

## ARCHIVES OF SERVICE CIVIL INTERNATIONAL (SCI) MALAYSIA

### Introduction:

**SCI was started in 1920 by Pierre Ceresole**, a widely travelled Swiss mathematician and pacifist. He led a group of internationals in helping to rebuild a war devastated village on the battle fields of Verdun in France. In 1928 710 volunteers from 28 countries worked in Liechtenstein. Pierre Ceresole was never a man to go back on a step he had deliberately taken after mature consideration. Pierre cannot tolerate the smallest lie, even the “white lies”

In July/August 1989 when I was in Europe for the exchange program, I stayed with the SCI/IVS Archives collector, **Ralph Hagnauer** and his wife **Idy** at their home in Affoltern Switzerland for 2 days. Ralph showed me his archives on SCI Malaysia based on reports he had received from the SCI Asian Secretary and later the Secretaries’ and co-coordinators’ reports of SCI Penang and KL. Below is a summary of what I had recorded from Ralph’s archives as well as from my own records from 1976 till early 1990 when I was involved in SCI Penang, mainly as the Secretary.

I will have to leave the archive of SCI KL to Stephen Nah, and the programs that were organised in the 90’s onwards to the new SCI Penang team.

5 July 1962: Adnan b Haji Abdullah b/p Director of Social Welfare, Federation of Malaya wrote an official reply to the SCI Asian Secretary, Devinder Das Chopra in New Delhi as regards SCI’s offer for 2 volunteers to work in the department. Devinder was advised to contact the Ministry of External Affairs through the Indian Govt. (There was no photostatting machine during that time, so the letter in the archive had been re-typed and certified true copy.

10 Sept 1963: UNESCO Travel Grant to Nagaretnam as a representative from the Malayan Association of Youth Clubs (MAYC) to travel as a volunteer to India and Ceylon (Sri Lanka) with SCI.

20 Jan 1964: Valli Charis, SCI Asst Asian Secretary wrote to MAYC as regards Naga’s trip to Ceylon & India.

1968: SCI Asian Secretary Navam Appadurai wrote to John Oorjitham in Penang

5 April 1972: IVS International Secretary Th. Von Fellenberg propose to the Ministry of Social Affairs, Singapore for SCI Asian Secretary to be based there.

12 to 16 June 1972: SCI Asian Secretary, Navam Appadurai in Malaysia

9 to 16 July 1972: SCI Assistant Asian Secretary, Bien C. Lap visit Malaysia

**26 August 1972: SCI Penang was officially registered with the Registrar of Societies.**

20 Feb 1973: Letter from SCI Asian Secretariat to the Prime Minister of Malaysia, Tun Razak for SCI to have Asian Secretary in Malaysia.

1973: Draft of Memorandum of Understanding between the Govt of Malaysia and SCI for the establishment of Asian Secretary in Malaysia.

I suppose the request was not granted and the Asian Secretary (AS) continued to function from either Sri Lanka or India, pending on who is the AS.

John Oorjitham once a Headmaster with the Ramakrishna School was the founder President of SCI Penang and after his demise in July 1976, Stephen Nah took over. (Perhaps Stephen will be able to fill up the gap between 1973 to 1976). The late John Oorjitham and Nagaretnam had worked together with Lawrence Cheah on SCI since 1965 and many others like Anji Suppiah, Letchumi Oorjitham, Mr n Mrs Rafaie and Mrs Sharma.

13 March 1977: AGM of SCI Penang:	President:	Stephen Nah
	Vice President:	Sunny Lim
	Secretary:	Ruby Eu
	Treasurer:	Kamala
	Committee members	Sunny Heah Guna Edward Oorjitham Bani (Naga's brother)

1977: International Secretary Franco Perna visit Penang

1978: Rose Hale from Tasmania, Australia serve as a volunteer in Penang, working at the Family Planning Association, Spastics Centre and others besides helping SCI Penang  
Tom Ryder from Ireland serve as a volunteer in SCI Penang, organising work-camps besides working at the various Homes, etc.

22 Jan 1978: SCI Penang AGM: (Stephen Nah had left for KL)	
President:	Guna Edward Oorjitham
Vice President:	Boey Chee Ho
Secretary:	Letchumi Oorjitham
Treasurer:	Kamala
Committee member:	Wong Pow Yoke Subramaniam Ruby Eu

Tan Siew Luang was involved in SCI work from 1970 and served as a SCI LTV (Long-term volunteer) from 1972 to 1980 in Malaysia, India and Northern Ireland. In 1981 upon the persuasion of the late Navam appadurai (AS) she initiated the start of SCI-KL working closely with Stephen Nah.

