



The corner suite bedroom is simple yet elegantly furnished.



Sarkies, the latest F&B outlet at the Victory Annexe, serves a sumptuous roast duck.

Renewed taste of Victory

It's a trip down memory lane for **Alan Teh Leam Seng** at the newly reconstructed Victory Annexe wing of E&O Hotel

I AM excited to learn that the new Victory Annexe of the E&O Hotel has reopened earlier this year. I have been following events at the hotel regularly as my family used to have lunch here every time we were on holiday in Penang back in the 1970s.

No way am I going to pass up this golden opportunity to relive history once again.

The opening of the new Victory Annexe is an important chapter for the hotel. And for me, it is like history has come

full circle.

At first glance, the external view does indeed project an architectural style true to the old world opulence that will surely make the Sarkies Brothers proud.

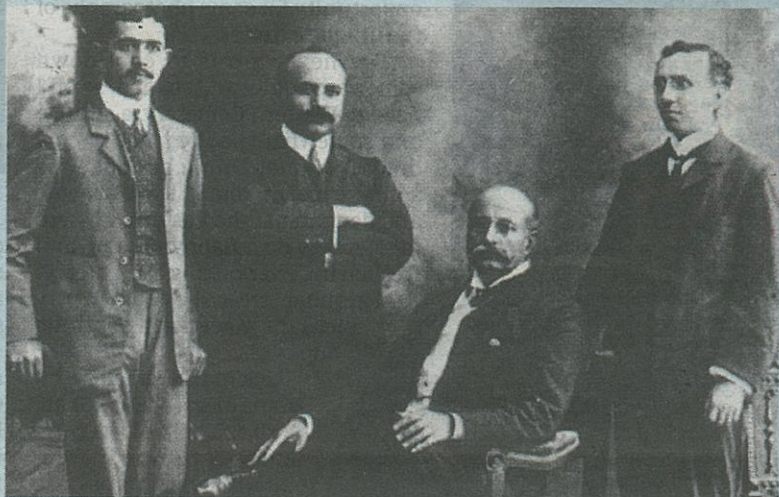
The Sarkies Brothers, siblings of Armenian ethnicity, were the hotel founders.

On top of that, the new owner, E&O Bhd, has made several exciting new additions. The new Victory Annexe features 117 superior and five corner suites, each with its own private balcony.

I am impressed that while almost all of its rich heritage has been retained, modern travellers are assured of the latest state-of-the-art conveniences including high-speed WiFi broadband connection, a fully-equipped gym and an infinity pool with an extensive view of the sea.

I spend most of the late afternoon and evening at the swimming pool and the connecting Planters Lounge. I like the pool as it is partially covered.

The best part of my stay is spent at Planters Lounge balcony, sipping my favourite drink and watching the sun set while casting a myr-



The Armenian Sarkies brothers started the Eastern and Oriental Hotel back in 1885

riad of hues in the sky above.

Another memorable item is the roast duck served at Sarkies, next to

PICTURES BY ALAN TEH LEAM SENG the lobby. I will never forget my first mouthful: Pure heaven — crispy skin and tender, juicy meat.

WHERE THE RICH AND FAMOUS HANG OUT

ON a momentous note in Nov 10, 1918, one of the Sarkies Brothers, Arshak, became the proud new owner of the Sea Bank, adjacent to his beloved Eastern & Oriental Hotel or the E&O as it was fondly referred to.

The day was made even more memorable as he had secured a long lease for his hotel site, giving his hospitality business greater security in future.

Later that evening, he received breaking news that the impending Armistice Day could be announced as early as the very next day itself.

The war had finally come to an end! This was excellent news for hoteliers like himself.

The string of events that day immediately set Arshak's nimble mind ticking. He took a walk by the sea front and while looking at the Sea Bank, an expansion plan took shape in his mind.

He swiftly set in motion plans to construct a handsome palatial

extension on this site, the western part of the E&O.

He called it Victory Annexe in remembrance of the just concluded World War I.

Five years later, the E&O became the most sought after luxury hotel in the Far East. Arshak's dream materialised.

The 40-room Victory Annexe opened its doors to welcome guests for the very first time. It soon became the talk of the town and a status symbol for the rich and famous — a place to be seen among the elite.

Sadly, the Victory Annexe fell into disrepair in the 1970s and in 1981, its owners at that time, decided to demolish it completely.

Fast forward to present day. The new Victory Annexe looks like the old from the outside but after having experienced the modern comforts and state-of-the-art facilities, I am sure even Arshak would agree that the new Victory Annexe is by far, the better version.

FAST FACTS

Eastern & Oriental Hotel, 10 Lebuhr Farquhar, Penang Tel: 04-222 2000 Fax: 04-261 6333 Email: luxury@eohotels.com

GETTING THERE

Located at intersection of Farquhar Street and Penang Road, 20km from the Penang International Airport and just a few minutes drive from the ferry terminal and Swettenham cruise terminal.

FIRST IMPRESSION

Very relaxing with a combination of colonial charm and lots of greenery and stunning views!

ROOMS

Only two room categories — corner and superior suite. The over-sized corner suites have a separate living area, guest washroom, expansive balcony and dining area with sea view. For a single traveller, the superior suite is more than adequate. The black and white chequered marble floored bathroom and the claw-foot long bath evoke that colonial feel.

OVERALL SERVICE

Friendly and efficient service

F&B OUTLETS

Those staying at the Victory Annexe wing have access to the private Planters Lounge which serves complimentary breakfast, coffee and tea throughout the day and evening cocktails. Sarkies serves buffet for lunch and dinner.

FACILITIES

Victory Annexe gym, the 400-seating capacity Victory Annexe Ballroom, a dedicated meetings concierge and complimentary transfers for staying guests to its sister establishment, the Lone Pine Hotel in Batu Ferringhi.

PLACES WITHIN WALKING DISTANCE

Walk or take a trishaw ride to nearby Fort Cornwallis, Penang State Museum, Carpenter's Guild, Kapitan Keling Mosque, Guan Yin Temple and St George's Church.

