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Singapore Heritage Festival 2013 celebrates the past through collective memories

SINGAPORE — The Singapore Heritage Festival (SHF) 2013, which will kick off on July 19 under the theme “Memories of Tomorrow” aims to share the collective memories that bring Singaporeans together by connecting people through various community platforms, conveying the stories behind the diverse aspects of Singapore’s rich heritage. The festival — which began in 2004 — has grown from strength to strength over the past decade, with this year’s event offering three heritage trails, 10 heritage hubs and 20 programme activities. Over one million visitors are expected to attend the various activities and exhibitions.

BY ALEXANDRA DAWN WESTCOTT -

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Organiser Angelita Teo, who is also the director of the National Museum of Singapore, shared some more about this year’s collaborations: “Over the last decade, SHF has grown from strength to strength, both in scale and reach. What is truly worth celebrating is the increased contributions by our partners — students, heritage interest groups, ethnic associations and corporates, among others.”

Speaking about the involvement of the respective organisations in this year’s programme, Ms Teo said: “We try not to dictate too much. Our theme is wide and encompassing. We want to show interesting things that have happened in the past, but it’s not all about nostalgia. We want to put the past in context of the present to show how things have evolved.”

Some of the activities include a look at the Chinese clan associations, a special zoo exhibition and trail and ‘Coffee Adventures’, which [includes](#) a brewing and tasting workshop, to name but a few. One

of the unique festival hubs is 'Magical Moments', which investigates Singapore's history of magic, from the Great Wong, famous for his Chinese rings, to Magic Babe Ning. "Some of the exhibitions have the potential to go beyond SHF," says Ms Teo. "Magical Moments, for example, is also of interest to the National Museum of Singapore in being developed further."

THE SELETAR HERITAGE TRAIL

One of the 20 community-driven activities – one of three heritage trails – is the Seletar Heritage Trail, conceptualised by the youth team at Wings over Asia. The trail offers visitors the opportunity to walk through the air base's historic past, going back as early as the 1920s.

Student volunteer at Wings over Asia Ashwin Kotteri, 22, an undergraduate at SIM and President of the Singapore Youth Flying Club who started flying at the age of 17, spent almost two months researching the history of the Seletar air base. Together with 10 other volunteers from Wings over Asia, they explored the detailed history of Seletar through internet research, as well as interviewing the residents on the property for more personal insights. "Despite the many changes that have occurred at Seletar, so much has remained the same," the aspiring pilot says. "The community here is very close-knit. Having grown up with aviation, I am keen to impart this knowledge and passion for aviation history."

Highlighting the traditional colonial houses and old hangers as particular points of interest on the three-hour trail, Mr Kotteri goes on to say that "the stories – the [human](#) elements of Seletar – are what are particularly fascinating". The trail involves two visits to Seletar residents in their traditional black and white homes to learn more about the estate, and the lifestyle on the air base.

Mr Yeow Meng Ng, Founder and Managing Director of Wings over Asia describes says that this aviation lifestyle service provider came to be involved in the Singapore Heritage festival by chance, but that they were keen to become more involved in activities on a grassroots level. Mr Yeow himself lived on the Seletar air base in 1994, and has fond memories of jogging through this lush area, cycling along the old kampong roads and stopping by at residents' homes to socialise. "Our youth division at Wings over Asia is very important to our networking activities," he adds. "We are trying to support aspirations between corporate and community levels."

GET YOUR CAMERA OUT AND YOU COULD TAKE TO THE SKIES

A spectacular incentive to get involved in the festival's photography contest is that five winners will take to the air for a 45-minute flight in one of Wing over Asia's planes for a bird's eye view of Seletar. Participants are encouraged to submit images that capture this year's theme, and post them on the festival website: www.heritagefest.sg for consideration.

The official opening of the festival will take place July 21 at the National Museum of Singapore. The Seletar Heritage Trail will run on July 27 and 28 from 1-5pm on both days. Participation in the SHF programmes is free of charge.

