



Coastal Chronicle

The newsletter of the
China Coast Community

April/May 2014

A SMALL BUT IMPORTANT STEP IN OUR JOURNEY

IN THIS ISSUE

From Our Chairman

I am delighted to welcome you to the China Coast Community's first newsletter. It is part of a larger social media plan designed to build a tighter knit community of residents, donors and well-wishers. We will also use it to get to know our staff, residents and committee members better via interviews and informal chats. I do hope you enjoy this new opportunity to discover the various activities and developments that have taken place in the Home recently.

In the inaugural issue, there is a fireside chat with Miss Vijai Singh, who has been General Manager of the Home for close

to 13 years, and is a pivotal point around which the Community runs. I also take this opportunity to wish Josephine Piper a very happy 92nd birthday, which falls on April 20. We run a number of games/fun/therapy activities for residents and non-residents in the Community – some of these events are listed on these pages, but please contact the Home for more detailed information.

Happy reading!

Jon Addis

Face-to-Face: An Interview with Vijai Singh, General Manager

In a candid interview, Miss Singh eloquently describes her time as the General Manager of the China Coast Community, its changing dynamics, what keeps her ticking and how she de-stresses.

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DON'T MISS THESE EVENTS AT THE COMMUNITY...

Yoga with Miss Vijai Singh on
Wednesdays ①3:00-4:00 pm

Bingo on Fridays and Sundays ①2:30-4:00 pm

Josephine's birthday party on Monday,
April 28 ①3:00-4:00 pm

Music with Jasmin & the Hungs on
Saturday, May 10 ①3:00-4:00 pm

Music with Secret Sing on Sunday, May
25 ①3:00-4:00 pm

Monthly Birthday Celebrations with the
Spanish Ladies on Monday, May 26
①3:00-4:00 pm

Amy's Retirement Party – celebrating
her 27 years of service at the CCC on
Thursday, May 29 ①1:30 pm

Please see Notice Board or contact us
for exact schedule



Residents and friends
got together to
celebrate Lily Lee's
birthday ▼

▲ Volunteers at the China Coast Community span several generations. Young children volunteered recently and presented a song and dance performance



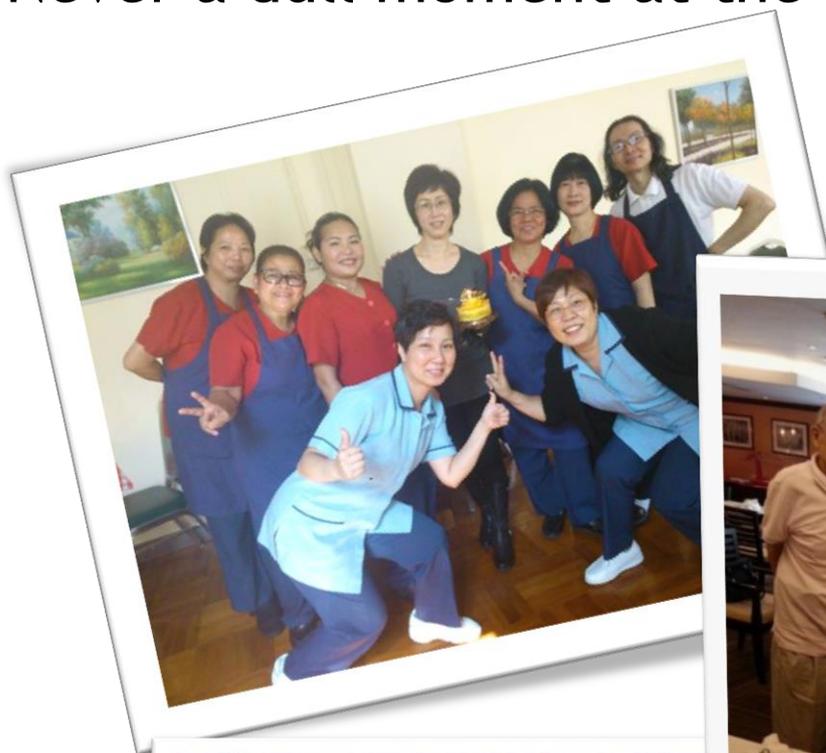
Resident in Focus: Josephine Piper turns 92



Josephine Piper is Spanish and was born in Hankow, China on April 20, 1922. She has been living at CCC for 10 years now. She learned about CCC through friends and her brother lived here too. She finds CCC clean, quiet and a home away from home. She loves knitting and playing bingo.



