



A Media Release by My Community

Embargoed until 8am on 22 July 2018

NEW MANDARIN TOURS, PHOTOGRAPHY AND SKETCH WALKS IN QUEENSTOWN TO CELEBRATE THE TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF MY COMMUNITY'S HERITAGE WALKS

Singapore, 17 July 2018 – The first heritage tour in Queenstown was organised on Saturday, 23 August 2008 and attracted a paltry four participants. The original guided tour aimed to document and showcase the rich history and heritage of Singapore's first satellite town and dispel prevailing impression of the town as a "ghost town." The four participants visited iconic landmarks at the town centre including Margaret Drive Hawker Centre, former Queenstown Cinema and Bowling Alley and Queenstown Driving Test Centre, and watched dozens of birds singing at the void deck of Block 39A Commonwealth Avenue.

2 Ten years later, the town centre in Margaret Drive was replaced with 47-storey skyscrapers and the elderly residents partaking in birdwatching had either passed away or moved out of the town. Concurrently, My Community has grown substantially from a team of two into a blossoming heritage society comprising 150 members, 83 of whom are volunteering in 5 fortnightly guided tours (or 10 guided tours a month) in three neighbourhoods. In 2017, My Community had organised 55 public tours which attracted over 2,500 participants.

3 Heritage tours comprise landmarks and experiences which serve as visual and experiential reminders of how the past is engaged in embodied meanings. My Community's popular guided tours are heavily curated with sensory cues that evoke the past, layered with personal accounts and experiences which took place on site. These tours form a convergence between collective memories and individual biographies and are essential forms of how communities interpret and negotiate heritage through familiarity, sensory recollection and community ownership.

4 President of My Community, Kwek Li Yong, commented, "Every community has a story to tell. Through heritage walks, we wish to narrate the endearing story of the common man, celebrate the little things which make the neighbourhood special and reconnect individuals to the social networks in the community."

New Mandarin Tours, Photography and Sketch Walks

5 My Community is launching a series of immersive monthly arts walks as part of the tenth anniversary celebrations for our guided tours. The first, Lens of the Past, is a photography walk around Queenstown where locally and internationally

renowned photographers including Joseph Nair and Nicky Loh bring participants to capture their sacred spots in the neighbourhood. The monthly photography walk will commence in August 2018.

6 The second, Artsy Avenues, is an immersive sketch walk where participants learn how to sketch, paint and draw from renowned fine arts practitioner including Tan Chwee Seng. In this community tour, participants return to the basics and discover drawing techniques and join fellow enthusiasts in creating collaborative artwork. The monthly sketch walk begins in July 2018.

7 Heritage tours in Mandarin will also commence in August 2018. My Community aims to reach out to a large pool of non-English speakers in Queenstown, Bukit Merah and Tiong Bahru so that they can immerse in the colourful stories within their neighbourhoods.

8 Participants can register for the guided tours at www.myqueenstown.eventbrite.sg or www.mybukitmerah.eventbrite.sg. For any enquiries, email myqueenstown@gmail.com

9 A detailed schedule on My Community's arts and heritage tours can be found on Annex A & B.

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About My Community

My Community is a civic society which documents social memories, celebrates civic life and champions community arts and heritage. We believe in and strongly advocate for greater community involvement in cultural management and urban governance. We aim to shape and transform community spaces through arts, culture and heritage.

Before My Community was established as a society on 26 August 2010, the community group began organising tours in 2008 and blogging in 2009. My Community was registered as a charity under the Charities Act on 12 December 2015 and conferred with the status of an Institution of Public Character on 13 December 2016.

Today, My Community organises guided tours, exhibitions, festivals and other art, heritage and place-making programmes in Queenstown, Bukit Merah and Tiong Bahru.

Annex A: Schedules of Heritage Tours

No.	Communities/ Neighbourhoods	Tours	Frequency	Duration	Description
1	My Queenstown	My Tanglin Halt Heritage Tour	Every 2 nd Saturday and 4 th Sunday	0830 to 1230	My Tanglin Halt heritage tour traces the evolution of Queenstown as Singapore's first satellite town. The tour visits iconic landmarks including Singapore's first HDB flats along Stirling Road, the first polyclinic, sports sports complex and branch library. Participants also get to meet librarians, long-time residents and shop keepers along the tour.
2		My Alexandra Heritage Tour	Every 2 nd Sunday and 4 th Saturday	0830 to 1230	My Alexandra heritage tour visits the military installation constructed by the British to protect the naval outpost in Singapore and follows the series of battles from Labrador Park to Gillman Barracks, Alexandra Hospital and its neighbouring Boh Beh Kang villages. Participants also get to enter the black and white bungalows at Alexandra Park and hear first-hand account of the war from former Boh Beh Kang villagers.
3		My Holland Village Heritage Tour	Every 1 st Saturday and 3 rd Sunday	0830 to 1230	My Holland Village heritage tour traces the transformation of Queenstown from a rustic Hakka Village and rubber plantation in the 1870s to a bustling military village in the 1930s and a renowned expatriate centre and tourist attraction known as Holland Village in the 2000s. Participants also get to meet and hear anecdotes from long-time residents and shop keepers at Thambi Magazine, Commonwealth Crescent Market and the VIP block
4		My Dawson Heritage Tour (To be launched	Every 1 st Sunday and 4 th Saturday	0830 to 1230	My Dawson heritage tour uncovers the thrills and spills of colonial Queenstown in an adventure through former British military camps, black and white bungalows and

		in Q1 2019)			government institutions in Dawson, Tanglin and Dempsey. The tour also recounts the intriguing figures and groundbreaking events which shapes modern Singapore. Participants can get to meet long-time residents in Forfar Heights, Strathmore Avenue and Dempsey.
5	My Bukit Merah	My Redhill Heritage Tour	Every 2 nd Sunday and 3 rd Saturday	1000 to 1200	My Redhill heritage tour recounts the legend of Bukit Merah and the interesting tales from one of Singapore's oldest neighbourhoods. Participants can visit the soon-to-be-demolished Singapore Improvement Trust (SIT) flats at Redhill Close and get up close with the fascinating residents and shop keepers at Redhill Market.
6		My Radin Mas Heritage Tour (To be launched in November 2018)	TBC	1000 to 1200	My Radin Mas heritage tour uncovers the mystery behind the keramats, shrines and cemeteries at Kampong Marang, Temenggong, Silat and Radin Mas. The tour unwinds the series of events prior to the founding of Singapore and the secrets behind the Malay villages in an immersive heritage walk.
7	My Tiong Bahru	My Tiong Bahru Heritage Tour	Every 1 st weekend	Various times	My Tiong Bahru heritage tour features Singapore's only conservation estate where participants explore the pre-war and post-war architecture and learn about the culture and arts, food and romance, as well as intriguing people and stories associated with the charming and picturesque neighbourhood. The tour includes an exclusive visit to Singapore's first communal civilian air raid shelter in a residential estate which saved and gave lives during world war II.

Annex B: Schedule of Arts Tours

No.	Tours	Type of Arts Form	Frequency	Registration	Description
1	Lens of the Past	Photography	Monthly	www.myqueenstown.eventbrite.sg	A photography walk around Queenstown where locally and internationally renowned photographers including Joseph Nair and Nicky Loh bring participants to capture their sacred spots in the neighbourhood
2	Artsy Avenues	Sketch	Monthly	www.myqueenstown.eventbrite.sg	An immersive sketch walk where participants follow an immersive heritage walk around Queenstown and learn how to sketch, paint and draw from renowned fine arts practitioner including Tan Chwee Seng.