

NEWSLETTER VIAVIA | 3 - 2009

SEPTEMBER | OCTOBER



ViaVia
TRAVELERS CAFÉ - RESTAURANT
in cooperation with Jiker Tourism NV
Jalan Prawiroataman 30
Yogyakarta - Indonesia
tel +62 274 386557
yogya.indonesia@viaviacafe.com
www.viavijogja.com

It's been a while that we released a newsletter. It seemed like an easy task when I accepted the responsibility as coordinator of the newsletter. In fact, honestly, it's not that easy. It is not just a matter of gathering articles from others but also about how to bring catchy reading and decent contents in the newsletter.

Anyway, this 3rd newsletter of 2009 is done.

Glenda and Tony, joined many tours in ViaVia. They write about what they've done and their impressions.

Uuth, one of our freelance guides writes about her experiences of living far away from Jogja and coming back home after one year.

Egar and Maria tell about their new experience of joining ViaVia for training and guiding.

One of the freelance guides is also a candidate for the legislative council. Nanick shares a bit about her idea and feeling of becoming a candidate.

Marriage for some people is the beginning of a new life. Adapting to life after marriage can be difficult in a patriarchal culture.

Endang, writes about her experience in dealing with her marriage and combining it with her activities. An article absolutely not to be missed!

Every year, ViaVia conducts some social-cultural projects. This year, we had a waste management project at an elementary school. The purpose of the project is gaining awareness for the environment for the children. More so for the families who live on the bank of the river. This project was facilitated by the guides and the freelancers of ViaVia. The pictures are enclosed.

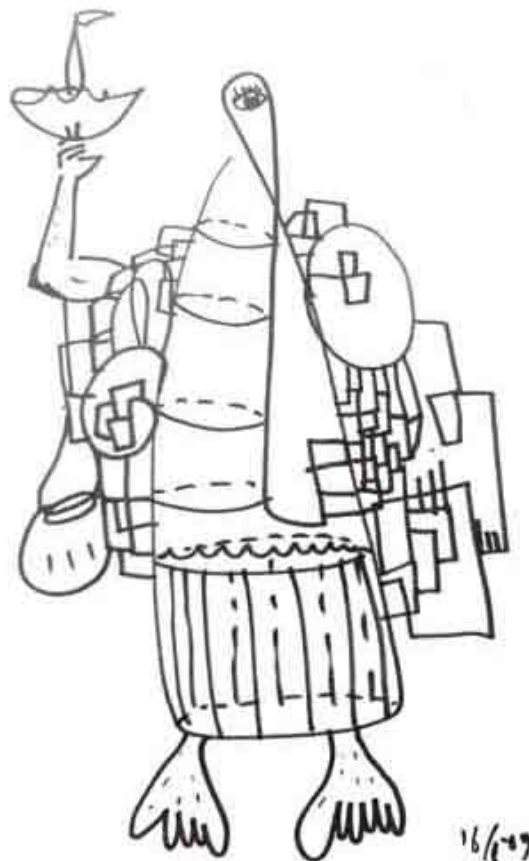
We are happy to receive articles to support our newsletter.

Happy reading!

Uji

kepauc: extreme realism of the illusive

CURRENT EXHIBITION



pameran tunggal greg sindana

Tony and Glenda in Jogja

My wife and I visited Jogja for the third time since 2004 and stayed from 27Feb 09 to 11 Mar 09. During this period we again had the daily pleasure of renewing our acquaintance with ViaVia , their friendly and efficient staff and super meals.

We had been on some Via Via's tours previously, but this time we determined to try and fit in as many as we could, while taking into consideration our age. We were both born during the "Great Depression" of the 1930's, so do have to try and act our age even though we may not feel it.

We took the following tours:

Code walk; Katamso walk; Culinary trip; Kaliadem (Merapi) by car; Village trip by dokar and a trip to Imogiri and Depok.

We also did the Cooking Course and Silver Course.

ViaVia have put a lot of thought into their tours and we enjoyed them all. The guides were very knowledgeable and informative and able to answer all our questions of which we had many. Friendly greetings and respect is shown not only by the guides, to residents, but importantly, from residents to guides and visitors. We felt welcome and that says a lot about the ability and training of ViaVia staff, to be able to interact with people of all ages, from all walks of life and many different cultures and countries.

