



STETS News

Singapore Tertiary English Teachers Society

2004/2005 Issue 1

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Message from the President

While we managed to get a brief Stop Press announcement into the last newsletter after April's AGM, this is the first opportunity to report fully on officers, committees etc. for the new academic year. It is also a chance to write to you all as the new STETS President.

At first sight it may seem as though there has been some kind of palace revolution, as STETS has a completely new set of officers this year, and quite a few executive committee changes! In fact all those not seeking reelection had eminently good reasons for not being able to continue - from retirement through new work responsibilities to the different but equally imperative demands of PhD work and a young baby - and we who have taken over see our main task as continuing along the path they have been travelling so successfully.

At the bottom of this page we report on the presentation made to Manee Lugg in recognition of the outstanding role she has played as President over the past four years. I don't need to tell you that she will be a difficult act to follow, but I shall do my best!

Voluntary societies such as STETS, even more than other organisations, depend on the support of their members to help them flourish. In a period when there seem to be ever greater demands on our time in the academic world, such support is not easy to give; but I think you'll agree that the opportunities STETS provides for professional upgrading and networking across the tertiary institutions are well worth preserving.

I'm sure I can count on your help to ensure STETS remains a valuable resource for the language and communication community in Singapore.

Richard Slessor

Presentation to Manee Lugg



Presentation to Manee Lugg by Richard Slessor

The new executive committee felt it was important to do something concrete, on behalf of all STETS members, to express our thanks to Manee Lugg for everything she has done for the society over the years - and in particular during her presidency.

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At the executive committee meeting on August 5, Manee was presented with a Robinsons gift token. We hope that she will buy something she really wants, and think of us occasionally as she uses it!

Manee may have retired from the STETS executive committee, but she remains actively involved with the society as a member of the Special Projects committee.

Looking Back...Manee Lugg Reminisces



Manee Lugg, as STETS President, making a presentation to Paul Nation, 2001

Richard (current STETS President) asked me to 'do something for the newsletter'. So, here it is: a brief account which may be of historical interest.

I first heard of 'STETS' in 1984, when my husband was the Hon Secretary to the then President, Edwin Goh, the Director of the Language Proficiency Centre (LPC). Maurice Baker was the Patron. (He later became the SAAL Patron.) This was not long after it had been founded in 1982 by a few keen educationists headed by Chris Mills and the late Professor Lee Kok Cheong of ELPU, NUS. Never did I imagine that one day, I would be very involved with STETS, serving as Secretary for 9 years and as President for 4 years!

My involvement started in 1989 when I was working at RELC. Sheer desperation on the part of those looking for members to join the Exco led Liang Mun Ling to approach me, just before the AGM. I was very surprised when she asked me if I could be the STETS Secretary. I was not sure, but Mun Ling was very persuasive so I said I would give it a go. On the same day, I got a call from Tony O'Brien who was the President designate, and the rest, as they say -- is history

Tony was the first President (1989-1990) for whom I was the Hon Sec, followed by Christine Tan (NP, 1990-1992), Dorothy Cheong (NTU, 1992-1994), Liang Mun Ling (TP, 1994-1995), Nelly Kwa (SP, 1995-1996), Khong Chooi Peng (NTU, 1997-2000). I took a year's break when Wong Lian Aik was the President (1996-1997). This was the year before Chooi Peng started her Presidency which lasted for three years. However, I was the Secretary for only 2 years (1997-1999).

Since Tony was from (the) British Council, he conducted all meetings there and this explains why almost all STETS committee meetings have been there ever since. The hospitality has been continued by his successors: Graham Millington, John Knagg, Barbara Hewitt, and now, Martin Hope.

At the start of Christine Tan's Presidency, STETS revived its association with IATEFL when it became an 'Institution' member. This was changed to 'Affiliated' member during Dorothy's time. I remember meeting Alan Maley with Christine to negotiate the former, and Magdeline du Vivier with Dorothy, the latter.

Dorothy was the President who initiated STETS overseas educational trips. In 1995, a group of members went to two universities in China. A revised version of

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STETS logo (similar to the present one) was also designed.

STETS went overseas twice more during Lian Aik's Presidency (Taiwan in 1996) and during mine (Chiang Mai in 2000). We also had plans for going to Israel, India and Turkey, but they did not materialise. However, I believe that the present Exco will follow up on a trip to KL, in the near future.

As you know, STETS is a member of 6 IATEFL SIGs. Three - CALL, BESIG, and Learner Independence/Self-access -- were very active during Mun Ling's year as President.

