



NEWSLETTER

January 2006

<http://singaporekites.com>

Happy New Year 2006!

The SKA 24th Annual General Meeting was held successfully on October 30, 2005. Kite flying is still a passionate hobby for many in Singapore and in other parts of the world (see compiled news).



When and where was this?

SKA Kite Day

February 12, 2006

**West Coast Park - Car Park 3
1 PM - 6 pm**

SKA family kite day will be held on 12 Feb 2006. We are expecting a few guests on their way to Pasir Gudang to join us on the 12th. So start packing your kites today for the this event. See you there!

Important: We are planning a dinner for all kite-fliers on 12 February 2006, so please diary!

Invitations to Kite Festivals

SKA members are invited to attend the following kite festivals. For more information or to confirm your participation, kindly contact Wing Lee.



January 12-15, 2006

Gujarat 16th International Kite Festival (Ahmedabad, India)

Tourism Corporation of Gujarat Limited (TCGL) has been organizing The International Kite Festival for the past 16 years.

The Kite Festival is organized in Gujarat during this period because it coincides with the Hindu Festival of "Makarsankranti" which is traditionally celebrated to welcome movement of the sun to northern hemisphere.



**February 14-20, 2006
11th Pasir Gudang International Kite
Festival (Johor, Malaysia)**

The Pasir Gudang International Kite festival is one of the prestigious events listed in Malaysia's tourism calendar. The festival promises thrills and fun with its showcase of kites creatively put together by international and local kites. Besides the various categories of competition, there will also be exhibitions, workshops and Malaysia's own multicultural performances.



**March 11-12, 2006
The 9th Thailand International Kite
Festival**

Over 15 countries will join in the ninth Thailand International Kite Festival, which will be held at the Somdej Phra Suriyothai 16th Infantry Division Army Camp in Hua Hin, Prachuap Khiri Khan Province. Many activities and contests are planned for the festival, such as kite-fighting and demonstrations of Chula and Pakpao kites.

The *Pakpao* and *Chula* kites are symbols of a national sport played by the Thai kings throughout history. The

battle between the male Chula and female Pakpao kites is the highlight of such festivals as these.



**April 19-23, 2006
23rd Weifang International Kite
Festival (China)**

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

SKA Members' Activities

January 2, 2006

Kite Demo at Yishun Sapphire

SKA first event of the new year. Gadis, Yuwono and Wing were there to demo kite making also distributed some 250 pre-paid kites to the residents.

December 17, 2005

Flying the "World Kite" in Singapore against the "Durians"



For more photos visit:

<http://groups.msn.com/GoatHillGang/theworldkite.msnw>



From left:-
Wing Lee, Yuwono, Shakib, Peter Teo



SKA's signature on the kite

November 27, 2005

Civil Service Club Arts & Craft Fair

SKA conducted 2 workshop sessions on kite making. Attended by Gadis, Yuwono and Wing.

October 28-30, 2005

Xiamen International Kite Festival, China

This event was attended by Tan See Liang and Tan Poh Wah.



2nd from left :- Tan Poh Wah

October 9, 2005
One Sky One World - Worldwide
Kite Flying For Peace

To participate in the event, some SKA members flew kites at East Coast Park.



From left:-
 Peter Teo, Yuwono, Wing Lee, Gadis, Chua Lin

September 3, 2005
Kite Flying at Korea Peace Festival



On the left :- Gadis Widiyati



Group photo at the festival. Gadis on the left.

Elsewhere in the world...

KUWAIT

World's largest kite



Kuwaiti Energy Minister Sheikh Ahmad Al-Fahad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah (C) presides over a ceremony for the flying of a large kite with the design of the Kuwaiti national flag, in Kuwait City, capital of Kuwait, Feb. 15, 2005.

(Source : People's Daily Online, Feb 17, 2005)



KUWAIT CITY, Feb 15 (Xinhuanet) --

The biggest kite in the world, which is 1,050 square metres in area was flown over Kuwait on Tuesday as part of Hala February shopping festival.

According to the official KUNA News Agency, the kite, representing the flag of Kuwait measuring 25 meters long and 42 meters wide, was flown in the Flag Public Square center of Kuwait City.

Abdulrahman Al-Farsi, owner of the kite, was quoted as saying that he was able to break the world record by 633 square meters.

The kite was manufactured by Peter Lynn in New Zealand using about 2,500 square meters of ripstop nylon. The kite cost of about 9,000 Kuwaiti Dinars (about US 27,000 dollars).



(Source : www.alfarsikites.com)

JAPAN

Massive kite to blot out sun over Tokyo

The Yomiuri Shimbun

The Japan Kite Association will attempt to fly one of the world's largest kites in the sky above Tokyo in January. The kite, measuring 25 by 40 meters for a total surface area of 1,000 square meters, is the same size as kites flown in Kuwait in March and in the United States in September.