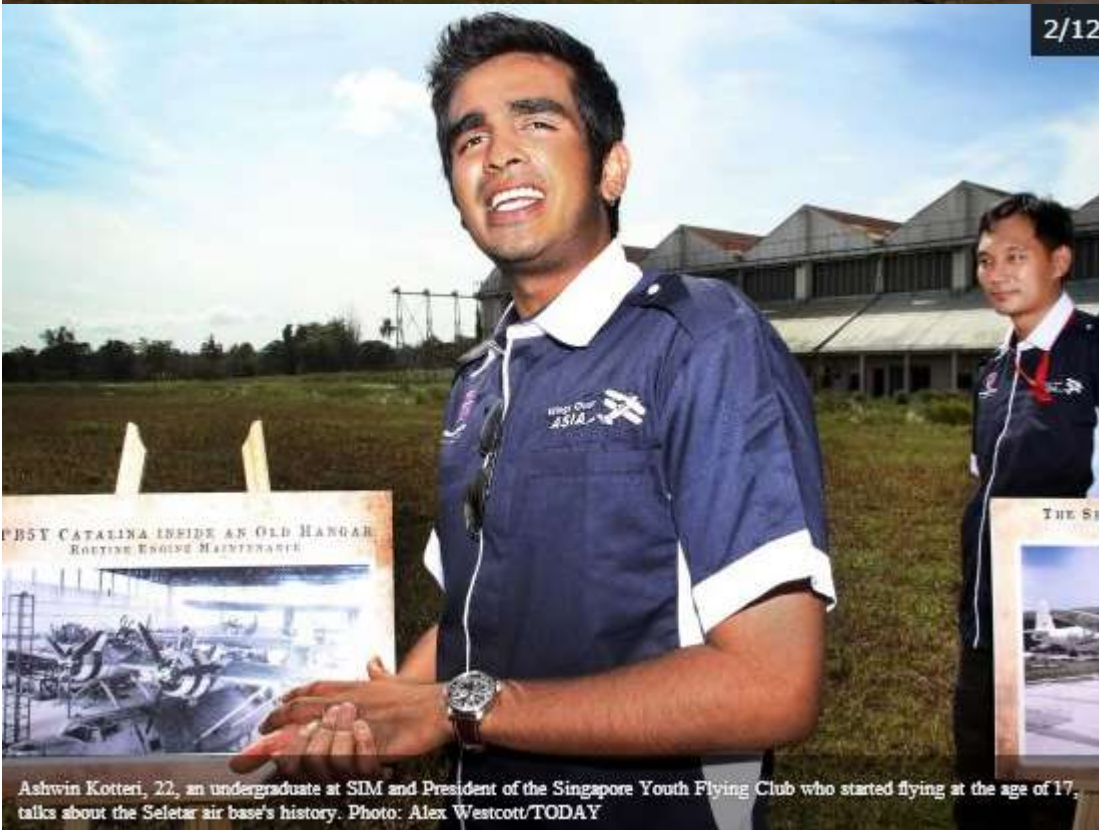
For full details and registration information, visit <http://heritagefest.org.sg>

Original Report

<http://www.todayonline.com/entertainment/arts/singapore-heritage-festival-2013-celebrates-past-through-collective-memories>



Traditional black and white houses along the Seletar Heritage Trail. Photo: Alex Westcott/TODAY



Ashwin Kotteri, 22, an undergraduate at SIM and President of the Singapore Youth Flying Club who started flying at the age of 17, talks about the Seletar air base's history. Photo: Alex Westcott/TODAY



The entrance to Seletar Airport's passenger terminal. Photo: Alex Westcott/TODAY



The entrance to Seletar Airport's passenger terminal. Photo: Alex Westcott/TODAY

THE FAR EAST FLYING WING SQUADRON PHOTO



PHOTO <http://www.airfieldinformationexchange.org/community/showthread.php>
Pieces of history of the Seletar air base displayed along the Seletar Heritage Trail, part of this year's ISingapore Heritage Festival running from 19 -28 July.



Visitors can appreciate the historic buildings of the Seletar air base along the Seletar Heritage Trail, part of the Singapore Heritage Festival 2013. Photo: Alex Westcott/TODAY



The British officers' clubhouse in one of the many black and white buildings still standing on the Seletar air base. Visitors can explore this traditional architecture on the Seletar Heritage Trail. Photo: Alex Westcott/TODAY



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Yeow Meng Ng, Founder and Managing Director of Wings over Asia, talks about the colonial buildings along the Seletar Heritage Trail, part of this year's Singapore Heritage Festival. Photo: Alex Westcott/TODAY



Pieces of history - explanations of key points of interest along the Seletar Heritage Trail, one for the three trails at this year's Singapore Heritage Festival. Photo: Alex Westcott/TODAY



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Yeow Meng Ng, Founder and Managing Director of Wings over Asia (left) and Ashwin Kotteri, 22, an undergraduate at SIM and President of the Singapore Youth Flying Club (right). Photo: Alex Westcott/TODAY



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Angelita Teo, organiser of the Singapore Heritage Festival and Director of the National Museum of Singapore. Photo: Alex Westcott/TODAY