



**ANNUAL REPORT**

**2013**

# President's Address

*A year ago, the new VSS team set out to reinvigorate the society. Thanks to the efforts of many individuals, both from within and outside of the Exco, I think we have mostly succeeded.*

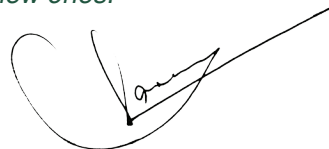
*The **Veg Buddy** program (brainchild of our Education Officer, Ashley) proved to be very popular and had participants going veg or vegan for 21 days. Veg mentors shared their experience and offered tips on how to successfully (and enjoyably) sustain a meat-free lifestyle. I'm happy to note that after each run of the program, at least a few of the participants decided to continue on a plant-based diet for good.*

*VSS has been on Facebook for some years and has garnered around 6,500 fans. In 2013, we bolstered our online presence with the launch of our YouTube channel ([www.youtube.com/user/vegetariansocietysg](http://www.youtube.com/user/vegetariansocietysg)). The first video clip, **Plant Strong**, is presented by veg weightlifter, AngHwee, and features interviews with cardiologist, Dr. Ong Hean Yee, Louis Ng of ACRES and Natalia Angel of Veggie Thursday. We hope to continue uploading varied and inspiring videos on a regular basis.*

*After years of discussion and planning, the **'Why Love One but Eat the Other'** MRT campaign is finally underway! The fundraising drive was launched in mid-December 2013 and has so far been very encouraging – we've reached close to 70% of the target amount. For 2 weeks, from 27 March to 9 April 2014, all 96 platform screen doors of the City Hall MRT station will feature a message that hopefully gets people to look at farm animals in a kinder light.*

*One area in which we hope to do more is our engagement with volunteers. Mark Soh, one of the organisers of **Veg Meetup**, recently wrote to me about this, suggesting that we introduce a volunteer induction program. It is certainly a good idea and one we hope to implement.*

*All in all, it's been a good year for VSS and 2014 looks very promising as well. We look forward to more collaborations with old friends and many new ones!*



**Clarence Tan, President  
Vegetarian Society (Singapore)**

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# Minutes of the 14th Annual General Meeting

**Date:** Saturday, 2 March 2013  
**Time:** 3:30pm to 6:30pm  
**Venue:** Kampung Senang Holistic Lifestyle Centre,  
Blk 106 Aljunied Crescent #01-205, Singapore 380106

**Number of members present:** 42  
**Number of proxies:** 13  
**Number of observers/non-members:** 4

## PRESIDENT'S WELCOME

1.1 Dr. George Jacobs, VSS President, took the chair, welcomed and thanked everyone for coming to the 14th Annual VSS AGM, and gave his opening address.

## TO RECEIVE & ADOPT MINUTES OF THE 13th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

2.1 Dr. Jacobs asked everyone to look through the minutes of the 13th VSS AGM.

2.2 Ms. Michelle Ayn Tessensohn moved that the minutes be accepted, and Ms. Ayura Ong & Mr. Wong Koi Hin seconded. The minutes of the 13th AGM were received and adopted unanimously.

## TO RECEIVE & ADOPT THE 2012 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

3.1 Dr. Jacobs invited everyone to go through the 2012 Annual Report and welcomed any questions, comments, suggestions and disagreements. Hard copies were handed out to attendees.

3.2 Dr. Jacobs added that The Heart Smart Oil Free Cookbook was going for only \$16 while it costs more than \$25 overseas. The book was inspired by Dr Caldwell B. Esselstyn, Jr. and his wife Ann, who visited Singapore in March 2011 to give talks on his oil-free diet against heart disease. They gave feedback that they liked the book a lot.

3.3 Dr. Jacobs opened the floor for members to accept and adopt the Annual Report.

3.4 Ms. Amelia Wong proposed that the Annual Report be accepted and Ms. Ami Mehta seconded. The Annual Report was adopted unanimously with none opposing.

## TO RECEIVE & ADOPT THE FINANCIAL REPORT FOR 2012

4.1 Dr. Jacobs invited queries and comments on the VSS 2012 Financial Report.

4.2 Mr. Lee Nguan enquired about what made up the "sponsorship" on the report. Mr. Navaneethan Neminathan, VSS Treasurer, clarified that it covers the new cookbook and Dr. Jacobs added that a few vegetarian and organic companies like Zenxin and Sukha House had contributed.

