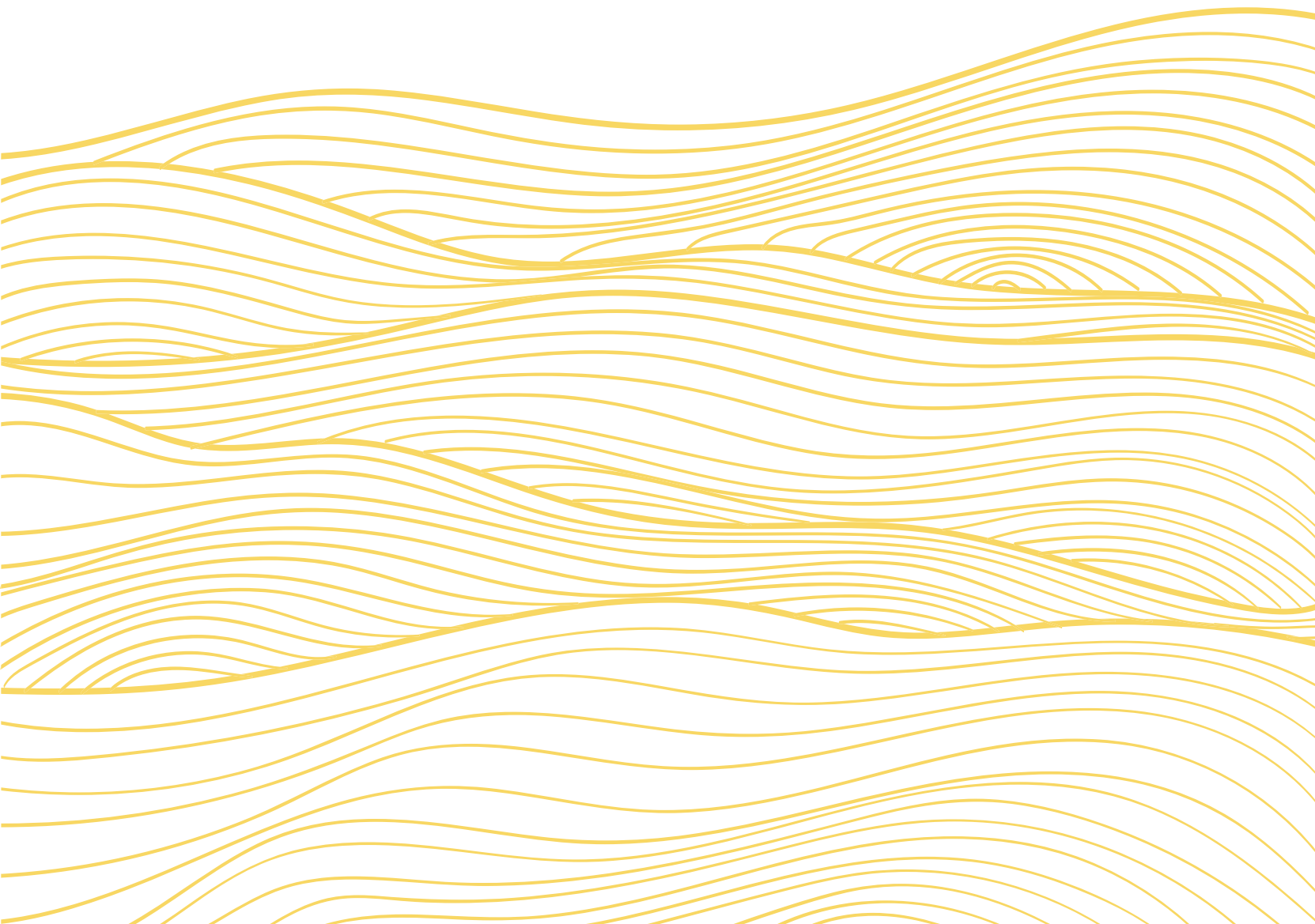




**The Nine Emperor Gods Festival in Singapore:
Heritage, Culture, and Community**

**新加坡九皇文化：
社群，信仰与传统**

Volume 2B



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Heritage, Culture, and Community
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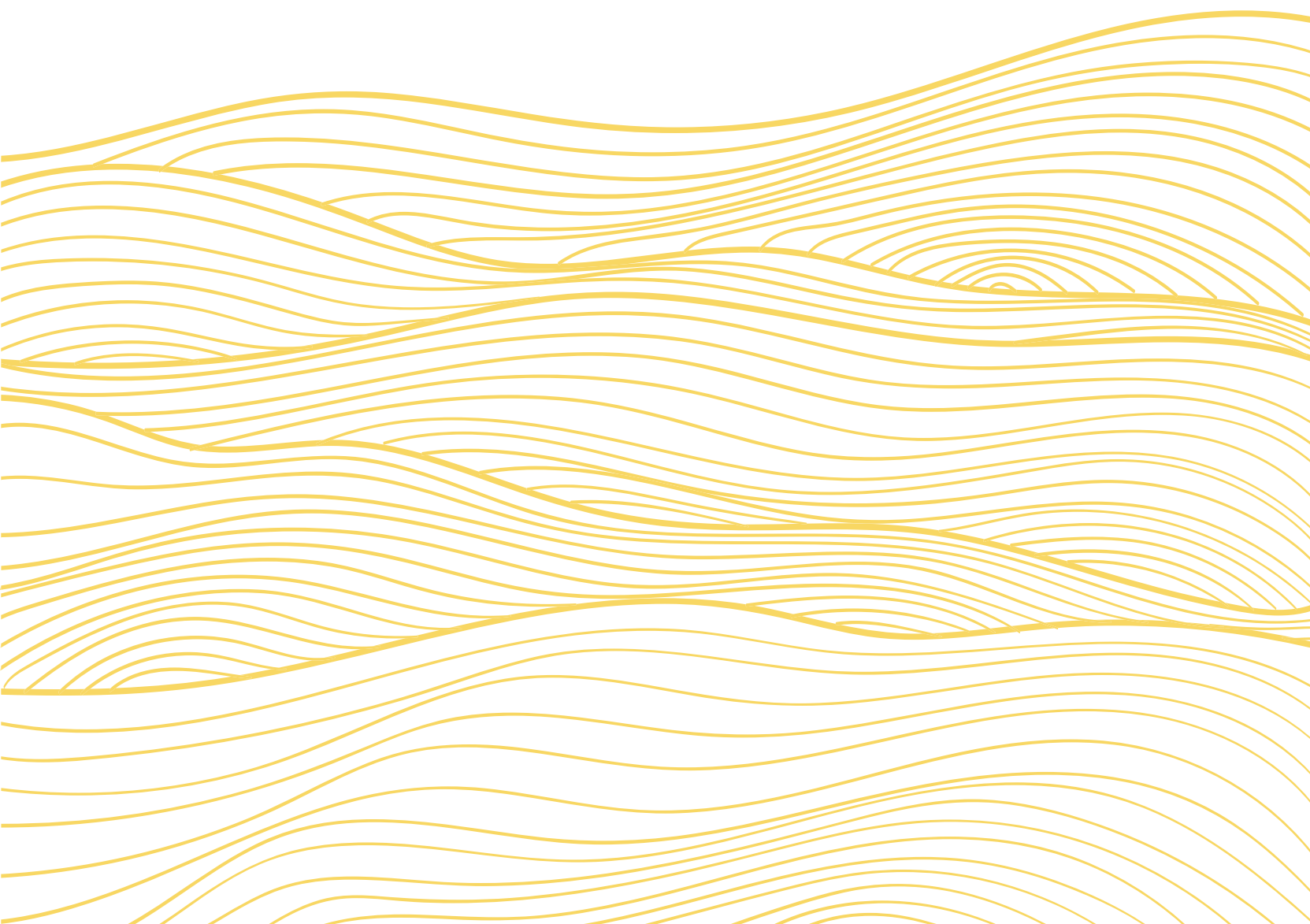
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第 9 章

Leng San Giam Dou Mu Gong
龙山岩斗母宫



History of Leng San Giam Dou Mu Gong

Founded by Master Chuan Xi around 1978 or 1979, Leng San Giam Dou Mu Gong began in a flat in Jalan Membina. There existed a unique relationship between Master Chuan Xi and the Fifth Emperor God as the latter had selected the former as his spirit medium some years prior in 1971. For that reason, Master Chuan Xi crafted the statue of the Fifth Emperor God and situated the statue in his home temple in 1977 or 1978. The Nine Emperor Gods Festival during this period was hosted at Kim Lan Beo temple at 119A Kim Tian Road. Assisted by his godson, Yang Muqing, the invitation and sending-off ceremonies were carried out at West Coast Road with only two palanquins—one for the Fifth Emperor God and the other for the censor. Though on a comparatively smaller scale than the contemporary ceremonies, Leng San Giam Dou Mu Gong's ceremonies held during the initial years were still fashioned similarly with Master Chuan Xi as the temple's spirit medium.

Moving to a three-room Housing Development Board (HDB) flat at Block 506 Bukit Batok Street 52 in the late 1970s, the temple was renamed Bukit Batok Dou Mu Gong between 1985 and 1990. The relocation also meant moving the festival's site to Lim Chu Kang Jetty for the receiving and sending-off ceremony. At Bukit Batok, Master Chuan Xi also acquired more