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PRESS RELEASE

Penang Hill Festival 2023 Celebrates the Century-Year-Old Railway

The annual Penang Hill Festival returns this year for the fourth edition from **21-23 July 2023!** Since its inception in 2018, Penang Hill Festival has collaborated with business partners, the hill community, academics, artists and nature enthusiasts to bring together an event suited for everyone.

The three-day festival is aimed at promoting and creating greater awareness of Penang Hill's nature, history and cultural heritage. Furthermore, Penang Hill Festival 2023 (PHF2023) is extra meaningful as it also highlights and celebrates the **100th anniversary of the Penang Hill Railway** which began its operations in 1923.

"I am happy to announce that Penang Hill Corporation (PHC) will once again organise the popular Penang Hill Festival this year. This annual festival offers visitors and locals a glimpse of Penang Hill's uniqueness from its century-year-old railway, to its lush greenery rich biodiversity that was certified as a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve site in 2021," says YB Yeoh Soon Hin, Penang State EXCO for Tourism and Creative Economy (PETACE).

"We hope this festival will boost heritage and biodiversity education in Penang and draw greater appreciation towards our nation's icon, the Penang Hill. Visitors can expect an array of exciting and interesting programmes ranging from Talks, Heritage and Nature Discovery Walks, Exhibitions, Photography & Videography Workshops and not forgetting Penang Hill Festival's signature event; **"Music on the Hill - East meets West"** on 22 July 2023," YB Yeoh added.

Some of the highlights include: -

i. Talk: Rejuvenating Penang Hill: The Journey Continues...

A freak storm on 4 November 2017 badly affected Penang Hill, resulting in more than 300 landslides on the Hill alone. Huge boulders, fallen trees, and debris were everywhere, cutting off access roads. The funicular service was also disrupted then.

What had been done to rectify the effects of the landslides? What were the challenges faced? Learn about these at the talk session – "Rejuvenating Penang Hill: The Journey Continues..." by Lngeshwary a/p Bhaskaran and Muhamad Sahrizan bin Sepiai – who spearhead Penang Hill Corporation's Project Planning & Development Division, Ir. Yau Ann Nian – Executive Director

of WEA Engineers & Associates Sdn. Bhd., Allen Tan – Managing Director of The Habitat Penang Hill, and KP Ong – a founder member of NatureWalks@Penang Hill.

ii. Talk: Penang Hill & Its Vicinity: 100 Years of Wonders

This year, as we celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Penang Hill Funicular Railway, learn about the numerous wonders in and around Penang Hill from our speakers at the talk session – “Penang Hill & Its Vicinity: 100 Years of Wonders”.

Come join Enzo Sim – the author of “The Great Hill: A Short History of Penang Hill”, Clement Liang – a history researcher active in promoting heritage conservation and tourism, and Dr. Tan Chee Seng – a Senior Lecturer at the History Section, School of Humanities, Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM), as these experts share the historical evolution of Penang Hill, the transformation of the Air Itam/Air Putih valley, and the “education wonders” across centuries since the early 19th century, to discover the pioneers of education in Malaysia, around Penang Hill.

iii. Talk & Walk: Crag Heritage Trail

Step back in time and experience the vibrant past of Penang Hill with a visit to The Crag, a historical landmark on the Hill that has withstood the test of time. Built in the mid-19th century, The Crag served many purposes over the years, from a sanitarium to a hotel and a boarding school. This iconic building was even the filming site for “Indochine” in 1992 and a British TV series, “Indian Summers”, in 2014.