4.3 Mr. Mark Soh asked how we added up "Bad Debt". Mr. Navaneethan explained that it was the rental fee for equipment loaned out and still not paid for after 2 years. Professional fees included fees for the visit of Dr. and Mrs. Caldwell Esselstyn, who gave a series of talks and met with the Minister of Health and his team of cardiologists.

4.4 With no further questions on the finances, Dr. Jacobs invited members to receive and adopt the financial report. Mr. Gangasudhan proposed that the Financial Report be adopted & Mr. Mark Soh seconded. The Financial Report was adopted unanimously with no opposition.

## TO ELECT OFFICERS FOR FRESH TERM OF OFFICE

5.1 Dr. Jacobs nominated a slate for the election as VSS office bearers, as follows:

President:	Mr. Clarence Tan
Vice President:	Mr. Navaneethan Neminathan
Honorary Secretary:	Ms. Audrey Pauline Menezes
Assistant Secretary:	Mr. Edmond Chua
Honorary Treasurer:	Mr. Heng Guan Hou
Assistant Treasurer:	Mr. Jayachandran Maniyeri
Education Officer:	Ms. Ashley Chow
Communications Officer:	Mr. Gangasudhan
Events Officer:	Mr. Alex Lim
Projects Officer:	Ms. Sutha Raman
Volunteers Management Officer	Mr. Lau Wen Jin

Dr. Jacobs invited other nominations and questions, as well as the motion to approve the slate of office bearers presented. Ms. Violet Lee proposed that the entire slate be accepted and Ms. Ami Mehta seconded. None opposed the nomination or abstained from voting. Dr. Jacobs then acknowledged Ms. Lily Leong's contribution as the previous Vice President.

## TO ELECT TWO HONORARY AUDITORS FOR THE YEAR 2013

6.1. Dr. Jacobs explained the roles of the Honorary Auditors and thanked Mr. Chandra Shekar and Mr. Low Chip Khoon, the Honorary Auditors for 2012, for their work. He then invited members present to stand as the coming year's auditors.

6.2 Dr. Jacobs also introduced Ms. Amelia Wong who manages the accounts, with Mr. Heng Guan Hou & Mr. Jayachandran Maniyeri as the new Honorary Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer. The Treasurers will send the necessary information to the Honorary Auditors and answer their questions fully when required.

6.3 Ms. Violet Lee & Mr. Mark Soh volunteered. They were elected unanimously, with no opposition and no abstentions.

## CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT

7.1 Dr. Jacobs and Clarence explained that the change is simply based on maintaining a minimum of 6 Executive Committee Members instead of 11 due to the sheer difficulty in finding people to fill all posts at all times. Dr. Jacobs read out the new constitution and invited comments or questions, and to entertain a motion to approve these amendments.

7.2 Mr. Wong Koi Hin proposed and Ms. Michelle Tessensohn seconded. The vote was unanimous with no opposition and no abstentions.

### Amendments to Constitution

A) Clause 8.1 shall be deleted in its entirety and replaced by these new clauses:-

*"8.1 The administration of the Society shall be entrusted to a Committee consisting of no fewer than 6 and no more than 11 members to be elected at alternate Annual General Meetings. The Committee must include the following:*

*A President, Vice-President, Secretary, Assistant Secretary, Treasurer, and, Assistant Treasurer*

*8.2 The Committee also has the option, but not the obligation, to include any or all of the following positions as open for election:*

*An Education Officer*

*A Communications Officer*

*An Events Officer*

*A Projects Officer, and,*

*A Volunteers Management Officer"*

B) Clause 8.4 shall be amended by adding the following sentence therein:-

*"Every decision at a Committee Meeting shall be made by a simple majority vote of the Committee Members present at that meeting; and in case of an equality of votes; the President, or the Chairperson of that Committee Meeting, shall be entitled to an additional deciding vote."*

C) Clause 9.7, 9.8 and 9.9 shall be deleted in their entirety and replaced by these new clauses:-

*"9.7 The Education Officer shall arrange and present talks, initiate and organise all educational efforts connected with the Society.*

*9.8 The Communications Officer shall liaise with the media, arrange the design and printing of all the Society's literature and publicise all the Society's events.*

*9.9 The Events Officer shall organise all social events connected with the Society.*

*9.10 The Projects Officer shall monitor and maintain progress of, and assist with, all projects undertaken by the Society.*

*9.11 The Volunteers Management Officer shall liaise with and coordinate all volunteers for the Society."*

## ANY OTHER BUSINESS

### 8.1 MRT POSTERS

8.1.1 As was first raised and discussed in the previous year's AGM, the inspiration came from the Toronto subway campaign which garnered a lot of interest from the Canadian public. VSS hopes to generate the same interest in Singapore. The estimated total cost was \$30,000 per station per month, and would cover all station doors on the platform. The ad space was fully booked for the entire year of 2013, so plans were for early 2014. An initial donation of \$10,000 had already been received from Mr. Abhishek Murthy.

