



# NEWSLETTER

April 2006

<http://singaporekites.com>



Blue bear at SKA Kite Day

## Home News

### SKA Kite Day

West Coast Park, Singapore  
12 February 2006

WEST COAST PARK is now a park, not a big field as it used to be, but parking is free. Many of us remember the field as the first home for international kite festivals in 1982, 1983 and 1984. We also hosted the one and only Asian Kite Festival (Japan and Singapore) there sponsored by the Japanese daily, Asahi Shimbun.

Come to think of it Sadao and Toma Harada, holders of the record for the most kites on a single line (11,284) flew there. But at West Coast Park, we managed to launch only 1,400 kites.

West Coast Park was also the venue for the launch in Singapore of what was then the biggest kite in the world, all 5,500 sq ft of it.

When we arrived there on 12 February 2006, we were greeted by a monster blue bear flown, not by a SKA member, but by Frederic Pouillaude of Image de Vent, Paris. Frederic had arrived earlier in readiness for the Pasir Gudang show.

The good weather wasn't accompanied by lots of wind but Calvin, Ng, Polly, Shakib, Siti Hawa and M. Azmi, Gadis, Wing, Yusni and Abu Bakar were able to colour the blue sky. Ng even donated an impressively beautiful star kite to the heavens, free-flying *tali putus* style.



Twin Merlion Rokkaku

For the first time, we flew two matched rokkakus designed by Wing and made by gadis. The kites feature interpretations of the Singapore merlion symbol.

In the evening we gathered at Chai Chee Seafood Restaurant for a *yu sheng* dinner rounding off a nice day.

## Kite Workshop for Secondary School

Ping Yi Secondary School, Singapore  
10 March 2006



*School teachers making kites*

Fifty-five teachers spent two hours on a kite making workshop to nurture relationships. They were given a theme to work on. Six kites were chosen for best designs.



*Winning kites*

## Kite Flying with Youth Center (USAF)

Terror Club, Singapore  
25 March 2006

Youths and teens aged 5-18 years gathered at the Terror Club to enjoy a kite flying session with SKA.

Gadis and Wing were there to assist.

## SKA Interview on Radio 938LIVE

Date: Monday, 6th February 2006

Time: 10am to 10.30am

Programme/Station: "The Living Room" on 938LIVE

Hosts: Stanley Leong & Mahesha Thenabadu

*SKA is represented by Founding Member Shakib Gunn. Below is an excerpt from the interview transcript:*

**Mahesha** : A very big hello to you and welcome to "The Living Room". Thanks for starting a brand new week with Stanley Leong and myself, Mahesha Thenabadu. Now, today in this first segment, we talk about taking flight with kites. Yes, we're all about kites today. You may have heard that kites made their first appearance over 3,000 years ago back in China and with bamboo for the frame and silk for the sail and bridle. China has all the materials needed for kite making. From China, the kite was then reproduced throughout Asia, then later on in Europe and it's now found in America and Australia so it's a global thing. Kites have made their presence felt as they were even used in science, transport and also back in World War II where they were used as gunnery targets.

**Stanley** : Mmm. So today, to tell us more about kite flying, it's a hobby that a lot of us perhaps have had lost touch with that our forefathers were or have deeply engaged in. We have in our studio today, founding member of the Singapore kite flying association or Kite Association, Mr Shakib Gunn, with us. Shakib, thank you for taking time off flying kite to join us today.

**Shakib** : It's my pleasure. Not flying today but flying yesterday.

**Stanley** : Ah, flying yesterday. Where... where were you yesterday?

**Shakib** : I was on the East Coast Park.

**Stanley** : OK. Is that a popular haunt for kite fliers?

**Shakib** : It used to be but it's not now, because er, trees and tall apartment blocks.

**Stanley** : Now would that pose a big problem in Singapore for this sport to grow?

**Shakib** : I would say that, ya, lack of open spaces.

**Stanley** : Lack of open spaces.

**Shakib** : And we can't get too close to airport, so you know, the number of places where we can fly is reduced, of course.

**Stanley** : Now what is the health of the Singapore Kite Association looking today? How is the Kite Association doing in terms of the activities, members, activities...

