at which to stay.

**MR PETER COLE, DEPUTY  
HEAD OF COLLEGE**



# SPEECH DELIVERED AT INTERNATIONAL HOUSE'S 50TH ANNIVERSARY DINNER



BY DR SUNDARASON, MBBS (MELBOURNE) 1956, FRCS (GEN SURG) (GLASG) 1964, FRCS (GEN SURG) (ENG) 1965, FAMS (GEN SURG) 1969, FRAACS (GEN SURG) 1971

A very good evening to His Excellency, the governor of Victoria, Dr David de Kretser; Chancellor of the University of Melbourne, Mr Ian Renard; Chairman of the IH council, Mr Peter Bobeff; Ladies and Gentlemen.

Before I begin I would like to say that I am touched and humbled that His Excellency the Governor has graced this occasion. His presence here today reaffirms the longstanding bond between IH and Victoria's local government. In fact, I recall giving a speech at the first International House Fair, welcoming the then Governor of Victoria. I am glad the relationship continues and I hope it will continue to strengthen over the years.

I am indeed very honoured to have been invited to speak at this 50th anniversary of the opening of the International House. I am the sole survivor of the original three who conceived the idea of International House. I wish my

co-founders could have been here to see this day.

I would like to take this opportunity to share with you some of the significant events that led to the establishment of International House.

In the early 50s, there were only a handful of Asian students and Asian professionals in Australia. Many Australians had not even met an Asian. At that time, there were many misconceptions about the life and culture of Asians. Unfortunately, the aftermath of the White Australia policy had left its legacy of racial intolerance.

In February 1950, I arrived in Melbourne with three fellow Singaporeans to study Medicine at the University of Melbourne. I was a Colombo Plan scholar. We stayed temporarily at the Salvation Army hostel called "The People's Palace", somewhere in the vicinity of the Spencer Street railway station.

Soon after, we began looking for suitable permanent lodgings. The University of Melbourne student representative council ran a housing department; this was

to assist students in obtaining suitable lodgings. We were frequent visitors to the student housing officer, as we had difficulty obtaining suitable lodgings. We felt we were being



I am the sole survivor of the original three who conceived the idea of International House. I wish my co-founders could have been here to see this day.

discriminated against because of our colour.

I recall after six moves in three months, we ended up in a boarding house in Royal Parade called the "Mayfair Guest House". Four of us shared a room. We had no heating or chairs to sit on, we sat on the arms of the armchairs, and we kept warm by studying in bed. We had to wake up early to stand in line to use the sole guest bathroom.

After enduring this situation for a few weeks, and feeling that our studies were being adversely affected, we decided to go back to the student housing officer and enlighten him on the conditions we were living in. We again requested him to look for suitable lodgings for us. The Student Officer was not pleased. He hinted that we were being difficult to please, and he did not believe our claims.

Much to our delight and amazement, this student housing officer turned up to our guest house unannounced late that night. He was very disturbed to see the conditions we were living in, and agreed that the living environment was not conducive for studying. Over the next few days, he interviewed prospective

landlords and placed us separately to lodge with different Australian families. I lived with the same family for the six years till my graduation. The student housing officer to whom we went for help, who made a surprise visit to our guest house and who finally helped us to find suitable accommodation with Australian families was no other than Sam Dimmick.

During the first term holidays in 1950, Sam invited four Asian students including myself and three other Australian students to his family holiday home in Sorrento. The purpose of this retreat was to obtain firsthand experience of Australians and Asians living together under the same roof. Initially, the Asian and Australian students were cautiously polite to one another, but the ice was soon broken. The Asian students freely discussed the difficulties they had personally encountered, and the Australian students freely discussed the misconceptions they had about Asian students. We felt that the racial discrimination and misconceptions we had of one another were brought about by the lack of interaction.

One night, while we were still in Sorrento, Sam suggested that the lot of us go over to Portsea

for after-dinner drinks. Upon entering the pub, I observed an argument between Sam and the owner of the pub. After a while, Sam came out and told us the pub owner was refusing to serve any "coloureds." The pub owner told Sam that the pub was patronised by people of high society and wealth, and should any of these patrons see any coloureds in his pub, he feared that they might not patronise his pub again. Naturally, Sam and the other three Australians in the group were embarrassed by this incident; they could not believe such prejudices existed in Australia.