"Japan has long tradition of kite-flying, which has been passed down for 1,000 years. We can't look wistfully at [the other nations'] successful attempts [to fly giant kites]," said Masaaki Modegi, the 66-year-old head of the association based in Nihonbashi, Tokyo.

The kite the is of a kind called "futon-dako" for its structural resemblance to Japanese bedding. When fully inflated, this type of kite, which does not have a framework, spreads out like a soft quilt.

Although the monster futon-dako kite is made of nylon, it weighs about 250 kilograms.

The kite, which literally looks like a quilt, is puffed up and supported by air artificially blown inside.

The event will take place on Jan. 8 and 9 from 1:30 p.m. at the Harumi Pier in Chuo Ward. To fly the behemoth, a rope attached to the kite will be fixed to a truck. About 80 members of the association will take part in the event under Modegi's direction.

According to Modegi, who participates in kite-flying events around the world more

than 10 times a year, competition over the size of kites has been a recent trend.

Until a kite of 1,000 square meters was flown early this year in Kuwait, the largest kite ever to get aloft had measured 630 square meters. A kite of the same size was flown in Hamamatsu, Shizuoka Prefecture, in October 2004.

On hearing that Kuwaitis had broken the world record, Modegi got fired up to challenge the record. He immediately ordered a kite from Peter Lynn of New Zealand, who designed and built the Kuwaiti kite. Modegi asked Lynn to make an even bigger kite than the Kuwaiti or American ones. But while Lynn accepted the order to make another kite, he refused to make it any bigger, explaining that such requests might go on forever, according to Modegi.

The kite, dubbed Mega Moon, features a traditional design of a rabbit and the moon, alluding to the Japanese folk belief that rabbits live on the moon.

Mega Moon cost 6 million yen, including the cost of transporting it from Lynn's workshop to Japan. Modegi, who runs a restaurant in Nihonbashi, covered the expense.

"The most fascinating thing about a kite is its struggle with the wind. If there's a good wind, I am sure we'll successfully fly the kite," Modegi said. (Dec. 24, 2005)



USA Flag kite
(www.peterlynnkites.co.nz)

CHINA

10-meter-long kite flying

www.chinanews.cn 2005-11-21

A senior citizen shows a new 10-meter-long kite featuring the mask of Beijing Opera, at Badaxia square in Qingdao, east China's Shandong province Nov. 20, 2005. Thousands of citizens watched kite-flying performance at the square.



Kite flying competition held in Xiamen

www.chinanews.cn 2005-10-29

The 3rd "Dazhou Cup" Xiamen Invited Kite Flying Competition held in Xiamen, China's Fujian province on Oct. 29, 2005. Kite enthusiasts from all over the country gathered here to show their skills.





2,005-Meter Kite Flying in the Sky in Xuyi

China Daily, June 29, 2005

An 8-member team successfully fly a 2005-meter-long dragon kite in Xuyi county, Jiangsu Province June 28, 2005. The huge dragon is composed of a dragon head and 7,888 squamas. The team plans to fly a 2,008-meter kite in Beijing during the Beijing Olympic Games in 2008.



MALAYSIA

It's time to go fly a kite

By NASA MARIA ENTABAN (Malaysia)

A group of people in the Klang Valley has given a more respectable connotation to the term "go fly a kite". For them, it's not a put down at all, but the cue to head off to the nearest open area for some classy kite flying.



Kite bugging is not an easy feat, but 40-year-old general manager Syed Mohd Amin, 40, has mastered the skill.

The pastime is no longer about gluing together a few pieces of rattan and paper. Modern "kiting" involves so much more.

A small group of friends who share a bond in "kiting" gather at Bukit Jelutong in Shah Alam every weekend to "ride with the wind" and share the ins and outs of their hobby.

One of them is Danny Lau, who runs a kite shop called "Windancer: Wind Art Professionals" at 1 Utama Shopping Centre.



'Kiting' couple, executive news administrator Catherine Foong, 25, and sound engineer Benny Tan, 34, having a great time together at the helm of their double-line kite.

"Flying a kite is not as easy as it looks. During strong winds you can be literally carried away if you do not know how to control the kite.

"It all depends on your size. That's why it's

wise for a small-sized person to start off with a single-line kite and later move on to a double line," he explained.

Sound engineer Benny Tan, who began taking an interest in "kiting" a year ago, said: "Stunt kites are smaller as they are more of a 'show' type kite and come in interesting shapes. These kites can do 'tricks' such as turning somersaults.

"They aren't your ordinary kites because every little detail has been analysed and the technicalities are engineered down to the very last feature. We have to make sure they fly."

"It takes a bit of practice, but it's really not very difficult to master the art of kite-flying," he said.