We had a great time sitting with a group of women and small children, in the village along the Code River. We laughed a lot and talked (through our guide Endang) about things that are discussed in every household in the world – governments, politicians, families and the peculiarities of men (a popular subject amongst all women). They were just as interested in us, our family, and our way of life, as we were about them and we were delighted to have the opportunity to talk to ordinary, everyday folk. They were so happy for us to learn that at this late stage of our life, we would become Grandparents for the first time in July.

These opportunities are so rare, when traveling, and for us, this is what it is all about. Well done ViaVia.

The new "Culinary Tour" was, one could say, delicious, with lots of sampling through the day of many different types of food. We had a very enjoyable and tasteful introduction to "Bakpia" at the factory where it is made. It is good. Also enjoyed the motorbike ride with our lovely guides Rita and Eva.

Do not miss the cooking course. Chef extraordinaire, Made, is a great teacher and a wonderful cook.

Some highlights: Merapi, very clear and very menacing, reinforced by a visit to the Seismic Station and looking at the results of the 2006 eruption.

Home Industries: From tempe, krupuk and house bricks, to the most exquisite hand painted batik. Watching a true batik artist is a real privilege.

Hands on in the field, if you wish, in the process of getting a bowl of rice on the table. We did not realize that there are so many steps involved, all time consuming, and all of it hard, back-breaking work.

Notwithstanding the excellent content of the tours, our enjoyment of them was enhanced by the company of the entertaining and beautiful young women who acted as our guides for most of them. It was a pleasure to spend time in their company.

There is a special place in our hearts for Vita, Uji, Rita, Eva, Endang, Cisca, Made, the courageous and delightful Tyas and not forgetting Mr. Rojo and the wonderful staff in the restaurant.

We are still missing ViaVia and do look forward to another visit, if not in Jogja, then maybe in another ViaVia in another part of the world. The girls told us that Mie was currently in Tanzania passing on her wealth of knowledge and experience about all things ViaVia.

Tony and Glenda Sorensen



Sleeping Beauty, "No place like home"



It is all just like a dream. I feel like a princess, maybe Sleeping Beauty. It seems that I was sleeping this whole last year, then, suddenly when I get up, here I am. I am in JOGJA!!!

I never imagined that my life would run this way. Well, I dreamt of going to Borneo one day. Then, one year ago it just happened like that. Like many others wise men, my grandfather told me that 'Planning is our hope, but the decision is in God's hand'.

Returning from Borneo I was so nervous flying above the sea level. My feelings turned from fear to being so touched for I saw the Merapi volcano outside the window. It amazed me. I felt like I wanted to jump at that moment.

I was smiling the entire journey on board. I imagined the flight attendants were looking at me with a very big question mark. ^^ I was so happy, that I could go crazy.

Yep, I had been away from home since last year. It was my longest period of time away from home. I was teaching in

Balikpapan, East Borneo. It's an oil city. I imagined jungle, but there is no single tree. Only in some parts of the city, there are some areas with trees.

My life a year ago is rolling in front of my eyes now. I can still feel the touch of the raindrops on my hand last year. I could still feel my mom's good-bye kisses plus her crying.

The whole year, all I imagined was to play my life forward. I wanted to make my life go faster. If it was possible I wanted to go to this year's chapter directly. All the complaints I spilled on Facebook. All the swear words I spelled inside. Everyday there was another day of living alone, like an old wolf. I missed the warmth of love, both from my family and my friends.

Well, the saying 'no place is like home' sounds cliché for some

people. But I guess that's 110% correct! When I was sick, I was alone. When I got raise, there was only me.

Well, I hardly ever cry. But this time, when my feet touched the soil, every part of my body seemed to cry. Hm, too hyperbolic I guess. ^^

Overall, I am so happy being here in Jogja. I can hang out with my friends till I get cold. However, I miss my students there. They're just so cute and nice.

Yep! Time passes without our notice. Suddenly here I am, in front of the computer on my bed and also back in ViaVia. Welcome back!

Uuth

Training for Freelance Guides 2009



It was wonderful to be there, to attend the training for freelance guide for seven "years". Seven years because every single day of training I learned so many things that it felt as knowledge of a whole year^^. That is why, seven days equal to seven years. Wait a minute! Doesn't it mean that it takes only four days to finish my study in university? Whoa, what a short time! (Then the black angel living in the other side of my body says "come on honey, 'four

years' is 'four years', there's no such a thing like that in the real world". Then I answer "Cannot you just leave me alone and see me happy with my dream! It will be much easier both for you and me!".) I wish I could make it though. Well, leave my conversation with the black angel. Now let's go back to the ViaVia freelance guide training.