We returned to the house and discussed this incident at length. We felt the pub owner was a victim of circumstances beyond his control. This

incident strengthened our belief that the only way to break social barriers and correct misconceptions was for Australian and Asian students to experience one another's cultures by living under one roof.

The existing residential colleges did not serve this purpose. There was, therefore, a compelling need for a new residential college, and its goals in addition to pursuing academic excellence were to advocate and stress the development of interpersonal relationships among people from various cultures. Hence, the idea of establishing the International House associated with the University of Melbourne was born.

Continued on next page.





Soon after the formation of the International House Committee, fund-raising began in earnest.

The women's committees under the leadership of Mrs Mavis Jackson were a tremendous success.

#### Continued from previous page.

Upon our return from Sorrento, we went full steam ahead with our plan; and formed the Melbourne University Students' International House Committee. Over time, the other students completed their studies and left the University. Sam and I were the only ones remaining of the original committee.

We decided to seek the approval of the University authorities and went ahead to form the Melbourne University International House Committee. We invited representatives from the University, past residents from the overseas International Houses, Melbourne University graduates, foreign missions, student and parent organisations. We were fortunate and privileged to have the late Sir Ian Clunies Ross to chair the committee. His association with International House gave tremendous credibility to the project.

Soon after the formation of the International House Committee, fund-raising began in earnest. The women's committees under the leadership of Mrs Mavis Jackson were a tremendous success.

She organised the wives of medical, legal and other professional organisations to raise funds for International House. Rotary clubs from all over

Victoria, including Melbourne, gave their wholehearted support. Teams of students representing different national groups visited the Victorian country towns appealing for support.

By the end of 1953, the IH building fund was substantial; it stood at A\$60 000. This included donations from Singapore, Malaya, Sri Lanka and Sarawak. The Commonwealth government saw the importance of this project and granted pound for pound collected to the fund.

As we had sufficient funds, our next task was to find a suitable site close to the University of Melbourne on which to build International House, a task Sam and I took upon ourselves. We spent our weekends site-hunting. One day, while we were driving along Royal Parade, we noticed a new signboard advertising the sale of land and a house. Sam rang the estate agent the following Monday morning and told him that we were interested in purchasing the property, provided we could purchase the adjoining property as well. A few days later, the estate agent told us the landowner, who owned both properties, was willing to sell both. Once the site was acquired, fundraising became easier and the International House dream started to become a reality.



The Clunies Ross wing was completed by 1956. In 1959, I became a resident of IH and tutored Anatomy and Surgery. In 1960, the warden of International House resigned. The care-taker warden was the late Col. Murray, formerly the administrator of New Guinea. He was a close friend of the late Sir Samuel Wadham, who was then chairman of the IH council. Col. Murray was in office for a few months when he approached me and invited me to accept the post of vice-warden. I was reluctant at first, but he was persistent. Hence, I became the Vice-Warden of IH in 1960. Col. Murray's vision was to start a tradition. He felt that in future, if a suitable candidate could

be identified for the position of Warden or Vice-warden, this person should be Asian.

By mere coincidence, Sam, who joined the Foreign Service in 1954, was posted back to Canberra in 1960. At that time, the University was looking for a permanent warden for IH, so the IH council persuaded Sam to resign from the Foreign Service and take on the position of warden of IH. As soon as Sam took office, he embarked on a very ambitious fund raising programme. His aim was to build another residential block and acquire as much of the adjacent property as possible.

Sam targeted big corporations and institutions, particularly



those involved in fundraising in Asia. He invited influential company directors and their wives for dinner at IH. He limited the invitation to 4-5 couples at a time about three times a week so we had time to interact with them. Australian and Overseas students were given the duty of looking after each guest from the time of their arrival at IH. Asian students in particular were expected to share with the guests their experiences of life in Australia, to give the guests insight into the value of IH. The Guests were also shown their living accommodation at IH.