Chooi Peng was instrumental in organizing the first international conference jointly with NTU and IATEFL TEA in 1999. She also started the STETS website which was then managed by her school at NTU.

I had thought being approached to become the secretary was a real surprise, but being approached to become the President was a real shock. Why? If you look at all the names of the Presidents I mentioned earlier, you will see that they were 'heads' or 'deputy-heads' of their respective organisations. What was I? Although there was no written rule in the STETS Constitution, the understanding was there that the President should be someone with seniority. What would my Director think? How would I get support since I didn't belong to these levels of high ranking people? However, Chooi Peng assured me that she had checked with my Head of Department (Ng Chee Hian, who was the President before Tony took over.) and he had no objection. I checked with him myself and he gave me his full support.

I asked those who attended the AGM in April 2000 for their support without which I would not have been able to do the job. I was rather apprehensive but deep in my heart I always know that STETS people always support each other. I also knew how STETS 'works' having been its secretary for 9 years. So, I started my first year as President!

Over the next four years, I followed the STETS tradition of organising talks/workshops every month and 2 workshops a year, a 'smallish' one at the beginning and an annual one at the end of the year. The highlight was when STETS celebrated its 21st Anniversary in 2003 with a public lecture and a workshop by David Nunan, followed by an anniversary dinner at the Singapore Recreation Club on the Padang. (Bonus: David's rendition of songs by the Rolling Stones!)

With help, suggestions and support from the committee members STETS can now boast its own website. The LC Review looks professional, so does the membership card with the IATEFL logo. Professor Koh Tai Ann, continues to be our Patron. I must thank Judith Lindley for inviting her at the beginning of my Presidency. And, thanks to Lian Aik, STETS archives and materials have found a home at CELC, NUS, where it all started.

Looking back, I was very fortunate to have the opportunity to work with colleagues from all institutions who gave me their support. I have made many friends and very often felt touched when people came up to me to say that they wanted to take on certain jobs because of me. Some of my colleagues at SP thought I was mad to stay with STETS for so long. I was and am very sane and believe that STETS is good for all tertiary teachers out there in Singapore.

Thank you everyone who supported me. Without your help, I would not have been able to do what I did. THANK YOU!

Manee Lugg

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STETS AGM - Election of Office Bearers



STETS Executive Committee members 2004-05

The following office bearers were elected at the AGM in April 2004.

President:	Richard Slessor (TP)
Vice President:	Phyllis Wachob (NTU)
Hon Secretary:	Sandra Kemp (TP)
Hon treasurer:	Grace Kwan (ITE)
Membership Sec:	Lee Hwee Hoon (NTU)

Election of Auditors

Ann Hendricks (NUS)
Happy Goh (NUS)

Institutional Representatives

British Council:	David Kemp
Institute of Technical Education:	Bhasula Somanesan
Nanyang Polytechnic:	vacant
National Institute of Education:	Cynthia Macknish
Nanyang Technological University:	Loke Wei Sue
National University of Singapore:	Gan-Lim Meng Choo
Ngee Ann Polytechnic:	Irene Tan
Regional Language Centre:	Chin Soo Fun
Republic Polytechnic:	vacant
Singapore Polytechnic:	Maira Wee
Temasek Polytechnic:	Tiew Lee Ching
Associate Members:	Lee Hwee Hoon

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WebBites

Since the migration of the STETS website, in 2003, from the NTU site to the current one, there have been a number of developments and new features added to the website. These exciting additions are as follows:

Events (<http://www.stets.org.sg/stetsEvents.htm>)

Besides the calendar of STETS activities for the whole year, there is information about conferences in the region compiled mostly by Richard Slessor. This is a specific up-to-date list of seminars and conferences in language teaching in the Asia-Pacific region.

Workshop (<http://www.stets.org.sg/stetsAnnualWorkshop.htm>)

The Workshop page specifically highlights the annual STETS workshop and any details concerning the workshop. In addition, there are links to reports on previous workshops.

Online STETS Language & Communication Reviews (<http://www.stets.org.sg/stetspublications.htm>)

The STETS Language & Communication Reviews are now placed online. Back issues from 1987 to 2002 contain the contents list only but full papers in pdf format are available on the Internet, starting volume 2, issue 1, 2003.

Online Links/Resources (<http://www.stets.org.sg/stetsResources.htm>)

Ann Hendricks and Richard Slessor compiled a list of useful language teaching and learning links (with a short description) which have been uploaded onto the STETS website recently. Browse through them and share with all STETS members your feedback and comments via the STETS Forum (<http://www.stets.org.sg/forum>). If you have used any good online resources and would like to recommend them, please email your contribution to the webmaster (webmaster@stets.org.sg). Indicate the URL or website address and include a short description of the site, i.e. what you find most useful, the targeted students etc.