**Shakib** : Members, we've got rather less than 50 members but we're very active. Always doing things. This coming Sunday at West Coast Park, for example, we've got Flying Day. And, next week, we are going to Pasir Gudang. Eight-day festival. One hour from Singapore. One hundred thousand people will be there, on a Saturday night. Cultural shows, fireworks, and kites as big as ten HDB apartments.

**Stanley** : Kites as big as ...

**Shakib** : Yeah, how about that?

**Mahesha** : Oh, we're just going to find out about the events shortly but first, we want to find out about the specific kites that are available, that catch your fancy even. What are the different types of kites that are available ...

**Shakib** : Well, you.. you can't really classify too.. too specifically but we've got fighting kites and paper kites, object to cut the other kite down. We've got single-line kites, can be small or very large. We've got double-line kites which are often called stunt kites and these are manoeuvrable, they can go anywhere you

want. We've got, four-line kites that you can stop in flight, reverse, go up, go down, go left, go right. And, we've got giant kites and small kites. Kites are as small as my little fingernail, kites as large as can lift us all up in the air together.

**Stanley** : Mm, it's truly amazing..

**Mahesha** : It is truly amazing.

**Stanley** : I never thought that kites to be like that, to have so much variety and then ..

**Mahesha** : Or to be the size of a fingernail

**Stanley** : Yeah. How would you actually spot a kite the size of a fingernail up in the sky?

**Shakib** : Well, you fly them on a human hair. I fly them on a girl's hair because I find it's better than a boy's hair, right, and you make it from that cellophane kind of paper that you wrap your sandwiches in. You.. you cut bamboo very, very finely, once, twice, you know, four times, eight times, thirty-two times, sixty-four times, hundred and thirty-two times and you can still fly, you can even fly over, just warm fire, because it is very, very light.

**Mahesha** : Oh, Shakib, how did you get started in kite-flying?

**Shakib** : My father gave me a kite when I was six years old.

**Stanley** : And you've been flying ever since.

**Shakib** : Not, the whole time. But a lot of the time, oh yeah.

**Stanley** : You told me before we came on the show that it is almost like malaria.

**Shakib** : Yeah, it is. Once you like many things in sports and hobbies, you never forget, and you see the leaves rustling on the trees and you think of kites. I see a paper bag flying along and I think eh, I should be kite-flying, not working.

**Stanley** : Very interesting.

## GO fly a kite!

At 83, he still...

Soars to new heights

The Electric New Paper  
25 February 2006

By Dominic Ying

If you think that's easy, try keeping this 100m long 'centipede' in the air for 15 minutes.

I tried and lasted only a minute before I had to return the reel to its 83-year-old owner, Mr Ng Thang Eng.



*SKA member Ng Thang Eng*

Pulling the kite felt like taking part in a tug of war. It kept twisting out of control as the wind grew stronger.

Not so for this grandfather of 12 who has been flying kites since he was 8.

I found that the trick lay in how he was using his body weight to tame his airborne creation.

Such a kite - made up of 80 diamond-shaped pieces - usually requires three people to launch and keep in the air. It is folded into a container for transportation.

Of course, every time the wind died down and the centipede came crawling down through the air, Mr Ng's face fell as well.

'We'll try again later,' he would always say.

Mr Ng and 13 others from the Singapore Kite Association (SKA) were among 500 kite flying enthusiasts at the 11th Annual Pasir Gudang International Kite Festival last weekend. The festival, held at Bukit Layang Layang in Johor, drew participants from countries such as Japan, Australia, China, the US, India, Italy and Germany and included some competitions for Malaysian entrants.

SKA treasurer Gadis Widiyati, 45, said such events allowed kite enthusiasts to get together and share their passion.

'It's interesting to see what design enthusiasts from other countries come up with,' he said.

The sky over Pasir Gudang was filled with kites during the festival.

Some were as small as a shoe. Others were giant inflatable animals and comic characters such as Batman.

This is the seventh time Mr Ng has attended this festival. He has also been to festivals in France, New Zealand, China, Taiwan and Thailand.

'It's only in open spaces like here in Malaysia that I can fly my centipede kite. There are just too many trees in Singapore,' he said.

He usually goes to Sengkang East and Pasir Ris Park to fly his smaller kites, but does not go to the popular Marina South kite-flying area because it is further away from his home.

Mr Ng makes all his own kites, often working on them when he cannot sleep at night. Since he started crafting his own kites in 1965, he has lost track of how much he has spent on them.