8.1.2 Betty felt it was powerful imagery but was concerned with costs and suggested that VSS could take the idea to the schools or pet lovers groups.

8.1.3 Clarence clarified that this initiative started as a planned collaboration with ACRES but will probably end up as a solely VSS project. Clarence will take the suggestion into consideration after the design phase when there is more to show other organisations and then see how it can be taken further. With no objections, VSS will go ahead and work on the plans and fundraising drive.

#### 8.2 VSS PARTICIPATION AT 5th SEA VEGETARIAN CONGRESS

8.2.1 Dr. Jacobs invited Mr. Heng Guan Hou to talk about the 5th SEA Vegetarian Congress 2012, where Mr. Heng represented VSS and gave a talk on the history and development of vegetarianism in South East Asia.

#### 8.3 TALK BY MS JOYCE LYE OF KAMPUNG SENANG

8.3.1 Dr. Jacobs introduced Ms. Joyce Lye, the head of Kampung Senang (KS) to speak about her organisation and its activities. Joyce commented that their own AGMs were not so well-attended as members prefer to send proxies if there was a need to vote. She then talked about a school in Thailand that serves vegan food for their children. She also highlighted an upcoming living vegan food retreat overseas and a talk by John Robbins, with the Minister for Education as Guest-of-Honour. Details would be on the KS website and information counter.

8.3.2 She ended the introduction by highlighting that VSS members also enjoy KS members' price for their events.

#### 8.4 SINGAPORE VEGETARIAN MEETUP GROUP

8.4.1 Dr. Jacobs also thanked Mr. Mark Soh for his volunteer work with the Singapore Vegetarian MeetUp social group. The group serves to support the vegetarian community and those wanting to experience the vegetarian diet. It also serves to support vegetarian businesses. Besides Mark, Mr. Neil Madvahni and Ms. Low Lai Chow are also actively engaged in organising events. All are welcome to participate in the group's regular events and also volunteer to organise future events.

8.4.2 Mark added that there will be a lot more events to look forward to in the near future.

#### 8.5 THE NEXT IVU CONGRESS

8.5.1 Dr. Jacobs brought to everyone's attention the date for the next International Vegetarian Union Congress in early October 2013 in Kuala Lumpur and that more details will be announced via the VSS newsletter.

#### 8.6 B12 TALK BY MS. NG RUI JUN

8.6.1 Ms. Ng Rui Jun gave a talk on B12 and answered questions, with slides and a demonstration on how sublingual B12 supplements should be taken.

#### 8.7 LAUGHTER YOGA

8.7.1 Laughter Yoga coach, Mr. Santharam was invited to give a brief but rousing introduction to Laughter Yoga.

#### 8.8 PLANT STRONG DVD

8.8.1 Clarence introduced the VSS Seeds VCD and explained that over the years, VSS had given out more than 100,000 of them. There was a need to update the contents of the VCD and plans were for a compilation not just of foreign video clips, but to incorporate local elements as well. The audience was given a preview of the VSS-produced Plant Strong video.

8.8.2 The video will be posted online eventually. The new DVD will probably be ready in a month's time and announced through Twitter, Facebook, the VSS Newsletter, etc.

#### 8.9 LEADERSHIP CHANGE

8.9.1 Clarence expressed his gratitude for Dr. Jacob's many years of dedication and said that he had been a pillar for so long that his decision to step down threw the team into a panic. Dr. Jacobs had raised the bar so high that it would be hard to match. Clarence has been with VSS since 2008 and feels that the new team is strong and eager to invigorate and energise the society and hopefully make Dr. Jacobs proud.

8.9.2 Although Dr. Jacobs steps down as President, he will still remain actively involved in VSS. Dr. Jacobs was presented with a cake courtesy of Kalavira Vegan Cooking School.