Ruby Eu's maiden trip out of Malaysia to attend the ACM in Sri Lanka alone in 1978.

Ong Kung Wai served as our SCI Penang co-ordinator during after the International 10-day work camp at the Silver Jubilee Old Folks Home, Sungei Dua Penang in 1979

Ganesh Rasangam later took over the role and also became the National co-ordinator when SCI KL started.

Yeap Lien Tarn served in the Asian Executive Committee (AEC) having been the President of SCI-Penang for several terms after Guna left.

Ganeas Dorairaju of SCI-KL served as a paid full-time Asian Field co-ordinator and worked with the two groups in Malaysia.

Leo Carlos composed a song for SCI – “Working Together in SCI”

In the **60s** SCI pioneered sponsored walks in Penang and Ipoh to raise funds for the Mentally Retarded while laying the ground-work for SCI to be registered in Penang, Malaysia.

In the **70s** SCI Penang organised short-term and week-end work and study camps. SCI work was always carried out with the true muhibah spirit by volunteers from various back-grounds, racial and spiritual beliefs at the following:

Kampong Madrasah Spastics Centre	Kampong Tanjung Bungah St Nicholas School & Home	Family Planning Association Society of the Blind (SBWM)
Silver Jubilee Old Folks Home	Little Sisters of the Poor	Mentally Retarded School
Malay family in Teluk Bahang	Cleanathon in Pantai Kerachut	Mentally Retarded Balik Pulau

In the **80s to early 90s** week-end projects and work cum study camps continued to be organised by SCI Penang in some of the above as well as in Orphanages and Child Protection Shelters, besides having their regular committee meetings, fellowship gatherings and the following:

A Charity Premiere, “Blackout” was organised to raise funds for SCI Penang projects.

Joint SBWM / SCI Telematch for the Disabled at the Penang Municipal Youth Park

Tandem cycling with the visually impaired were organised round Penang Island, down to Taiping and Maxwell Hill and also tandem expeditions all the way to Ipoh, KL and Singapore.

Bungalow stays and camping by the beach were also organised for the physically and visually impaired.

Canoeing for the physically and visually impaired and once Allen took them canoeing round the Island and volunteers brought food for them when they camped at various beaches.

A team of volunteers got together to compile a collection of community inspirational songs.

Christmas carolling with a multi racial / religious team were organised to raise funds for our projects as well as to foster good-will and fellow-ship.

SCI Penang and KL hosted Asian Executive Committee Meetings (AECM) & Asian Committee Meeting (ACM) as well as Asian and European SCI/IVS visitors and volunteers in Penang.

SCI Penang and KL organised local, Asian and International work-camps at the Ipoh School for the Mentally Retarded, CETDEM Organic Farm in Sungai Buluh as well as at the St Nicholas Home, Spastics Centre (now called Cerebal Palsy Centre).

23 April 1989: SCI Penang and KL organised a “Work-shop on Child Rights”

29 July to 6 August 1989: SCI Penang and KL organised 1<sup>st</sup> Women’s Work-camp in Malaysia

22 October 1989: SCI Penang organised the **1<sup>st</sup> Peace Fun Run** with Peace Exhibition, multi-racial presentations from the physically and visually impaired

Committee members have also participated in the Asian Executive Committee Meetings (AECM), Asian Committee Meeting (ACM) in Sri Lanka, India, Bangladesh and Nepal, as well as being observers in the International Executive Committee Meeting (IECM)

Volunteers from Malaysia also participated as volunteers in the Asia and Europe Exchange work-camps in various countries.

Over the years in SCI Penang, other than then those mentioned in the earlier committees, several other individuals have served in the Committee as well as working together in the programs, work-camps and other community projects:

Early 70’s to late 70’s

L Ganason	Nagaretnam	Anji Suppiah	Irene Chuah
Mrs Rafeaie	Aunty Kamala	Julian	Seow Hooi Cheng
En Jabbar	Helen	Mrs Sharma	Casper

Late 70’s to early 90’s (some come and go while Henry remains active in SCI Penang from 1987)