Frankly speaking, indeed I learned a lot from the training. Apart from the language proficiency, the being more disciplined, the leadership stuff, the cards, and the proverbs, I learned that I have been so blind of my own traditions. I

almost know nothing about it. Like what Javanese do with their Kejawen, what people do on Sekatenan, why Javanese are so polite, etc (just for additional information, I am a Javanese, and I live with these traditions in my surroundings), I am not sure that I can tell you any sound information about it. That makes me so sad. I think being born in this era is also one prominent reason that I have been so far away from even to only knowing my ancestors' precious heritage.

In this training, Mie and the others made me realize that language alone is not enough. To tell people about yourself, you need to know about yourself. If you want to be a good guide you must know your own culture and so many other things. Because that is how we will get people understand our culture, and by doing so, we can understand others better.

It's not that I have known everything. I wish I had. It is that I have to learn more and more about my old things, about others' old things, and about yours. It will be a really long long and really long and also time consuming and tiring journey. But it's worth it. It's what it takes to be able to stand on your own feet. It is difficult, but it's not impossible. Thus here I am, to learn from others, to learn from you. See you soon then!
Maria

A Legislative Candidate



"So, you are a legislative candidate? It's cool!" These were the utterances I mostly heard for the last seven months. Yes, I was a legislative candidate of one political party for the last 2009 legislative election.

My party stands for the creation of a just, peaceful and prosperous Indonesia as a manifestation of religious faith and love for the fatherland. Its mission is to keep

Indonesia intact as one country, to create harmony between religion and state affairs and to improve prosperity by creating new jobs for the young and encouraging entrepreneurship for the youth.

Honestly, being a legislative candidate is not cool. It is not an easy job. There were many responsibilities, there were many tasks to do, and there was much money to spend. Moreover, the 2009 legislative election has many new rules that are so different from the legislative election years ago. One of them

is the rule that states that the candidate with the most votes wins. And it is so hard, because many people want to be a legislative and the positions are scarce. It is a lot easier for the well-known candidates, because people already know him/her. But for newcomers (like me), it is hard work to make myself 'popular' in order to make the society vote me. That's why it needs lots of money to make campaign adds as much as you can in order to make people know you. Besides that, the candidates still need to 'pay' their own team that works for them.

Now, the legislative election took place. My votes? Well, the number of people voting for me was quite satisfying for a newcomer like me but it still didn't fulfill the quota to go to the legislative. Even though, I didn't get the opportunity to go to the legislative, I got the opportunity to experience many new priceless things. Well, for me, it's not just about the result; it's about the process.

Nanick

My First Trip



My first trip! It's quite hard to imagine. I had little guiding experience. It was a jump start new experience. True guiding for ViaVia is not only to explain the history of a place but also to make the tourist feel satisfied and understand our culture. I realized it was difficult to do. Two weeks training by Viavia have made me become all in one package of shampoo: entertainer, friend, family and gateway to the city and culture of Yogyakarta.

This could be explained by the fact that my first guiding experience was like my first exam. It was early morning when I came to Viavia. I tried to be relaxed and well prepared because I thought becoming a guide was similar as being a pop singer. I felt my stage was ready for my first performance at that time. I met Glenda and Tony, a lovable and kindhearted couple from Brisbane, Australia. It was their third visit to Yogya and their first destination were some traditional home industries in the villages south of the city.

In the middle of the paddy fields, more or less 20 km to the south, we arrived in Giriloyo, a small village at the foot of a hill. This was totally strange for me. I remember the Hansell and Gretel fairy tale. When they are lost in the forest, they find a house made of gingerbread and candies, with sugar windows and a witch catches them into a cage. This seemed to become true. Suddenly our car stopped in front of a small house made of bamboo. But it turned out to be ok because the woman was not the witch in Hansell and Gretel. They were very friendly and welcoming. It was a batik industry for hand dyed batik used for the traditional clothes of Java. We had a small talk with the woman who put the wax on the material. We observed the process of making batik and got a short course how to make batik. Indeed, I released extra energy to answer questions from Glenda. She was a very active granny at her age. One more thing that I learned right there is that making batik is not only for women but also for men. After the earthquake in 2006 destroyed Yogya, the women gave batik courses to their children.