Never a dull moment at the China Coast Community



◀ The staff at the China Coast Community know how to have fun!



▲ Our residents had lunch recently at the Craigengower Cricket Club



◀ RN Eddie and Rose Remedios

Face-to-Face: Vijai Singh

Undaunted by challenges and committed to her mission, Miss Vijai Singh has been instrumental in making the China Coast Community (CCC) a home where the elderly are treated with dignity and respect. She has been at the helm of the CCC for the past 13 years, headhunted from London to oversee a wide range of activities - from day-to-day routine to even lobbying for funds. In a candid interview, Miss Singh eloquently describes her time at the CCC, its changing dynamics, what keeps her ticking and how she de-stresses.

INTERVIEW

How long have you been associated with the China Coast Community (CCC)?

I started working here on September 1, 2001. Whilst working at the Matilda Hospital in 1981, we took care of residents from the China Coast Community who required hospitalization on a *pro bono* basis. So, I was aware of the CCC but never dreamt that one day I would be running it and for 13 years!

A job such as this calls for an enormous amount of commitment/ time/sacrifice. What made you choose a job dedicated to senior citizens?

I am a nurse by profession and have always worked on a medical floor and have been associated with the elderly since my training. I did not choose the job, the job chose me.

Also, being single makes a big difference as it is a very demanding but challenging job and takes up a lot of my time. There is no such thing as 9 to 5 here as things are always happening which are totally unplanned and need to be dealt with immediately.

I first came to Hong Kong in 1979 and worked at an antique shop in the Hilton Hotel, which was quite interesting as it helped me in adapting to the frenetic way of life in Hong Kong. But, soon after, I met the Chairman of the Matilda Hospital and was offered a post in the Out-patients Department. In 1984, I was offered a senior post in the Grayburn ward where I worked until 1991 when I left to work in Canada covering 4 different Hospitals through a Nursing agency. One of my strengths is being able to adapt to any situation and use it as a learning curve.

In 1997, I returned to the UK and worked for BUPA, and soon after, one of the CCC

Board Members was visiting and said they were looking for someone to manage the CCC. I came, had a look and realized that it was going to be a huge challenge for me. I was interviewed by the Chairman and some of the Board Members - and here I am.

What do you like about running this place? What do you enjoy?

I enjoy using all my skills - my nursing skills, my people skills though at times this is challenged, my management skills and being hands on in many ways. I have always been able to adapt to the challenges that life throws at me.

Do you feel you face new challenges every day or do you have them all covered now?

My day is never planned as I wear many hats and often have to deal with several issues on a daily basis. In the beginning, I faced many difficulties in the overall restructuring of the CCC and turning it into a Home with high standards in caring for the elderly. It took four years to get the Home to what it is today through sheer determination and perseverance, but it now needs to be updated.

When did CCC begin?

The Dean of St John's Cathedral convened a meeting of those concerned with the care of the elderly, and they realized there was an urgent need for setting up a home for the English-speaking elderly. And so CCC was born. It was incorporated in 1978. It began with eight residents, a warden and a cook. Most of the residents were fit and well. They went to work and came back in the evening to have their evening meal and sleep. It was more like a residential home.

Has the resident profile changed over the years?

Yes, it has. In the early days, we had more fun loving, able-bodied residents, but as the years went by, some of them required assistance with daily care and in 2001, the CCC was registered as a Care and Attention Home. Currently, the general profile has changed as some of the residents have become older and require even more nursing care. Indeed, the general requests

for accommodation are for persons requiring total care, which places more pressure on the nursing services.

But in terms of nationalities has it always been a mix?

It has always been a mix. It is a home for English speaking persons regardless of their nationalities, as long as they have a Hong Kong ID card. The CCC is a charitable institution and is the only English speaking Home in Hong Kong.

What is the vision behind this insistence on English-speaking residents?

