

PRESS AND MEDIA CONFERENCE

COMPLETION OF LOKE THYE KEE BUILDING RESTORATION AND APPOINTMENT OF OPERATOR AND MANAGER

Penang, Malaysia, Thursday, 27th September 2012 – 83 years since she was first built, 16 years since she was abandoned and 9 months in the making, the veil of the landmark Loke Thye Kee building will once again be lifted.

“We are proud to announce the completion of the restoration of the Loke Thye Kee building and we hope that she will become a premium heritage landmark that it deserves to be. We hope this will bring life back to the middle-Penang Road area,” said Mr Jonathan Foo, Director of Loke Thye Kee Sdn. Bhd.

Situated on the key junction of Penang Road and Burmah Road, the building was originally owned and built in 1929 by Khoo Sian Ewe, one of the most influential community leaders of that time. It was designed for Khoo by Architect Chew Eng Eam, one of the earliest Western-trained Straits-Chinese architects.

For close to seven decades, the Loy family operated Loke Thye Kee restaurant, serving up their classic menu of Hainanese cuisine, and creating the premium venue for birthday and wedding celebrations for over three generations until 1996. True to its name, meaning “House of Happiness”, it is also the place where matchmakers would bring potential brides and grooms for their first meeting.

After 9 months of extensive restoration works, including the replacement of water-logged concrete slabs and rotting timber, Loke Thye Kee building is renewed and once again ready to play host to many more happy occasions.

“The Loke Thye Kee building is a key landmark heritage property. It is a perfect example of how with proper planning and effort, the value-add to a formerly abandoned building can be both financially rewarding to the owner, as well as historically beneficial to Penang,” said the project’s marketing consultant Mr Michael Geh from Raine & Horne.

With the completion of the restoration, today also marks the appointment of FoodPeople Sdn. Bhd. as Manager and Operator of Loke Thye Kee building.

“We are excited to be part of this project. The Loke Thye Kee building is by itself a branding for Penang. We aspire to bring F/B and retail outlets which by themselves speak for the fame of Penang as a destination of choice for good food and provide a slice of its history,” said Mr Ong Ban Seang, Managing Director, FoodPeople Sdn. Bhd.

Today, the two parties signed the appointment documents on-site at the Loke Thye Kee building with the Guest of Honour, Dato Anwar Fazal, Chairman of ThinkCity Sdn. Bhd. as the witness. The Loke Thye Kee building was a recipient of a Building Conservation Grant from ThinkCity’s George Town Grants Programme (GTGP).

“We feel privileged to be the custodian of such a key heritage building in Penang. Mention Loke Thye Kee, and anybody who has lived in or visited Penang in the last 80 years will recall this iconic place. We would like to once again see it touch the lives of today’s Penang residents and visitors,” said Dato Syed Aidid, Chairman, FoodPeople Sdn. Bhd and Penang Tourism Centre.

FoodPeople will begin managing the building from 1st October 2012.