Our second destination was a keris home industry. A keris is a traditional asymmetrical dagger often possessing spiritual forces. Unfortunately it was a holiday so we couldn't see how the keris is made but it wasn't bad because the host let us watch his keris collection. Glenda and Tony were very curious about the keris. They needed more than just a one go-see experience. I gave an explanation to them that it was difficult to find a place where they make the real keris. I told them the fairy tale of Tutar Tinular. The story began when Kamandanu, a blacksmith's second son, was interested in an old sage, Ranubhaya who was an expert in martial arts. He started to study martial arts from Ranubhaya and learned that

Ranubhaya was actually his father's schoolmate in weaponry. While Kamandanu's father chose to be a weapon supplier for the government (at the time Kingdom Singhasari), Ranubhaya chose to not cooperate with the government and isolate himself.

When the father learns about the teacher-student relationship between his second son and Ranubhaya, he became angry and accused Ranubhaya of being a traitor and used the government army to attack Ranubhaya's shrine. The relationship between Kamandanu and his father sickened and Kamandanu became a wanderer as a warrior.

The story became more complex when Ranubhaya, which had survived the attack on his property, was kidnapped by Kubilai Khan's envoy who was amazed by his expertise in weaponry. Being a prisoner in China, he was forced to make a great sword, Nagapuspa (naga means dragon). Finishing the sword, he was murdered by the official out of fear that Ranubhaya would create another sword for the rival of Nagapuspa. Before his death, he asked a warrior couple, Lo Si Shan and Mei Ling, to bring the sword to Che Po (Java Island, pronounced in old-china language) and to give it to Kamandanu.

The story continued with the involvement of Kamandanu in Raden Wijaya's troop, survivors of Singhasari kingdom after being attacked by Kediri kingdom. The involvement repaired the relationship between Kamandanu and his father, especially after his brother, Dwipangga betrayed them. Kamandanu helped Raden Wijaya create his own kingdom, Majapahit.

The story of Tutar Tinular began when the main character was still young and ended when the main character had grown old. It shows the development from an idealist young lad to a sage who didn't want to see the war again and isolated himself.

We discussed it until we arrived at Imogiri Royal Cemetery. It was my first time I went there. Voila, hundreds of stairs looked absolutely pompous and magnificent at the same time. These stairs were the centre spot for visitors to take photos. Visitors also like to count these stairs one by one. They use a chalk to sign them, or a calculator to help them get an exact number. Funny enough because they strongly believe that when they count for the second time, it will never give the same result as before, which made me raise my eyebrows. Nevertheless, the whole atmosphere in the Royal Cemetery was truly marvelous.

This experience was far beyond my expectation. Walking through green forest and an amazing golden carpet of paddy fields was really fun and enjoyable. The best thing about becoming a guide is to know the traditional values and delve into the Javanese culture. Experience the lovely friendly manner of people in Yogja since they open their doors and hearts for you.

Egar

Waste Management Project

Every year, ViaVia conducts educational and/or social-cultural projects, usually during low season period. This year, on June 23, 2009, we organized a waste management project in an Elementary School called SD Pakel, located in central Jogja, near the Code River.

We tried to raise awareness with the children about ecological problems and their role in producing and recycling garbage. We showed them what would be the consequences if they litter, especially in the river.

There were 20 facilitators involved for this project, including the freelance guides. Each class had 2 persons as the facilitator.

Several reasons why we chose children in the city instead of in the village for this project were: Awareness on waste management should be thought from very young age. So it can become a habit to not just litter and use an overload of plastic.

Children who live in the city are known to be huge garbage producers compared to the children from the village.

We used the "learning while playing" method, meaning that in every game we played there was something to learn. The children saw the effect of what will happen if they keep throwing everything in the river by simulating a flood. They got information about recycling organic and non-organic garbage, and about how to deal with this garbage. We also thought them how to make compost from organic garbage.

ViaVia provided 2 buckets per class room for organic and non organic trash. We also made a big poster for all the classes with information on how long waste (for example tissue paper, tire, bottle, etc.) recycles without any process.

We hope that at least something stays in the memory of the children after this day with ViaVia.

LAMANYA SAMPAH TERURAI		
KERTAS TISSUE		1 bulan
KERTAS KORAN		1,5 bulan
KULIT BUAH		2 bulan
DUS MAKANAN		2 bulan
KOTAK SUSU		3 bulan
BUNGKUS ROKOK		5 bulan
TALI SUMBU KOMPOR		11 bulan
KAYU YANG DICAT		15 bulan
BAN MOBIL / MOTOR		50 tahun
KALENG		50 tahun
ALUMINIUM		200 tahun
TAS PLASTIK (KRESEK)		450 tahun
BOTOL PLASTIK		450 tahun
SANDAL		450 tahun
STYROFOAM		500 tahun
TALI PLASTIK		600 tahun
BOTOL GLAS		650 tahun



“Would you marry me?”

