

The Friends of the National Museum



President's Report 03/04

Overview

With over 1200 members, the Friends of the National Museum (FOM) is a dynamic, highly active volunteer non-profit organisation which works in partnership with the National Heritage Board (NHB) as well as a number of other cultural organisations in Singapore. FOM supports the four NHB museums by providing volunteer guides (docents) who conduct tours for the general public and students visiting the museums, as well as guides for Young People's activities such as the Children's Discovery Gallery (CDG). FOM organises these programmes and trains new guides through intensive courses, which are updated to include new trends and requirements on a yearly basis.

In order to contribute to adult education as well as to upgrade the knowledge & skills of our members & volunteers, FOM also organises a Public Lecture series, as well as Members Activities such as study groups, book discussion groups on Asian cultures, study tours to Asian countries and programmes related to Singapore's heritage.

Statistics

In the year 2003/04 FOM conducted twice daily tours in all four NHB museums, seven days a week, as well as a large, indeed increasing, number of special requests, especially in Asian Civilisations Museum (ACM), Empress Place. Some 25,000 visitors (including those guided by our Japanese Docents) were guided, of whom half were students of primary and secondary schools. This included around 3,000 children in the CDG. Our public lectures series, which now includes two monthly evening lectures as well as our popular weekly morning lecture, attracted some 4,000 attendees. In addition, we held an extensive range of Members Activities, numbering on average 25 to 30 a month.

Highlights

In October 2003, we celebrated our 25th Anniversary by holding a party at Asian Civilisations Museum (ACM), Empress Place which almost 400 people attended. We also wrote and published an Anniversary book detailing some of Friends of the National Museum's (FOM) major accomplishments over its long and active history. We launched our first website and established a Marketing team with the aim of ensuring greater awareness of both FOM's activities & those of the Museums in the wider community.



Recognition in the Community

During the year, our 500 active volunteers participated in a National Volunteer & Philanthropy Centre Survey entitled "The Value of Volunteering"; from this it emerged that on a pure economic basis, our volunteer work represents exceptionally high added value with our volunteers working the equivalent of 50 full time staff – a conservative dollar equivalent is S\$2 million. FOM was recognised at the annual National Volunteer Award ceremony when we received a special award for our high Value Added contribution.



Summary

2003/04 was an extremely busy and active year. In the next year, we look forward to attaining our status as a Registered Society and to continuing to work in partnership with the National Heritage Board as their "preferred provider" of volunteers with as much energy, commitment and professionalism as ever.



Jane Iyer

President, The Friends of the National Museum