



NEWS UPDATE

ASIA PACIFIC NETWORK
OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
CENTRES

Information for ASPAC Members

July 2003

WELCOME TO THIS EDITION

This ASPAC News Update contains information on:

- **President's message**
- **ASPAC welcomes new member**
- **International Conference on the Sustainable Development of Science Museums in the 21st Century**
- **PlaySmart: A New PETROSAINS Program**
- **Update on exhibitions at the National Science and Technology Museum, Taiwan**
- **Report from Executive Directors Meeting**
- **4th Science Centre World Congress in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil**



Photo: Mr YIP Chee-kuen, ASPAC President

It is the first time in history that a new form of deadly virus responsible for an infectious disease was identified and decoded within just a few months since the first case was reported. As part of the scientific community in the promotion of science behind health and infectious diseases, I learnt that a number of centres have created exhibits and exhibitions related to SARS within a short period of time.

International activities in this region are now returning to normal. I have received an invitation to a conference from one of our members of Executive Council, Dr WANG Yusheng of the China Science and Technology Museum. The Conference on "Sustainable Development of Science Museums in the 21st Century" will be hosted in Beijing during 22 to 24 September 2003. China is one of the fastest growing areas in our region in the development of new science centres.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Every one of us should feel a sense of relief as SARS finally crumbled in the hand of modern technology and combined efforts of professionals and dedicated people from all over the world. Lying within the region having the biggest number of cases, I have got reports from many of our colleagues of significant drops in visitor number in the last three months. As the disease is now under effective control and the World Health Organisation has lifted all its related health warnings, I am glad that visitors are now coming back to our science centres.

Dr Wang is now working on the construction of a new China Science and Technology Museum at the Olympic Green in Beijing in time for the 2008 Olympiad.

I encourage all ASPAC members to consider taking this opportunity to join this Conference in Beijing to share views on "Sustainable Development of Science Museums in the 21st Century"

YIP Chee-kuen
President, ASPAC

ASPAC WELCOMES NEW MEMBER

ASPAC continues to grow! Since the last news update, Discovery World at Otago Museum, Dunedin, New Zealand has joined ASPAC.

The total number of member organisations is now 31 as follows:

- 26 Full Members
- 3 Sustaining Members
- 2 Associate Members

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF SCIENCE MUSEUMS IN THE 21ST CENTURY

The 22nd September 2003 is the 15th anniversary of the founding of the China Science and Technology Museum, Beijing, China.

Over the past fifteen years, CSTM has gone through tremendous changes, both in terms of physical scale and in regard to its exhibition content and form. It has developed from a small museum with 7,500 square

metres of exhibition area to a total area of 43,000 square metres. This has been accompanied by a steady increase in its annual number of visitors and an ever increasing role in promoting public understanding of science.

As part of the celebrations, an international conference is being planned for 22-24 September 2003. The proposed theme is "Sustainable Development of Science Museums in the 21st Century". Participants are expected to come from the United States, Europe, Japan, Korea, Australia and countries in Southeast Asia. In addition to the academic program, a post-conference tour of other museums and places of historical interest in Beijing is being planned. A formal announcement, with further details about this conference, will soon be released.

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PLAY SMART: A NEW PETROSAINS PROGRAM

On 29 July, PlaySmart was opened at Penang, Malaysia. This new 80-120 square metre exhibition is located at the Petronas Hyperstation, together with a Mesra shop and a coffee shop. Here, drivers can enjoy hands-on learning and “play smart” as they take a break from driving. This exhibition has a theme of “Upstream Oil and Gas Science and Technology”. PETROSAINS designed and developed this exhibition, and provides a manager for PlaySmart.



Photo: PETROSAINS staff with teachers of nearby schools at the open day for PlaySmart in Penang

Plans are well underway for PETROSAINS to set up another PlaySmart on the holiday island of Langkawi. The theme of this exhibition will be “Wind, Water, Waves and Energy”

ASPAC Website

You can now visit the new ASPAC website. More sections of the new site will be available soon.

ASPAC News Updates are available on the website. Check out the site at:

www.aspacnet.org

UPDATE ON EXHIBITIONS AT THE NATIONAL SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY MUSEUM, TAIWAN

The National Science and Technology Museum is located in Kaohsiung, Taiwan and is the first applied science museum on the island. We look forward to the opportunity for exhibition exchange with other ASPAC members in the future.

“Ancient Chinese Locks” is a new special exhibition. This exhibition presents the technological and artistic aspects as well as the craftsmanship of various kinds of ancient Chinese locks. The development of ancient Chinese locks reflected the technological, cultural, and economic situation of each historical period.



Photo: Fish-shaped lock



*Photo: Engraved Crane Locks
symbolising the eternity of our lives*

“Modern Creation in Old Houses: The Wonder of Miniatures” is an exhibition developed in collaboration with the Miniature Museum of Taiwan. This exhibition displays in miniature format, the creation of old Taiwanese houses. The display aims to focus visitor attention on the historical heritage as well as to revitalise interest in their community.



Photo: Taiwanese old noodle shop

For more information, visit our website:
<http://www.nstm.gov.tw> or contact
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REPORT FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS MEETING

ASPAC is one of five regional networks of science centres. The others are ASTC (North American region), ECSITE (European region), REDPOP (Latin American region) and SAASTEC (Southern African region).

As ASPAC Secretary, I represent our regional network at the meeting of Regional Network Executive Directors. In May, I met with Bonnie Van Dorn (ASTC), Walter Staveloz (ECSITE), Julia Taguena (REDPOP) and Mike Bruton (SAASTEC) during the REDPOP Conference held in Leon, Mexico.

Inter-Network Projects that we are undertaking include:

- Aligning our various member data surveys in a way that enables us to develop science centre data and statistics on a worldwide basis. This will facilitate statistical analysis and benchmarking across the science centre industry at regional and worldwide levels.
- Supporting the consortium working on the International Study of the Impact of Science Centres on their Communities. Executive Directors agreed to encourage greater involvement of their network members in providing data for the consortium, and to disseminate the findings of the Study to their members. The next phase of this international study is to obtain worldwide data on the

economic impact of science centers on their communities. To be able to measure this type of impact is becoming increasingly important for science centers as they seek further support from governmental and community sources.



Photo (from L to R): Brenton Honeyman (ASPAC), Bonnie Van Dorn (ASTC), Walter Staveloz (ECSITE), Julia Taguena (REDPOP), Mike Bruton (SAASTEC) with their five finger sign, symbolizing the five regional networks.

4TH SCIENCE CENTRE WORLD CONGRESS IN RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL

The dates of 10-14 April 2005 have now been finalised. Write these dates in your diary now and plan to attend the World Congress in this most exciting city. The theme of this Congress is "Science Centres: Breaking Barriers, Engaging Citizens".

The International Program Committee (IPC), chaired by Paulo Gadelha, Museu da Vida and Fiocruz, met in May during the REDPOP Conference to consider the report of the Organising Committee and to further the planning of this Congress. Brenton Honeyman represents ASPAC on the IPC.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information about items published in this edition of the ASPAC News, or for publication of items in future editions, please contact:

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The Executive Council distributes ASPAC News as an email attachment every two months. It includes news about ASPAC events and activities, issues impacting on the science centre industry in this region, and news about the people and activities of ASPAC member institutions.

Please ensure that the ASPAC Secretary is kept informed of any changes to your email contact details.

What is happening in your science centre?

Please send news (and jpg photos) of activities which will be of interest to ASPAC members.

Please send to the ASPAC Secretary at the address below.