In our culture, married women often have less rights and benefits than their husbands.

I see at least 4 reasons for this gender imbalance.

First: The stereotype of women as weak creatures both physically and mentally is very existent here. Therefore women need more protection from men. The consequence is that women have to show honor and loyalty to the men.

Second: There is a (wrong) doctrine that women are created from a part of men's body (rib bone) (in the case of Eve and Adam's creating). This idea causes an increased attitude of superiority from men over women. Men are considered to have more power and a higher ranking on all levels.

Third: women are considered a sexual object and a reproduction instrument for having babies. So a woman's job is to serve in sexual activity and of course they have to follow the men's idea about how many children they want.

Fourth: Women are considered to have a gentle attitude (usually connected to motherhood), therefore they are seen as the right person for taking care of household affairs and thus they don't need to have a high education.

What I wrote above is called Manak, Masak, Macak (giving birth, cooking, being pretty). 3M is a woman's job in Javanese tradition. I can also refer to 3M with Sumur, Kasur, Dapur (the well, the mattress and the kitchen). The function of this trilogy is basically to domesticate women.

“Would you marry me?”

Hmm... What did I think about these words? Frankly speaking, the first time it felt like this is the end of my world (my own world). This is true, because I live here in a patriarchal system of Javanese traditions. It's very hard to make a square deal in every segment of life between men and women. Men are like the ordinate people, but women are like the subordinate people. And I am a woman, I am proud to be a woman, and I realize that I have to be a smart woman because we're the same as humans.

What did I do to anticipate the scary things in marriage (ex: I just have to stay at home and I don't have any voice at all in the decisions)? First I thought I have to know the one who proposed. What kind of man is he? Is he a patriarchal man or not?

Secondly, I tried to discuss several matters with him about three main things: what's his concept about love, what is the meaning of women in his life, and what's the meaning of marriage in his mind.

For me love is love. Without any words as like i love u because you are ... (smart, beautiful, etc). How when I am not smart or beautiful any more, so your love is gone?



I'm a woman, I know that I have rights just like a man's rights. I have friends just like he has. I have activities just like he has. Marriage should not be the end of my world like it is right now. Marriage should be the gate for a new world. A world, which is full of love, a world which is full of

harmony, a world which is full of respect each other.

Hmm... What finally ensured me to get married to him is when he said marriage should not be an obstacle for my activities.

Marriage should support my self-actualization. Marriage is not creating a new king (man as a king) but a new (small) government with a coalition between husband and wife. Because in marriage life there is AKU (I), KAMU (you) and KITA (we); HATI (heart), PEMIKIRAN (mind), and SEGALANYA (everything).

Well, that was the meeting point of our long discussion and the result was the decision to get married.

I got already married on the 23th of May 2009. Khaerodin is the name of my husband, and he's from Salatiga, Central Java.

My last word, everybody who reads my writing, I really hope you to be witness of what he said, so that if someday there are frictions about what he promised, I will ask you to help me. We'll see!

GERMAN NIGHT

ViaVia Café

3 October 2009

As tribute to the upcoming 20-years-anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall, ViaVia Café plans a “German Night” on the German national holiday, 3 October 2009. Selected mural and graffiti artists from Yogyakarta will be invited to paint the café's walls, under the motto “The Wall In Our Minds”. On the night of 3 October 2009, everybody is invited to join them and to reflect the motto by painting or writing on the space left free between their artworks – like on the “real” Berlin Wall.

DJ Durga alias Dion B. Desianto, who lived himself in Eastern Berlin during the late 1990's, will play his collection of music from East and West Germany (1960's to 90's). Additionally, the participants of the German language rap workshop “Deine Stimme” by Goethe-Institut at LIP the same day are invited to present the result of their workshop that night at ViaVia. Besides, there will be a full German menu and snacks cooked by Germans living in Yogyakarta.

Concept for painting action “The Wall In Our Minds” (working title):

The Berlin Wall was not only a physical border between the Eastern and the Western part of the city, but a symbol of the world's division into two ideological systems. After the breakdown of Europe's Eastern bloc and the German reunification almost 20 years ago, this division never really disappeared, but only shifted into other dimensions. We can still find “the Wall” everywhere in the world, be it between countries, in our respective societies and our own minds – be it between compatriots and foreigners, Muslims and Christians, men and women. Whoever experienced this kind of physical or mental border, is invited to paint or write about it there and then on the WALL.