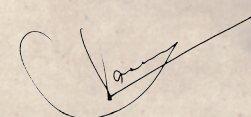
8.9.3 Dr. Jacobs thanked everyone for their presence and participation. Dr. Jacobs then declared the AGM closed at 5:30pm. The President invited all to stay for a healthy dinner prepared by Kampung Senang.

Recorded By



Pauline Menezes  
Honorary Secretary

Vetted & Confirmed By



Clarence Tan  
President



For the year in review, the VSS continued in its mission to get more and more people aware of how a plant-based approach can facilitate the recovery of Earth and lessen the cruelty to other sentient beings.

Through talks, projects and conference participation, various members of the society played their part to help in our multifarious education initiatives.

**SPREADING  
AWARENESS  
AT HOME  
AND ABROAD**

**06 March  
Buckminster Fuller Club**

A talk was delivered to members of the Buckminster Fuller Club of Singapore at *Hairfair*, located at The Adelphi (opposite Funan IT Mall).



**03-06 October  
World Vegfest 2013**

Representatives attended the International Vegetarian Union's (IVU's) World Vegfest 2013 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

**17 October  
Talk at Bedok Library**

VSS through collaboration with the Veg MeetUp group organised a talk by Dr Douglas Teo at Bedok Public Library. The talk was delivered in Mandarin and was well received by the participants.

*Brownice*

**03 November  
Talk at Brownice**

A talk was delivered to a crowd of 40 on the topic entitled 'Here Comes the Veg Bride' at Brownice dessert parlour located near Upper Thomson.

**17 November  
Peace as a Global Language Conference**

A talk was delivered by immediate past president, Dr George Jacobs, on the topic of Promoting Peace by Eating More Plant Foods. The conference was held in Tokyo, Japan, and the talk was prerecorded in Singapore and played at the conference venue.



*Peace as a Global Language 2013*  
*Peace and Welfare in the Local and Global Community*

November 16-17, 2013, Rikkyo University (Niiza Campus)





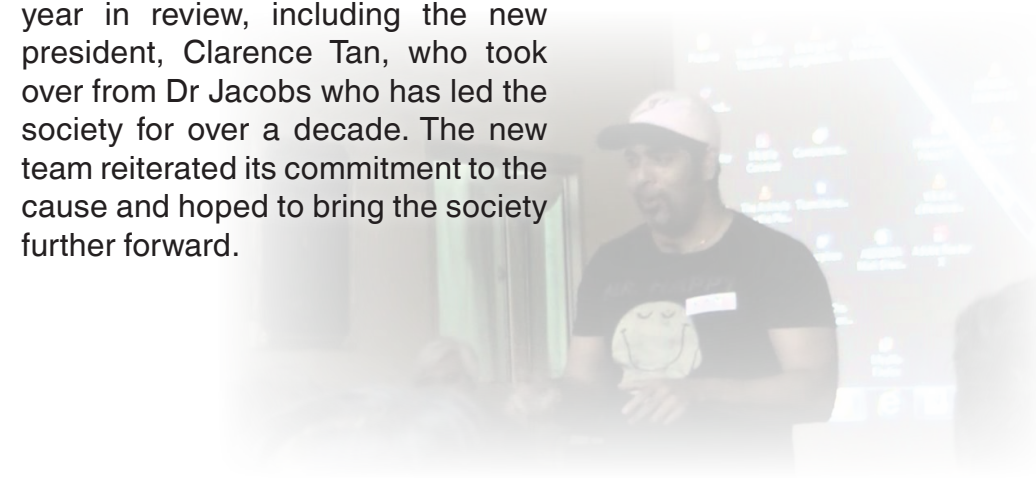
The VSS has always seen its role as a facilitator of various segments of the society coming together and for the year in review, we continued to build on our excellent community relationships to organise hikes and other meaningful events.

**CONNECTING  
WITH THE  
COMMUNITY**



**02 March**  
**VSS Annual General Meeting**

A new team was instituted for the year in review, including the new president, Clarence Tan, who took over from Dr Jacobs who has led the society for over a decade. The new team reiterated its commitment to the cause and hoped to bring the society further forward.