## EXPENSIVE HOBBY

They do not come cheap though. The centipede kite, made of nylon and plastic, set the retiree back nearly \$500.

He said his four-room Hougang HDB flat is a mess with more than 60 kites lying around.

Nobody nags him though because he lives there alone.

Among those who do live with their families are many who can forsake their near and dear ones for some flight time.

Ask 66-year-old Dutchman Govert Van Roon, who makes it a point to turn up for every festival.

He said: 'I see my kids maybe once a year, but I see my kite flying brothers and sisters every month! If I can't fly my kites, I'd rather die.'

## SKA Caps

Limited stocks are available. They are for sale at \$8.00 each.

Contact Wing if you want one.



## International News

### Pasir Gudang International Kite Festival

Pasir Gudang, Johor, Malaysia  
14-19 February 2006



THE ELEVENTH Pasir Gudang International Kite Festival was blessed with perfect weather – good wind, blue skies and no rain. Twenty-four different countries took part including newcomers Italy (Edoardo Borghetti) and Lebanon (Sami Sayegh).

Early arrivals, Scott Skinner, Alison (Ali) Fujino and Mathew Stubbs, from Drachen, were sitting quietly in Shakib's garden before the festival when a tsunami hit. Three vehicles from Pasir Gudang led by Michael Alvares arrived out of the blue with fliers from Germany, France, Italy, India and more, arrived. "Is this Pasir Gudang?" they must have thought.

The host team, Germany, led by old-timer Wolfgang Schimmelpfennig, fielded persons team that included SKA old friends, Peter Rieleit and Soon. The Germans anchored the show with Sesame Street characters and a great shark with sucker fish that flew metres above an aqualung diver. The team hardly stopped to breath. That can be said of Lynn, Cook and Hansen who looked after painting the sky and had a

Mega Ray floating past dusk each night – we could see it from Hotel Selesa.  
 – we could see it from Hotel Selesa.  
 Great kite for light winds.



Another activist was Roger Martin from Sydney who had spectators gasping with his buggying stunts and skillful quad line flying into a grandstand, so low and slow the kite could be touched and felt by spectators.

In contrast, the French team flew small kites. Jean-Pierre Ollive showed off small heart-shaped paper classics featuring

carefully researched images from the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, while Michael and Arlette Sollin held aloft the lightest kites at the festival, from a Chinese hell's banknote to a Tour de France cyclist held together with cotton thread. You don't have to be big to be noticed.



*Tour de France, light as a feather*

As usual, team performances were enthralling. USA and China stood out, the latter with a simple display of six long-tailed deltas chasing each other – the team from ShenZhen was appropriately named, Current Chasing Kite Team!

The SKA advance guard comprising Peter Teo, Ng Thang Eng, Tan See Liang and Gadis went on Tuesday. On Thursday, Friday and Saturday more members arrived including Shakib, Yuwono, Yusni & Abu Bakar, Siti Hawa & M. Azmi, Danny Teo and new member, life-and-soul-of-the-party, Calvin Tay.

Shakib and team were delighted that Opah Terbang flew so well, her best performance yet, despite her age (and slow leaks).

Gadis arranged for a tent for AKC (Asean Kite Council) and Orlando brought along 22 superbly-produced vinyl posters featuring kite traditions in member countries. Orly is to be congratulated on this great work. An AKC meeting was held during the festival with representatives from Malaysia,

Philippines, Cambodia, Vietnam, Brunei, Indonesia, Thailand and Singapore.

Friday night saw many of us dining at the H.K Rakit (floating) Seafood Restaurant at Kampong Pasir Puteh, Pasir Gudang.

At the Sunday night, at the usual award-presentation farewell dinner, a small number of special prizes were awarded to foreign flyers. We were all delighted to hear Tan See Liang's name called out. A tribute to his long-serving *pak kua* with a spinning *yin-yang*.

Shakib's take on the festival. "Let's remember we're there to please the crowds."

Monday following the festival saw some of us taking off for Pulau Sibu, always a great pleasure. As ever, grateful thanks to Pihak Berkuasa Tempatan Pasir Gudang for their efficiency and hospitality, not forgetting the drivers who so patiently ferry us back and forth.

