



MVM VOICES



Museum Volunteers Malaysia, hosted by Muzium Negara, 50566 Kuala Lumpur
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WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

- + Sleepover at the Maritime Museum, Melaka, **8 August**
- + Talk on Bok House by Nancy Chua **22 August**
- + Next MVM weekday training to start on **Tues 15th September**
- + Next MVM weekend training to start on **Sat 26th September**

Lots of our guides (and your newsletter editor) are away in August, so this is a short edition. There will be another newsletter on September 1, with more write ups on trips and schedules for the second half of the year.



MVM's potluck lunch to farewell volunteers on June 25. Yummy food all round!

Dear MVM Members,

We become volunteers at Muzium Negara Malaysia for many reasons, perhaps to support and contribute to the cultural heritage of this community or to gain knowledge. Perhaps more importantly, many of us stay on year after year at MVM because we are inspired by the passion and enthusiasm of the people we have been fortunate enough to meet.

This month we say goodbye to three particularly inspiring volunteers from Batch 1, Catherine, Sylvie and Natalie who have all contributed greatly to MVM. Who else but Catherine would be adventurous enough to travel into the deep sweltering jungle of Sarawak to witness the secrets of making a *pua kumbu*? Who else but Sylvie would painstakingly study the minute difference between a Japanese tea cup and sake cup? Who else but Natalie would be patient enough to organize our library?

All three are inspirational because of their great thirst to learn but also because they shared their knowledge with us. Without their dedication to MVM in the last three years, this organisation would not be what it is today. All three have brought something special to MVM which should motivate us to move away from our comfort zone. I know I have been motivated. From September I will leave the schools programme which I absolutely love to begin assisting Angela and Diane in the training programme which I know next to nothing about. Perhaps you too can be inspired by this enthusiasm to guide in a new language or follow a new route through the museum or learn about a topic you were not particularly enthusiastic about.

As you all know by now Muzium Negara has a new director who has indicated that he would like to expand the role of MVM within the museum so there will be plenty of opportunities for all of us to play a larger role in our organisation.

Finally, Catherine, Sylvie and Natalie, if you are reading this we would like to take this opportunity to let you know how much you mean to Muzium Negara Malaysia and all of us at MVM. We wish you well in all your future endeavours!

Zahara Shahrman, MVM Vice President



The MVM will be three years old in the Autumn. Please think how you would like us to celebrate and contribute your ideas! In the meantime, some photos from our farewell lunch on June 25.



HERITAGE CAMP INSPIRES RAUBITES

For MVM volunteer Aurelie Bosc, a ramshackle old British colonial mansion perched on top of a hill in Raub was an ideal place to teach teenagers about their heritage.

“Raub has a very interesting past. In its heyday in the 19th century Raub was a famous gold mining town. Remains of its colonial past are evident in the crumbling villas, rest houses and police station built by the British as well as the pre-war shop lots around the town. While predominantly a Chinese town, dotted around Raub are quaint Malay *kampongs* which add another cultural layer,” says Aurelie.

Determined to educate future generations to cherish their historical and cultural heritage, Aurelie organised a three-day camp for fifty teenagers in early June. The teens listened to presentations by MVM volunteers on the meaning of heritage and the concept of the Malay *kampung*; they explored a tailors shop, a traditional Chinese medicine shop and a family clan house; they discovered a typical Malay village and participated in a photography workshop. They surprised MVM volunteers with their creativity in poster-making and scrap books and in how much knowledge they absorbed.

“We were encouraged to ask questions, take photos and sketch,” said one of the participants who especially enjoyed his trip to the Malay village. Another participant who learnt a lot from talking to Raub’s older generation added rather sagely: “I learnt to observe and not just merely see.”

A lot hard work and organisation went into ensuring the success of the workshop. Members of Raub’s Lion Club, and parents and teachers at Chung Ching Chinese School all pitched in. However, particular thanks must go to MVM volunteers **Hayley, Nisha, Karen, Mariana, Catherine and Marie** for generously giving their time and effort to this project. “My greatest wish is that these children discover the hidden treasures of their own town,” says Aurelie. Judging by the excited chatter of the students and the wonderful work they left behind she more than exceeded her aspirations.

Zahara Shahrman

Artifact of the month Gallery B



Sanggul

Malay artisans have been creating jewellery since the 17th century. Gold hair pins were particularly important as Malay women needed to have their hair up in a chignon or “sanggul” to be properly dressed. The intricate gold pins were called “cucuk sanggul.” Usually one or two pins would be used for practical purposes but on more formal occasions it was not unusual for women to use a set of 3, 5 or 7 pins. These pins were decorated with geometric patterns or the shapes of leaves or flowers in keeping with Islamic traditions. Nowadays a cucuk sanggul is an important hair ornament for the bride in Malay weddings. **Zahara Shahrman**