*You've got  
a friend in **V!***  
**18 May - 08 June**  
**Veg Buddy**

The VSS embarked on a guided mentor programme to help those interested in a veg lifestyle to take the first step and maintain a 21-day veg diet under the guidance of an experienced vegetarian. In addition, participants and their buddies formed an informal support group to motivate and encourage one another through the 3 weeks. Activities were interspersed throughout the period and included a sumptuous welcome dinner cooked by the mentors, a movie screening on health and nutrition, a Veg Starter Kit packed with lots of useful info, and a free cooking lesson, before ending off with a celebratory potluck picnic at the Botanic Gardens.



**25 May**  
**Grow Things! : Organic Gardening Workshop**

Andrew Tay, a nature education consultant since 1994 who has experience in nature conservation, permaculture and other forms of ecologically sustainable food gardening, conducted a workshop identifying common local vegetables and herbs and how to grow them. The workshop included methods and demo on how to propagate plants, types of soil, herbal pesticide and fertiliser, and other relevant materials, and how to grow vegetables and herbs in highrise flats and other small spaces.

**02 June**  
**Guided Nature Walk at MacRitchie's Rainforest**

The society's resident nature guide, Andrew Tay, led a group of enthusiasts along winding dirt paths into the rainforest to spot wildlife scurrying about and enjoy the diversity of gem-like dragonflies, damselflies and other aquatic bugs.





**05 July**  
**The Honest Nail Party**

At a novel event organised by the VSS in collaboration with PasarBella @ The Grandstand Bukit, participants learned how to make better choices about nail care and hygiene, and, vegan-friendly and cruelty-free products.



**13 July**  
**Launch of Plant Strong DVD**

With over 100,000 copies of the SEEDS VCD being distributed over the years to change the lives of many, the VSS decided it was the right time to roll out an updated and fresher version entitled PLANT STRONG. The newly minted DVD features a compilation of videos on the wisdom of a plant-based diet, how going veg just once a week can help the environment, and recipe demonstrations.




**09 August**  
**Food Distribution to the Elderly**

Packets containing vegetarian meals were distributed to the elderly residents at AWWA (Asian Women's Welfare Association) Community Home for Senior Citizens at Ang Mo Kio during lunch as part of a community service initiative on National Day.



**29 September**  
**VSS Hike on Southern Ridges Trail**

In response to strong demand for hiking expeditions, yet another hike was organised along the Southern Ridges trail starting at the Harbour Front MRT exit near Seah Im Hawker Centre and ending 1.5 hours later at Hort Park along Alexandra.



*You've got a friend in Veg Buddy 2* **26 October - 15 November**  
**Veg Buddy 2**

After the successful initial run of the programme which received an overwhelming response, the VSS team decided to conduct the programme again with another batch of eager participants.



**09 November**  
**MacRitchie Reservoir Hike**

Another group of excited members joined the VSS team for a hike through MacRitchie Reservoir Park on a bright Saturday morning.



# BEiNG HEARD

While the VSS did not particularly respond to issues in an official capacity for the year in review, it was pleasing to note that many individuals from the community at large took the initiative to address misconceptions represented in the media. The society has been focused on engaging the community through social media and has been active on Facebook while keeping our subscribers abreast with regular email blasts. Our efforts were recognised when the Veg Buddy programme was picked up and featured on I-S magazine.



**Interview: Ashley Chow from  
Vegetarian Society (Singapore)**  
(I-S Magazine Online dated 29 April 2013)

**Why did you decide to start this Veg Buddy Program?**

*I realized through interacting with many Singaporeans that there is a growing collective consciousness about the tremendous health benefits of a plant-based diet, the destructive environmental impact of meat production and the horrors of factory farming, especially in the young generation. While many people are able to sympathise with the vegetarian or vegan cause, they are reluctant to try to change their diet because they think it's difficult or impossible. There are also many people who have tried to change their diet but have failed to do so successfully. So I decided to start the program to show the participants—and Singaporeans generally—how fun and easy it can be to adopt a veg diet for a sustained period of time. I believe that with the access to proper information and a support group of experienced vegetarians and vegans, anyone can successfully finish the Program if they wish to.*

**What sort of activities can participants expect?**


*They can expect a welcome launch event with a sumptuous dinner cooked by the mentors, as well as a movie screening about some startling nutrition research and the health aspects of going veg. They will also receive a Veg Starter Kit packed with lots of useful info, such as basic nutrition advice, where to eat out in Singapore, what resources they can use for cooking at home, as well as restaurant vouchers to kickstart their exploration of the delicious veg options in Singapore. Other events will include a free cooking lesson that will feature simple and delicious recipes, and which will include an introduction to raw food as well.*