## Thailand International Kite Festival

Cha-Am, Thailand  
9-16 March 2006

THE NINTH Thailand International Kite Festival was held about 20 minutes outside Cha-Am at Rama VI Camp in Phetchburi province. We were to fly at Cha-Am for three days, then in Bangkok

at Sanam Luang until our return to Singapore. The Sanam Luang fly was cancelled – there were lots of people there but they were not in the mood to fly kites!

The Cha-Am festival was promoted by TAT (Tourism Authority of Thailand) in association with Thai Sports Association under Royal Patronage. Being a TAT event, we were assured of the best in Thai hospitality and courtesy. Our own guide and 'mother', always smiling, bright-eyed Ms Kamolpanth Chalernsakulratn (Lek) looked after our every need.

We stayed in two very pleasant Chao Phraya riverside hotels in Bangkok and in the delightful Long Beach Cha-Am Hotel. Gadis (team leader), Shakib, Peter, Tan See Liang, Siti Hawa, Yusni and Calvin arrived in Bangkok Thursday night and found ourselves in Cha-Am the next day at lunchtime, after a 2.5 hour drive.

The slogan for the festival was "Coloring the Sky" – "Grand Invitation". This truly was a colourful festival and grand also. All the stops we pulled out -- by Ron Spaulding too, who personally co-hosted many fliers.

Shakib said he'd never seen so many large kites colouring the sky – his comment is captured on [gombergkites.com](http://gombergkites.com), Weekly Updates, March '06.

There was a "wall" of octopi in Thailand. Imagine 12 octopi from 5 nations, plus lots and lots of other monsters.



*Cha-Am saw 12 octopi flying at one time*

The festival attracted about 100 fliers from 15 countries, including Spain and Sweden. The largest contingents were from Malaysia and USA. This was quality over quantity however.

SKA decided to award each day International Kite Passports to those who we thought put on the 'best' performance. On Friday, we selected France (Nicolas Grez) for his Noe-Noe – 2m tall ground level 'walking' windsocks suspended from small deltas. The effect: a multi-coloured flock of ostriches. On Saturday the award went to the Spanish duo of Esteban and Pedro Gonzales for their non-stop display – monsters, opera masks and more. On Sunday the award went to Made Susila Patra for his flying wheel and to a Thai group for their innovative observation satellite.



*Spanish Opera Masks*

We were delighted to meet an old friend, Superman, who danced before Princess Sirindhorn and orchestrated the flight of many large bamboo and paper kites. Other old friends such as Vinai Poomaitong apparently awaited our arrival at Sanam Luang after the crowds cleared, but sadly we did not make it there.

Everyone was competitive – the Australians shone, the Chinese were exceptionally active, the French were creative, the Germans always in good humour, the Indonesians very talented, the Italian like the French, the Japanese few but impressive, the Koreans danced and flew the longest train, the Malaysians fielded no less than four

teams (MAS, Emirates, Keop and KL), New Zealand (everyone knows what Peter does best), Spain was professional, Sweden was gracious, Taiwan was always busy, and USA was colorful and impactful – the Sundowners did them real proud.

As activities progressed on the spectator side of the field, on the other side during the evenings, Modegi, Gomberg & Co, accompanied by a team of Thai Marines, unpacked and flew Modegi's 500lb Mega Moon, the 130ft x 82ft, 10,400sq.ft approx. monster, equal in size to 9 or 10 HDB apartments.



*Modegi and his Mega Moon*

A team of video cameraman followed us most places. At the field party on the last night we were stunned to view a complete video of the whole festival.

Two days of glorious weather and good company – and good food, we must not forget the food! On Sunday we were taken to beach-side Marukhathaiyawan Palace within the camp compound. On Monday 13 March, en-route for Bangkok, we visited yet another royal abode, hill-top Phra Nakhon Khiri Palace accessible via rock-face railway.

Return to Bangkok was marked by a evening river cruise with entertainment on two decks and a sumptuous buffet. The following day featured another encounter with the Chao Phraya with visits to notable *wat*. And of course, shopping. A total of seven nights bursting with activity thanks to the efficiency, overwhelming hospitality and generosity of TAT.



## Invitations



### Iran Kite Festival 17 April 2006

Iranian Kiteflying Association (IKA) eagerly welcomes fliers to take part in the first international kite festival held by IKA in Iran. The festival will be held in Kish Free Zone Island on 17 April 2006. Accommodation and meal will be provided by IKA for all guests.

