

Perlis Ruler: Penang Free School like no other

Penang Free School
22 Oct 2016 GEORGE TOWN:

Penang Free School is able to sustain 200 years of history because of the solidarity of its students, some of whom have emerged as leaders of the country, said Raja of Perlis Tuanku Syed Sirajuddin Syed Putra Jamalullail, an Old Free.

“Old Free leaders from the first prime minister Tunku Abdul Rahman to former chief minister Tun Dr Lim Chong Eu, preached unity learnt from an institution that valued togetherness,” he said when opening the 200th Speech Day and prize-giving ceremony of the



Guest of honour: Tuanku Syed Sirajuddin inspecting the PFS Cadet guard-of-honour at the Penang Free School.

school yesterday.

The Raja of Perlis said he had fond memories of his school days in the 1950s.

His father Almarhum Tuanku Syed Putra Syed Hassan Jamalullail was a student in the 1930s while the Raja Muda of Perlis Tuanku Syed Faizuddin Putra was also a student there in the 1980s.

“Hopefully, my grandchildren will follow suit,” added Tuanku Syed Sirajuddin.

The school was founded on Oct 21, 1816, years before the founding of Singapore.

It is the oldest surviving school in South-East Asia and the state government recently an-

nounced plans to declare the school grounds a heritage site.

Earlier, the Ruler planted a time capsule to mark the 200th anniversary.

The rectangular stainless steel box will be opened 50 years from now and it contains school magazines, photographs and the school's memorabilia of important events.

About 1,000 people attended the event, including Penang Yang di-Pertua Negeri Tun Abdul Rahman Abbas, his consort Toh Puan Majimor Shariff, Raja Perempuan of Perlis Tuanku Fauziah Tengku Abdul Rashid and Raja Puan Muda of Perlis Tuanku Lailatul Shahreen Akashah Khalil.

Some 5,000 Old Frees also gathered for the anniversary dinner last night.

Pos Malaysia honoured the school with commemorative stamps and first day covers.

A check on several post offices in the city showed that the folders, first day covers and miniature sheets and the complete sets were all sold out before noon.

Philatelist Paul Chong, 61, bought 60 commemorative stamps, first day covers and miniature sheets in his hometown of Sibu, Sarawak, and then took a four-hour flight to George Town just to have the commemorative postal mark stamped on them yesterday.

About 100 people gathered at the tomb of Rev Robert Sparke Hutchings (1782-1827) for the annual thanksgiving memorial service at the Protestant Cemetery in Jalan Sultan Ahmad Shah.