After dinner, the guests would adjourn to the Warden's residence for coffee. The warden, a few senior tutors and I would be present. Here, we would talk about the need to expand IH. It was my responsibility, as an Asian, to impress upon the guests the need to expand IH, elaborating with my personal experiences on the difficulties which many of the Asian students and I encountered. This manner of fund-raising turned out to be a tremendous success.

In February 1963, I left Melbourne for the UK to continue my postgraduate training in Surgery.

On recollecting the 12 years I spent in Melbourne, I must express my sense of profound gratitude to my countless



Australian friends who helped me fulfil my dreams beyond my expectations.

Two recollections of my life in Melbourne dominate my memory; firstly, the IH project gave me valuable experience for my career path. My exposure to the Melbourne business community while I was a member of the IH council gave me confidence and courage to venture into various projects on my return to Singapore.

My teaching experience at IH motivated me to further my surgical knowledge and skills. I went on to obtain the fellowships of the Royal College of Surgeons of England, Glasgow and Australia. I was also awarded a fellowship of the American College of Surgeons and of the Academy of Medicine, Singapore. I joined the Medical Faculty of the National University of Singapore upon my return.

The second recollection I would like to share with you is the memory of my friendship with the late Sam Dimmick. He was the Australian student whom I met soon after my arrival in Melbourne as I recounted at the beginning of this speech. Sam and I developed a close and genuine friendship over the years. I respected and admired him for his sincerity, commitment, dedication and vision. Many people played an

active role in the establishment of IH; however, without Sam Dimmick, IH would not have become a reality.

Two of the legacies we left behind still stand today; the first being the tutorial programme Sam and I initiated. We tapped the expertise of Asian postgraduate students residing at IH, involving them as tutors. I happened to be the first Asian tutor.

The second legacy was that of Café International. In 1962, Sam and I felt it would be fitting to set aside one day a year in which everyone in International House could be exposed to a different culture through the display of each particular culture's food, dance and song. This event is still being organized, but with different emphases.



Fifty years on, IH has evolved far beyond most of our expectations.

I am indeed happy that my son, Raj, who graduated in the United Kingdom in Law & Psychology, chose to continue his postgraduate studies at the Melbourne University Business School. He resided at International House and tutored in business Law and was a soccer coach. I hope my grandson, Joshua, who will be eight next month and has accompanied me with some of my family members to attend this occasion, will choose one day to reside in the IH as well. I have much hope for the future of IH. I hope it will continue to be a platform for international understanding, racial tolerance and global networking.





# IH ALUMNI WE WOULD LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU!!!

For regular updates about International House and so we may keep in touch and personally invite you to special events at International House, please update your own contact details on the attached form. Alternatively forward details of other alumni you know.

You may enter this information via our website [www.ihouse.unimelb.edu.au](http://www.ihouse.unimelb.edu.au) or fill in the attached slip and mail it back to us at International House, 241 Royal Parade, Parkville, Vic 3052.

Thank you.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Years at IH \_\_\_\_\_

Suburb \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Country \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Ph \_\_\_\_\_

## PLEASE SEND YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS TO:

By mail:

Tamra Keating  
International House  
241 Royal Parade,  
Parkville  
Victoria 3052  
P: (03) 9345 7558  
F: (03) 9349 1761

By email:

[tkeating@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:tkeating@unimelb.edu.au)

International House website:

[www.ihouse.unimelb.edu.au](http://www.ihouse.unimelb.edu.au)

### HOLD THESE DATES:

**International House Alumni  
Lunch**

**On:** Thursday 3rd April 2008

**At:** International House  
Further Details Coming Soon

Please go to [www.ihouse.unimelb.edu.au](http://www.ihouse.unimelb.edu.au) for further details.

**International House Garden  
Party and Market Fair**

**On:** Saturday 24th May 2008

**At:** International House  
Garden Party and Market Fair  
to commemorate our official  
opening on 24th May 1958.

For more information please  
refer to website [www.ihouse.unimelb.edu.au](http://www.ihouse.unimelb.edu.au)