If there is anyone interested to attend, please contact Wing. You can visit organiser's website at [www.IKAweb.com](http://www.IKAweb.com).



### 23<sup>rd</sup> Weifang International Kite Festival 19-23 April 2006

The 23rd Weifang International Kite Festival will be held in Weifang on April 19-23, 2006.

There will be a Grand Opening Ceremony, the International Kite Federation Representatives Conference, the Ten-thousand People Kite-flying Performance, the 2nd World Kite Championship & Stunt-kite Contest, the Weifang Kite-flying Competition and the Grand Prize-Awarding Ceremony.

The organisers will cover SKA team (up to 6 members) during the five days stay in Weifang. Besides that, they will meet

and pick up fliers at the airports of Qingdao, Weifang or Weifang Railway Station.



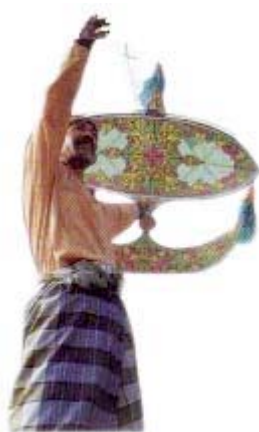
### "Houlogate Full Wind", France 19 April 2006 – 23 April 2006

Kite flying at Houlogate, a small town on the coast of Normandy.



### Cervia International Kite Festival 22 April 2006 – 1 May 2006

SKA received invitation from Cervia, Italy. For more info:  
<http://www.artevento.com/>



### **Kelantan Kite Festival Malaysia 2-4 June 2006**

The festival will be held at Pantai Sri Tujuh, Tumpat. SKA has received an invitation for a team of four. Accommodation, meals and ground transportation is provided. Let's go!



### **Vietnam Flying Wings III 3-8 June 2006**

Vietnam Flying Wings III is part of Hue Festival 2006, a cultural and tourist event. Participants pay for own airfares to Hanoi or Ho Chi Minh City airports.

The festival will draw the participation of kite clubs from Hue city, southern Ninh Thuan province, Ho Chi Minh City, Hoi An town and Do Son town, as well as those from France, Malaysia, Singapore, the Republic of Korea, and Cambodia. The festival's main activities will take place at Ngo Mon Gate Square and Thuan An beach, including kite flying performances, the display of traditional kites and the art of making kites.

Kites made in Hue were present at international kite flying festivals in Dieppe in France, Johor in Malaysia, and Jakarta in Indonesia and at local festivals as well.

Opening ceremony of Festival Hue on June 3rd 2006 will take place in Ngo Mon Square with a majestic scale dedicated to Vietnamese culture. There will be a combination of professional performing arts on stage and folk performances on the grounds of the city's squares, with the unique fireworks art by Pierre Alain Hubert – an international fireworks artist. There will also be special performances by the national symphony orchestra, royal dances, Vietnamese court music, and other high quality performances by various Vietnamese art troupes.



### **Bali International Kite Festival 12-16 August 2006**

This year's festival will be held at Tanah Lot. Located at the Tabanan, Bali 's southwestern coast, Tanah Lot is famous as the place of holiest temples on the island and the sunset above the Indian Ocean.

Participants pay for own airfares and hotel accommodations.



**2<sup>nd</sup> Phnom Penh International Kite Festival, Cambodia  
3-7 December 2006**

SKA has received invitation for three only (Wing, Gadis, Shakib) but others could represent them. Participants pay for airfares to Phnom Penh airport. Trip includes 2-days at Siem Reap to visit Angkor Wat.



**Tanjung Rhu Neighbourhood Kite Fly  
11 June 2006, 2PM-6PM**

Tanjung Rhu Neighborhood will be organising a carnival and kite-flying for the residents. SKA will be there to help out with the kite-flying activities. The venue will be open field between Costa Rhu and Park Shore.

**SKA members please diary and bring your kites out!**

**Upcoming Home Events**



**Come Fly A Kite @ Aranda Country Club  
9 June 2006, 3PM - 5PM**

SKA will run a kite-making workshop for Aranda members. Participants will be taught to construct a simple diamond kite and decorate it. Any SKA members interested to help out in the workshop, please contact Wing.

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