

Now, the news ...

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TODAY, I would like to share with you stuff that you do not read in the papers, whether online or in print.

The reason I decided to share this great resource is because I have come to realise that news and history about Singapore does not belong to one person, one company, or one political party. It belongs to all of us.

The catalyst for this was the announcement that a certain local broadsheet had decided to take their online edition from free to fee. Being the cheapskate that I am, it peeved me to have to pay for something I used to get for free. Yes, I am a True Singaporean.

So I decided to see if there were other resources online that told The Other Singapore Story, for free.

The world of the Internet has changed the way we consume news and history.

I mean, where else can you read about Eddy Neo's adventure with his vacuum flask in Orchard Cineleisure than at bubblemunche.blogspot.com?

Eddy, aka Bubblemunche, decided to sneak his chilled Coca-Cola into a movie screening using a vacuum flask.

There were two reasons Eddy wanted to smuggle food and drink into the cinema. One was because he was frugal. Okay, he was cheap. The second reason was that his mother threatened to confiscate his hongbao money if he did not help finish the Coke left over from Chinese New Year, which they had a lot of, because fewer relatives visited this year.

Here is a science lesson that Eddy learned about gassy Coke and vacuum flasks. The two do not play well together.

When he tried to open his flask, it was stuck, but he tried harder because he was thirsty from watching Natalie Portman talking dirty onscreen.

The lid came off, all right, it came off with a huge pop (that sounded like a fart) from the compressed gases building up inside the flask, and it sailed through the air, landing on a patron in the first few rows of the cinema,

who exclaimed a Hokkien vulgarity that I cannot repeat here, except to say that it starts with "N" and ends with "bei".

Needless to say, Eddy left before the show ended, sans flask and wearing some cola.

So if anyone from Orchard Cineleisure, especially the cleaning aunties, saw a silver and black vacuum flask left behind in Cinema 4, can you please contact Eddy through me? He misses it very much, and it cost him \$50. It is the least I can do for the good laugh he gave me when I read his account.

When I told my wife the story and I reached the Hokkien vulgarity part, my wife laughed and said, isn't that where Natalie Portman was the queen of in Star Wars 1 and 2?

No, my dear, I said. Natalie Portman was the queen of Naboo, not of ... that word.

You can also read very radical views online that you may not get from proper newspapers. Like, recently there was news about an ad campaign to get rich and powerful people who read magazines like Tatler, to not take drugs.

The idea behind this campaign was that rich people would not be swayed by those Mandarin "Ah Beng and his gangster brothers" anti-drug commercials running now.

So some very creative people did an ad that showed a headline that said: "I can stop taking cocaine anytime I want", against a background of copy that said, "The more you use it, the more you crave it".

Blogger cheh chai min saw (littlecartnoodles.blogspot.com) that piece of news, and felt that it was a waste of money and the more effective approach is "just hang a few of the bastards. That'll drive the message home. Rope is cheaper."

Yeah, that might work too. Maybe that's why so many of the recent batch of rich and powerful people caught for drugs decided to jump bail too.

Another fascinating read was Terz's website, terseandatlarge.blogspot.com. Terz, a photographer, followed a team from Mercy Relief to do tsunami relief work in Meulaboh, Aceh, Indonesia. His chronicle of his time there, in words and photos, provides a very personal and Singaporean account of what it was like to be a witness to the destruction.

If you like to read about university life in Singapore, you can go to Agagooga's site, gssq.blogspot.com. He has long posts about religion, theories and stuff (which the rest of us cannot understand) but also a great bunch of quotes he collects from his lectures.

I do not know how he pays attention in class while writing down gems from his lecturers, like these:

- [On 2004] "Last year was a bad year for evolutionary biologists. They all died."
- [On the relentless march of modern technology] "If there is some chalk, I will write on this board, but nowadays chalk is a very scarce commodity."

- "The final exam and the mid-term test are open-book. You can bring in anything you like, including your favourite comics."

So as you can see, there is a lot of free stuff online for you to read, especially on Singapore. This Net generation will probably be responsible for documenting Singapore life like it has never been documented before.

This is good, because I really want my son to know, 20 years from now, that his father wrote about the time he, as a baby, took his father's handphone and talked to it as if he was making a phone call.

Or the time he tried to take his sister's toy and got pushed away. Or baby photos of him bathing naked. All online and for free. No registration required.

mr brown is the accidental author of a popular website that has been documenting the dysfunctional side of Singapore life since 1997. Eddy really misses his flask, so cleaning aunties of Orchard Cineleisure, please send email soon. Oh, and Today can still be read online for free.

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