**How exactly will a participant's mentor act as a guide?**

*At the very minimum, a participant's mentor will be there to help him or her with any related questions or struggles, such as having difficulty finding healthy veg food near his or her home, school or workplace. Aside from that, it's really up to the participant and the mentor to decide! If they both want to, they could be visiting restaurants and cafes or cooking veg meals together, for example. It really depends. Aside from the participant's direct mentor, there will also be an online support group comprised of all the mentors to guide participants in their journeys.*

**What can they hope to get out of this program?**

*We hope that they will come out of the program with a more informed and enlightened relationship with food, a much better appreciation of what having a vegetarian (or vegan, if they so choose) lifestyle is truly like, as well as a better understanding of themselves.*



The screenshot shows the I-S Magazine website interface. At the top left is the 'I-S knows Singapore' logo. A navigation bar includes links for HOME, EVENTS, RESTAURANTS, SHOPPING, TRAVEL, BLOGS & COLUMNS, and ARCHIVE. Below the navigation is a dark banner with the text 'JOIN I-S ONLINE NEWSLETTER SIGN-UP' and a play button icon. The main article title is 'Interview: Ashley Chow from Vegetarian Society (Singapore)'. Below the title is a short summary: 'Member of Vegetarian Society (Singapore) and head honcho of the Veg Buddy Program tells us about the perks of going veg, why some vegetarians avoid mock meat, and substitutes to that quarter pounder.' The author is listed as 'By Azimin Saini'. A social sharing bar contains buttons for 'Share this article', 'Tweet' (0), 'g+1' (0), and 'Share' (363). Below the sharing bar is a photograph of Ashley Chow, a young woman with dark hair tied back, wearing a dark blue spaghetti-strap top, standing in front of a lush green background of plants. Below the photo is the caption: 'Ashley Chow from the Vegetarian Society (Singapore)'.

A close-up photograph of a person's hand, wearing a white long-sleeved shirt, pointing their index finger towards a black calculator. The calculator is on a white surface, and there are some papers or documents in the background. The lighting is bright and even.

# ACCOUNTING REPORT

In terms of funding, the Society enjoyed strong support and was able to improve its financial strength by adding a surplus and reports a balance of \$107,204 for the year ended 2013.

The VSS achieved this through more donations and earned better returns on fees and membership.

# Financial Report

for the period 1st January 2013 to 31st December 2013

## Financial Report

for the period  
1<sup>st</sup> Jan 2013  
to  
31<sup>st</sup> Dec 2013

### Income & Expenditure Statement for the year ended 31 December 2013

	\$	%
<b>Income</b>		
Donations in Cash	17,645.57	57.5%
Programme Fees	3,662.00	11.9%
Membership Fees	8,050.00	26.2%
Sales of Work	1,077.90	3.5%
Miscellaneous Income	246.84	0.8%
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>30,682.31</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Rental of Equipment	575.00	1.9%
Rental of Rooms	187.80	0.6%
Supplies and Materials	4,183.40	13.6%
Transport	115.00	0.4%
Communications	1,225.80	4.0%
Professional Fees	7,200.00	23.5%
Public Education	4,141.86	13.5%
Bank Charges	638.20	2.1%
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>18,267.06</b>	<b>59.5%</b>
<b>Net Surplus / (Deficit)</b>	<b>12,415.25</b>	<b>40.5%</b>



Honorary Treasurer  
Heng Guan Hou



Auditor  
Mark Soh



Auditor  
Violet Lee

## Financial Report

for the period  
1<sup>st</sup> Jan 2013  
to  
31<sup>st</sup> Dec 2013

### Balance Sheet as at 31 December 2013

<b>Assets</b>		
Current Assets		
Cash On Hand	106,926.12	
Inventory	588.15	
Prepaid Expenses	290.00	
Total Current Assets		107,804.27
<b>Total Assets</b>		<b>107,804.27</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>		
Current Liabilities		
Other Current Liabilities	600.00	
Total Current Liabilities		600.00
<b>Total Liabilities</b>		<b>600.00</b>
<b>Net Assets</b>		<b>107,204.27</b>
<b>Equity</b>		
Prior Year's Surplus/Deficit	94,789.02	
Current Year Surplus/Deficit	12,415.25	
<b>Total Equity</b>		<b>107,204.27</b>



Honorary Treasurer  
Heng Guan Hou



Auditor  
Mark Soh



Auditor  
Violet Lee