Allen Oorjitham	Suzanne Hor	Jenny Chew	Raymond Ong	Bonnie Loo
Tan Kah Hooi	Ganesh Rasangam	Ong Kung Wai	Yeap Lien Tarn	Daisy Ong
Mrs Yeap	Anderson Oh	Diana Chan	Khoo Boo Teen	Kiru
Lilian Sivaram	<b>Henry Goh</b>	Marina	Dinesh	Malee
Lim Ban Poh	Abdul Rahim	Mohd Afandi	Harjit Singh	Malar
Kala Devi	Wong Loy Ming	Chueng Kwan Leng	Roger Looi	Jeya Ruby
Debbie	Saodah	Zainab	Revathi	Johnny Goh
Leo Carlos	Bernie	Tan Boon Hock	Rosie Tan	Sheila
James	Karupiah	Ooi Beng Leong	Lim Kar How	Pasupathy

**A brief write-up of SCI Malaysia by first LTV (long-term volunteer) and the start of SCI-KL**

Tan Siew Luang had participated in the international work-camp in 1970 that was held at the Pure Life Society, thereafter as a long-term volunteer from 1972 to 1973 based in the Mentally Retarded School, Kg Tawar, Ipoh (together with a British volunteer.)

Subsequently Siew as she is fondly called did long-term volunteering in India from 1974 to 1975. She met Stephen Nah in 1974 in Penang before leaving for India and Sue in 1975 upon her return. Siew then went away to work in Northern Ireland from 1979 to 1980.

In 1981, she was persuaded by the late Mr Navam (her mentor whom she held much respect ) to start SCI group in KL, with the help of a Dutch expatriate. A Children Play Group was set up in the then squatter in Sentul until she left for Japan in 1984. During the period from 1982 to 1984 Siew worked with Stephen in KL – a dynamic, cool, energetic and generous YOUNG man then!! Several week-end, National and International short-term work-camps were held in Selangor at various times after the group's registration in February 1982.

“Working Together in SCI” by Leo Carlos of SCI-Penang

1) We are people, you and I  
We're all FRIENDS in SCI  
We are one big family  
Yes, and we believe in  
Peace and harmony.

2) Working together, best as we can  
Working together, for peace in the land  
Working for the love of a brotherman  
Working together hand in hand.

3) Come and join us, you'll know why  
We're all together in SCI  
There ain't nothing we don't share  
Yes, and there's always good fun in the air

4) Working together, best as we can  
Working together, for peace in the land  
Working for the love of a brotherman  
Working together, hand in hand

5) If you've never seen time fly  
Come experience SCI  
There are always things to do  
Yes, and there's always  
A place for you and me

6) Working together, best as we can  
Working together for peace in the land  
Working together for the love of a brotherman  
Working together, hand in hand.

Some inspiring words extracted from SCI reports, etc.

“With so many political leaders in Europe and in the world spouting words about breaking down the barriers of misunderstanding and prejudice between peoples, words which go largely unheeded, it is most refreshing and heartening to discover people who are actively, though less vocally, working towards that end.” Harry Hill

“Practical personal service is at the root of all SCI work”

“Be willing to learn from each other at any time”

“Promotion of International co-operation & understanding, cultivation of tolerance and patience, acceptance of others, with the ultimate goal of achieving PEACE.”

“In a spirit of humility and compassion, acts as a catalyst for change within both the individual and society.”

“Those working for SCI, a world-wide movement dedicated to the promotion of Peace, believe that all men are capable of living together with mutual respect and without recourse to violence to solve conflicts between nations, communities or people.”

“SCI workers put their ideals to the test in hard physical labour and come out of the experience enriched and with the knowledge that they have given invaluable assistance to the community in which they served.”

“Prejudices and misunderstandings are destructive to the foundations of human development and international peace. SCI workers are sure that better understanding among individuals will create an atmosphere out of which lasting peace can eventually grow!”

“It was long years ago that I travelled first time far away. I still feel the impact of such an experience – in a sense, far away into the unknown and plunging oneself totally with an open mind – is extremely valuable.” Valli Seshan, International Secretary

“Through SCI, we somehow seek to be more global in sharing a sense of responsibility in breaking down barriers and prejudices that exist between peoples.”

**SCI Vision & Mission** (taken from Souvenir Program SCI's 90<sup>th</sup> year Anniversary Dec 2010)

“We believe in a world of peace, social justice and sustainable development, where all people live together with mutual respect and without recourse to any form of violence to solve conflict.”

&

“We are dedicated to promoting a culture of peace by organizing international volunteering projects with local and global impact.”