STETS Forum (<http://www.stets.org.sg/forum>)

We welcome you to check out the STETS Forum, register as a member, and start sharing and exchanging ideas with other fellow STETS colleagues. It's just a few simple steps to register. Should you encounter any difficulties, please email the forum moderator David Kemp (David.Kemp@britishcouncil.org.sg).

I would appreciate comments or feedback from you to make the STETS website an active site. Email me at webmaster@stets.org.sg. Also, I hope to be able to update you periodically on any new developments on the website. Click on the [STETS website](#) now and place it in your Internet Favorite folder.

KC Lee

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New Journal Editor



Rohini Rajagopalan has reluctantly concluded that the amount of travelling she has been doing since her retirement makes it difficult for her to continue as Chief Editor of the *STETS Language & Communication Review*. I'm sure you will join with me in thanking her for stepping into Lisa Meyer's shoes after Lisa's return to Canada, and filling them so ably!

I'm delighted to say that Deng Xudong has agreed to take on the Chief Editor role, and is currently working on his first issue. Xudong, who works at NUS's Centre for English Language Communication, is no stranger to the task of putting the journal together, as he has been a member of the editorial board for several years.

Like his predecessors, he will very much welcome your contributions to the journal - whether academic papers; reviews of workshops (STETS-sponsored or otherwise); practical suggestions for good practice in the classroom; or book reviews. Now that the journal is available online, your writing will be accessible to a truly worldwide readership.

For further details, please visit <http://www.stets.org.sg/stetspublications.htm>; or you can write to Xudong at editor@stets.org.sg.

Richard Slessor

Date Claimer

Take out your diary and make a date for the main STETS workshop for this year which will be conducted by Phil Towndrow of NIE on Friday 26 November and the morning of Saturday 27 November. Further details can be found in the Forthcoming Events section of this newsletter and full publicity will be coming your way very shortly.

Can Anyone Help?

One of the visitors to our web site would like to get in touch with a previous contributor to the STETS journal, Mr Christopher Royal-Dawson. If anyone has his contact details please email Sandra Kemp at secretary@stets.org.sg.

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Call for writers

If you are interested in research and writing about language teacher research in Asia, then you might like to visit the following website for more information about a Call for Writers - Language Teacher Research Series. The series editor is Tom Farrell who is well-known to many STETS members.

http://www.tesol.org/s_tesol/bin.asp?CID=198&DID=2163&DOC=FILE.PDF

Forthcoming Events

Saturday 21 August 2004

Level 8, Room 803A
SEAMEO Regional
Language Centre
(RELC),

9.30 a.m.
(refreshments from
9.00)

INDIAN WORDS IN ENGLISH

You are sitting on the verandah of your bungalow in your pyjamas, waiting for your hair to dry after shampooing it, and looking out towards the jungle beyond as you sip a glass of punch and enjoy a bowl of mango and sticky rice. As you do so, you may not be aware that you are participating in a sentence containing no less than eight words of Indian origin!

Dr V R Narayanaswami, currently visiting Singapore from India, is an authority on this fascinating topic. Don't miss this opportunity to hear him.

Thursday 30 September 2004

Room 306/307,
British Council, 30
Napier Road

6.30 p.m. -
refreshments in the
British Council café
from 6pm

USING THE INTERACTIVE WHITEBOARD FOR LANGUAGE TEACHING - AN INTRODUCTION

Barbara Baird of the British Council will demonstrate an impressive new addition to the technology available to language and communication teachers. Barbara has had over thirty years of teaching experience in schools and language centres in Australia, Hungary, Singapore, Germany and Slovenia. She is currently ICT Co-ordinator at the Council in Singapore

The presentation will illustrate some of the ways in which teachers at the British Council are currently using the interactive whiteboard, and there will be a chance for participants to try out a few things on the board themselves. The session will end with an opportunity for questions.

Saturday 16 October 2004

Venue to be
finalised

ENGLISH IN SINGAPORE: TWO VARIATIONS ON A THEME

Low Ee Ling and Adam Brown of NIE offer two contrasting presentations, both nevertheless linked to their most recent book:

Low Ee Ling: How to write a book in ten uneasy lessons

This talk will be a platform for sharing the background to writing the book. In particular, the talk will cover how the idea of writing the book was conceptualised, the process of getting it published, how copyright issues of photographs

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were handled and how the original Asian Customised Edition was beefed up. Finally, an outline of the chapters will also be presented.