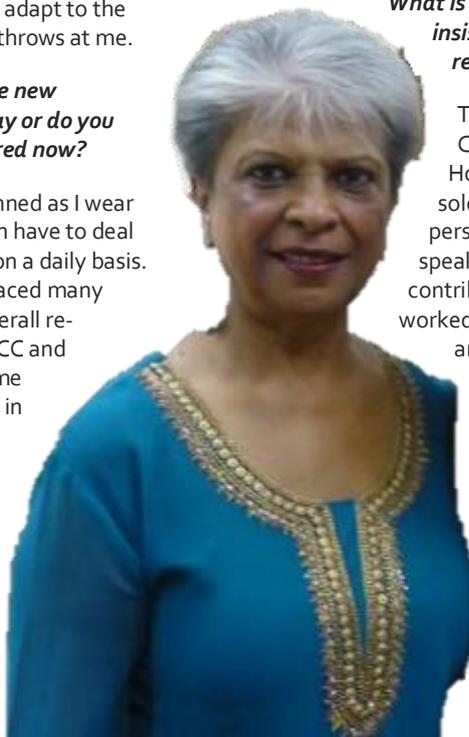
There are many Homes for Chinese speaking persons in Hong Kong but none catering solely for English speaking persons. Many English speaking persons have contributed their skills and worked for years in Hong Kong and made it their home and would find it very difficult to settle back in their own country. Hong Kong is their home and will always be - hence the need for an English-speaking Home.

Do the residents have to pay anything at all?

Everyone pays a fee. Some can afford the full fee whilst others are on CSSA and the CCC has to rely on donations and sponsorships, as we face a shortfall of approximately HK\$3-4 million each year to manage the place.

Do you have a selection procedure in place?

When there is an enquiry regarding a vacancy, I try and find out more about the potential resident, as this will depend on whether they are accommodated on the ground floor or the first floor. I will then set up an appointment for a medical check up with the Doctor for the Home and based on the results, we will make a decision for admission. CCC can house 39 residents, but at the moment we have 29. There are 14 single rooms on the ground floor and 23 (including 2 double rooms) on the first floor. In recent years, there has been a shift in the demand for rooms with most of the enquiries being for persons requiring total care.



How do you raise funds, get sponsors, donors?

We raise funds through donors, sponsors and fund-raising events. Some of our donors and sponsors have supported us for many years and we are indeed grateful for their continued support.

We normally obtain new sponsors and donors following our fund-raising events but this is only a one off donation. Hopefully, by making the CCC more visible through networking and social media and not only by word of mouth, we will be able to attract more sponsors and donors.

Could you tell us something about the work you do for the Community members who live around you?

CCC has around 75 Community members who live in their own homes or rented accommodation.

They join us for activities in the Home and for outings which we arrange. They are our potential clients.

The outings include afternoon teas or lunches which I arrange through our sponsors and try to make these events fun filled through games, talent competition and encouraging new friendships.

How do you make it a Home away from Home?

All residents have their own rooms, which allows them privacy, are clean and they are allowed to make it as homely as they possibly could. They have good nutritious food, are always nicely dressed, treated with kindness and respect and their needs including companionship catered for in the

form of volunteers and various visitors and activities. Any problems they may have are discussed with me or the staff and assistance given where possible.

What are some of the challenges that you face? What is the focus that you think you need for CCC going forward?

Presently, the most challenging is recruiting Nurses so as to continue the high standards of care we provide. The training has changed and most of the Nurses prefer to work in the Hospital Authority so we rely heavily on the Nursing agencies which in turn increases our staffing costs.

A second challenge is to fill our empty rooms by attracting residents who are fit and well instead of waiting until they need a lot of care.

Going forward, plans are currently being discussed to upgrade the facilities and make the rooms more attractive and to encourage more publicity and awareness of the CCC so that the Community is more within reach of the people who need it most.

How do you maintain work-life balance?

I have a life away from work and many good friends with whom I spend time. I love music; Yoga and meditation have helped me put things in perspective and not sweat the small stuff.

When I am at the CCC, I am on call a lot so, I try to go out of town to places where I can enjoy peace and quiet and spend valuable time with family.

UPCOMING FUND-RAISING EVENTS

Mardi Gras is here! The District Grand Lodge of Hong Kong and the Far East and the China Coast Community joint fund-raising Ball 2014 in aid of the China Coast Community - Saturday, September 27, 2014 at the Aberdeen Marina Club.

Book your tables NOW!

Contact Miss L.V. Singh ☎+852 2337 7266
✉ ccchome@netvigator.com



Golf Day is coming soon - Friday, November 21, 2014 at the Shek O Golf & Country Club.

Reserve your team of 4 today!

Contact Ms Joey Tong at Golfo07
✉ joey@golfo07.com

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of the China
Coast
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The China Coast Community, set up in 1979, is a care and attention home for the English-speaking elderly regardless of their financial circumstances. It is located at 63 Cumberland Road, Kowloon Tong, Kowloon, Hong Kong.

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