Take a 3-km nostalgic stroll along the Crag Heritage Trail while indulging yourself in the memories of Penang Hill. If you are an Uplands alumnus, it will be appealing to find out more about your alma mater and relive some of your fondest memories!

iv. Night Exploration

A rare chance to see the nocturnal wonders of the Penang Hill rainforest! In deep darkness, surrounded by jungle sounds, you will enter a world inhabited by diverse night creatures. Many animals, especially insects, amphibians, and reptiles, hide from predators during the day. This means that night is the best time to find beautiful frogs, shy snakes, and other rainforest creatures that only come out when the sky turns dark. You never know what miraculous creatures you will encounter!

v. Junior Rainforest Exploration

Open up your little ones to nature! Expose them to a wide variety of plants and trees in the rainforest, together with experienced and amiable guides who will provide thorough explanations. And to make the experience even more memorable, a copy of the “Penang Hill Nature Trail Companion” book will be theirs to take home.

Next, get them familiar with the iconic, adorable creature on Penang Hill, the langur, or dusky leaf monkey, with an engaging and interactive activity conducted by Langur Project Penang (LPP).

To wrap up, the children will experience gardening and tree planting with recycled materials at a plant nursery. It’s an excellent opportunity to teach them about the importance of sustainability and caring for the environment. Children aged five to 15 years old are welcome to join us!

vi. Penang Hill Photo Exhibition

As we celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Penang Hill Railway, visit the “Penang Hill Photo Exhibition” – an exhibition that will allow you to delve deeper into Penang Hill, the Great Hill.

Expect to see photographs of the signature events of Penang Hill Corporation (PHC), namely Penang Hill Festival, Penang Hill Heritage Forest Challenge and Trash Free Hill. Get to know what PHC has been doing over the years to manage, maintain and protect this marvellous hill, as well as the 100 years of transformation of Penang Hill and its vicinity.

Mark your calendars for this eye-opening exhibition, only at Penang Hill Festival 2023.

vii. Sunrise & Time-Lapse Photography Workshop

Calling all photography aficionados! Have you been dreaming of capturing breathtaking photographs of the sunrise on Penang Hill? Then you shouldn’t miss this out! Under the guidance of professional photographers from Canon Malaysia, you will get to learn the finer points of sunrise photography and go home with some useful takeaways.

Moreover, you will discover how to create a captivating time-lapse, making a series of still images come to life. Believe it or not, anyone can do it!

viii. Music on the Hill – East meets West

Penang Hill Festival’s signature event, “Music on the Hill - East meets West”, returns by popular demand! Be blown away by an engrossing symphony orchestra performance brought by Musica



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Sinfonietta Penang, a prominent homegrown orchestra consisting talented young and professional local musicians conducted by Resident Conductor, Lo Mei Yoke.

As a perfect complement to this, the Penang-based Omara boria troupe will present vibrant boria performances, which is a traditional artform that is unique to Penang. And the show doesn't stop here – catch a classical sitar and tabla performance by talented musicians Pravin and Kumaran, who will take audiences on an unforgettable musical journey.

The melodious night will also feature an inspiring Chinese orchestra performance with eclectic tunes by The Joyous Chinese Orchestra, which comprises Chinese musical instrument enthusiasts from Penang. Don't miss this incredible evening of music that will leave you spellbound!

Many more interesting activities and events await!

PHC wishes to express our gratitude to the Penang State Government, Penang State EXCO Office for Tourism and Creative Economy (PETACE), Penang Global Tourism, the Photographic Society of Penang, Canon Malaysia and our business partners on the hill for their continuous support for the event.

PHC is also looking for fun and energetic individuals to join us as **volunteers**. Interested individuals may look out for the registration link which will be shared on PHC's social media pages. For more information on the programme details (subject to change without prior notice) and registration for the events during PHF2023, kindly visit www.penanghill.gov.my/phf2023 or follow our official Facebook page at www.facebook.com/mypenanghill. Enquiries may also be emailed to phf2023@penanghill.gov.my.

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About Penang Hill Corporation

Penang Hill Corporation was established in 2009 through an enactment passed by the Penang State Legislative Assembly. Its main focus is to manage the funicular system, maintain and develop Penang Hill as a major ecotourism destination in its vision is to make Penang Hill the hill resort of choice in Malaysia and the region.

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