Adam Brown: Singapore English vowels

This talk will cover the typical vowel sounds of Singapore English (contained in Chapter 8 of the book). In addition to a description of vowel features, attention will be paid to criteria by which we may judge whether these features have any serious consequences, including frequency, spelling and intelligibility.

Finally, there will be a Q&A session, giving the audience a chance to put their own questions about Singapore English, and about the book, to the authors.

Friday/Saturday
26-27 November
2004

STETS WORKSHOP: TEACHERS, LEARNERS AND COMPUTERS IN CURRENT LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION TEACHING

National Institute of Education

Phil Towndrow of NIE will conduct this year's main STETS workshop, on Friday 26 November and the morning of Saturday 27. New media and the escalating needs of today's learners are constantly restructuring educational landscapes. Thus, knowing why information and communication technology (ICT) is useful has become a key element of knowing how to use it effectively. But how can teachers balance institutional goals and constraints in order to use ICT in an informed way?

The workshop explores this conundrum by identifying, describing and analysing issues relating to the roles and qualities of teachers, students and ICT in contemporary language and communication teaching contexts. The objective of this investigation is to derive a set of jointly-constructed context-sensitive pedagogical principles that can be used to guide L & C teachers in the formulation of action plans relating to their work.

Drawing on their ICT-based experiences, participants will work collaboratively in a state-of-the-art multimedia learning environment to generate and respond to a series of case-studies that require innovative solutions. Groups will conceptualise, present and critique their work using networked hardware and software. Finally, all participants in the workshop will receive a CD-RW of the resources they produced in their sessions.

Fuller details shortly on the Workshop page of the STETS website (and in your Inbox); meanwhile, please note the dates in your diary!

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January 2005 (To be arranged)

February 2005 **GETTING YOUR ARTICLE PUBLISHED**

(Date and venue to be finalised) Richard Slessor of TP, a publisher for many years, will look at how to prepare an article for publication, and how to go about getting it accepted.

March 2005 (To be arranged)

April 2005 **STETS AGM / TALK**

(Date and venue to be finalised) The idea of combining the AGM and dinner with an interesting presentation was a great success this year, and we are planning to do something similar in 2005.

Call for Papers

The *STETS Language & Communication Review* invites the submission of unpublished articles concerning aspects of the teaching and learning of English proficiency and communication skills in tertiary institutions in Singapore and Southeast Asia. Specifically, articles may discuss the following issues related to teaching and learning of English in tertiary education:

- syllabus and curriculum design
- testing and evaluation
- teacher training, pedagogy
- classroom practices
- computer-assisted language learning
- other issues

We also welcome submissions of the following:

- reports of original research
- review articles
- bibliographic essays
- book reviews
- reviews of workshops (STETS-sponsored or otherwise)

Submission guidelines:

- Length - between 1500 and 6000 words.
- Abstract to be included with your submission.
- A 50-word author biography to be included with your submission.
- Your contact details to be included with your submission.

Articles will be submitted to a blind review by at least two of our Editorial Board members and / or subject reviewers. The Editor reserves the right to edit articles for format consistency when this does not alter the substance.

For more details, please refer to the *Contributor's Guidelines* which is available from your STETS representative or at the STETS website www.stets.org.sg

We encourage you to e-mail your articles. However, if you mail your article, please include a soft copy on floppy disk.

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STETS Membership

The annual subscription fee is S\$10.00 which is renewable either at the end of June or December. STETS is a non-profit organization and does not charge GST for its membership and event registration fees.

Two types of membership are available:

Ordinary Membership: for full-time academic staff in tertiary institutions in Singapore.

Associate Membership: for anyone interested both in and outside Singapore.

Just complete the Membership Application Form which is available from your STETS representative or download a copy from www.stets.org.sg and send it to us. As a member, you can enjoy the following perks:

- opportunities to present your papers at IATEFL conferences
- 10% discount at Pansing RELC
- free copies of the L&C Review
- invitations to professional talks
- reduced workshop fees
- AGM lunches
- establishment of professional ties with all tertiary institutions in Singapore and associate members from other institutions and professional societies

Call for Speakers

We would like to ask all our readers to contribute suggestions for possible speakers and/or topics for events. The presenters could be locally-based or from overseas. The more ideas the better!

If you or someone you know, are willing to give a talk or workshop that would benefit STETS members, please contact Sandra Kemp at secretary@stets.org.sg

If you would like to publicize in our Newsletter, your research or your institute's events, that would be interesting to our members, Sandra Kemp at secretary@stets.org.sg