

## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE - OFA 85<sup>th</sup> Annual Report**

This present term of the Management Committee has proven to be quite momentous for The Old Frees' Association and I wish to express my sincere thanks to the members for giving their undivided support to the President and the Management Committee.

Without this support, we would not have been able to carry out our usual activities such as the annual games, triangular games, visits to fruit farms, patrons and trustees' night, annual dinner and members' night.

More than all these activities, there was also the launch of the Penang Free School Bicentenary celebrations by our Royal Patron, His Royal Highness The Raja of Perlis, Tuanku Syed Sirajuddin Jamalullail, at the Eastern & Oriental Hotel in George Town, Penang, during which time His Royal Highness also unveiled FIDELIS, the commemorative book of The Old Frees' Association.

I thank the members for giving the mandate to the Management Committee to produce FIDELIS. This commemorative book records the almost long-forgotten history of our association in the past 89 years and it carries the long and storied history of our 196-years-old Alma Mater, Penang Free School, as well.

I wish to record my appreciation to the editorial team namely, Mr David Hwang Hong Shi, Mr Quah Seng Sun, Ms Molly Ooi Siew Choo and Mr William Tan Poh Eng, for putting in so much effort within the short period of four months to make FIDELIS a reality and success story.

Regarding the OFA Bay Avenue clubhouse, the Management Committee held numerous meetings with the gaming management consultant, Eternal Leisure Sdn Bhd (ELSB), to revise the terms and conditions in the Management Agreement entered between ELSB and OFA. It took about six months to reach an amicable compromise with ELSB on an improved terms and conditions for us. Thereafter we took possession of OFA Bay Avenue in December 2011 and we opened the clubhouse officially on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2012.

I wish to thank the OFA Annexe Clubhouse and Jackpot Operation Sub-committee Chairman, Mr Saw Saik Mun, and the sub-committee members, namely, Mr Tan Heng Swee, Mr Kenny Wong and Mr Lee Eu Beng, and a few Management Committee members, namely, Mr Billy Yeo, Mr Kevin Ooi and Mr Lo Liang Kheng for all their effort in ensuring that the OFA Bay Avenue clubhouse is ready for members before the end of April 2012.

The Management Committee has revamped the OFA website and upgraded the WiFi Internet connection at the OFA Northam Road clubhouse. The Management Committee also renovated the library at OFA Northam Road to erect a physical partition with a door to separate the library facilities from the multi-media section. This also provides a single entrance and exit to the books and reading area.

It is pertinent to note that 2011-2012 was another successful term for the Indoor Games and the Outdoor Sports sections.

The Indoor Games successfully organised its yearly activities such as the Annual Indoor Games Snooker and Billiards Tournament, Annual Snooker League and the traditional 7-up Tournament. The OFA Chess team also participated in the Penang Chess League and the USM Open with commendable achievements, including winning the latter tournament.

The Outdoor Sports Section successfully organised the Annual Games, Triangular Games between OFA, OXA and MBSU, football seven-a-side tournament, hockey six-a-side tournament and cycling.

Beside these success stories, there are two main unresolved matters.

You may remember that the plans submitted by the OFA to the MPPP to regularise the alleged illegal extensions to the Members Lounge (Tavern), the Gymnasium and the Jackpot Room had been rejected on 12<sup>th</sup> Oct 2010 due to non-compliance of the 50-feet building line imposed by the State Planning Committee for protocol roads such as Jalan Sultan Ahmad Shah (Northam Road).

The previous Management Committee filed an application to the State of Penang Appeal Board to review the MPPP's decision to reject the OFA's submission of plan to regularise the alleged illegal extensions. This Management Committee held several meetings with MPPP to resolve the matter in an amicable manner but we have yet to receive any decision or outcome from the authorities and the matter is still pending at the Appeal Board.

On the second matter, the Legal Affairs sub-committee had reviewed The Rules of The Old Frees' Association (also known as OFA Constitution) and given the proposals to our solicitors to draw up the proposed amendments before the OFA Constitution can be presented for members' approval.

These two outstanding items notwithstanding, the Management Committee and the various sub-committees have completed a wide range of activities during this term, and I would like to thank them for all their effort and contributions to our association.

*Fortis Atque Fidelis*

M.S. Rajendren  
President