According to motorised paragliding instructor Rohaizi Md Hussin, even the haze did not deter enthusiasts like him.

"We were flying kites during the haze, but the wind wasn't as strong as we would have liked it to be. After a while, we couldn't even see where our kites were," he said.



Danny Lau assembling a stunt kite.

Now that the sky has cleared, the group, which normally consists of around 10 people, has returned to their kite-flying sessions at Bukit Jelutong. Occasionally, they also meet at the Selangor Polo Club.

An interesting addition to this activity is something called "buggying", where one would sit on a small three-wheeled land yacht powered by a kite.

"You steer with your feet on the front wheel (which has pegs on either side) and just let the wind take you away," said Rohaizi.

"One must first learn to control a kite before taking up bugging, as controlling the speed of the buggy and manning your kite at the same time can be quite an effort," said another kite enthusiast, technician Khaironisaq Mohamed Sharif.

The price of power kites ranges from RM500 to RM3,000 each, depending on the size and design.

The kite enthusiasts warn that the activity can become addictive, but they unanimously agree that it is good fun for anyone looking for a different way to unwind after a long week.

(Originally published in The Star on Thursday August 18, 2005)

VIETNAM

Let it fly

09:23' 30/09/2005 (GMT+7) Vietnam

Since 2002, the Vietnam Museum of Ethnology (VME) has been used as an annual venue for craftsmen to gather and create. This year, kites have been the flavour of the festival and it's easy to see why.

“To Vietnamese people, a kite (diều) symbolises childhood and dreams. Kites are traditional toys for children and also adults. Now the market is filled with imported toys.



That's why, we want to make kite flying and kite making a feature of this year” says VME director Nguyen Van Huy.

50-year-old kitemaker Nguyen Huu Dan from Kim Mon, a district in Hai Duong Province with a long history of kite making. Dan has two large kites, one called diều coc, which has with two wings, is more feminine and sleek looking, and another called diều dai, which is larger and sturdier.

The kites are built in a traditional Vietnamese style, known as diều sao, with eight ovoid wings attached, plus five bamboo flutes in graduated sizes, which are mounted on top and make a pleasing drone when the kite is flying. The faster the kite swoops, the more magical the sound of the flutes is.

Kites are estimated to be 2,000 years old, and are popular across most Asian countries, where kite flying is seen as a sport, hobby and a religious custom. In Indonesia for example, kites are used for sport and also to catch fish

“Kite flying has been in our village for a long time, but we do not know exactly when it started. The only thing we are aware is that it is our tradition and we have a responsibility to preserve it,” said Dan.

Dan said that the kite festival in his province lasts from Lunar New Year to the seventh lunar month, which is believed to be a time when spirits return to listen to sounds made by the kite flutes, before blessing their descendants.

Also at the museum, Nguyen Huu Kiem, age 58, head of a kite club in Ba Duong Noi Village in Ha Tay Province where kite flying dates back to the Dinh dynasty in 10th century.

Unlike Dan's village, Kiem said kite makers in his area have set out to create and develop, rather than just preserve kite flying.

Once a week, on Sundays, his club runs a class for children to learn kite making and try out new designs. Kites in Kiem's village come in various shapes, from classic shapes like a lemon leaf or bachang-mango leaf to more modern ones, in the shape of a butterfly, a bird or a plane.

Traditionally, kites used to be made from cartridge paper but today thin nylon-mixed fabric are more common. This makes the kite strong but also light. “But we prefer to make our kites in traditional shapes and with traditional materials,” said Kiem.

Bamboo is used to for the frames. According to Kiem, the bamboo must be cut from old bush at the beginning of winter. Then it's whittled into long sticks after it is dried under sunlight. Standard

sticks are small, strong but flexible, to ensure lightness and strength.

Historically, kite flying was not just a leisure activity of peasants but was also used to pray for a mild climate. The kite was also used as a weather barometer – for example, a kite flying high meant nice weather for working in the fields in days to come.

Kites also symbolised a balance between dryness and humidity. Sounds made by the flutes were believed to sweep away low pressure.

Today, urban kite fliers have more trouble finding space but near My Dinh National Stadium, apparently, from late evening to midnight, kites can be seen flying high in the sky. You can even buy them nearby on Nguyen Huu Tho road for 30,000-50,000 VND.

(Source: Timeout)

Should you need to contact us...

SKA Committee 2005/6

President

Lee Wing Hong

- winglee@pacific.net.sg
- tel 6445 2096
- fax 6445 3986

Secretary

Polly Ching

- cpolly@dso.org.sg

Treasurer

Gadis Widiyati

- Gadis@singnet.com.sg
- tel 9787 0534

Founding Member

Shakib Gunn

- shakib@singnet.com.sg
- tel 6440 2459
- fax 6440 2659