statues of the Nine Emperor Gods while also inviting Dou Mu Niang Niang to be the temple's guardian deity. He also commissioned more palanquins to be made. The expansion in paraphernalia corresponded to the growth in scale of the festival. By 1996, the temple was fully equipped with the complete set of 10 palanquins—as sponsored by members, and statues for each of the Nine Emperor Gods and Dou Mu Niang Niang.

In 2011, the temple was merged with Leng San Giam to form the Leng San Giam Dou Mu Gong temple. It also moved into the second floor of the Leng San Giam wing in a combined temple complex at Ang Mo Kio Avenue 1. The complex had been built in 1983 with Leng San Giam, Kong Lim Kong and Kim Eang Tong as the three resident temples. Mr. Zhou Zihui (also Zhou Jinshun, thereafter referred to as Mr. Chew), the medium who succeeded Master Chuan Xi, was a committee member and medium of both Leng San Giam and Bukit Batok Dou Mu Gong. This facilitated the merger. Later, a third temple, dedicated to the Great Sage, was added to the third floor of the same wing. Master Chew is currently the medium for the Nine Emperor Gods, one of the Fa Zhu Gong, and the Great Sage.

The Nine Emperor Gods Festival

The Nine Emperor Gods Festival is held over 11 days annually. It begins with the receiving ceremony on the 29th day of the eighth lunar month and concludes with the sending-off ceremony on the ninth day of the ninth lunar month.

The Layout of the Tentage

Entering the tentage for the 2017 Nine Emperor Gods Festival, worshippers were greeted with a statue of the God of Fortune which occupied the centre of the entrance in front of the Jade Emperor's altar. Displayed on the left of the tentage was a table selling prayer and blessing items, namely yellow paper for the Ritual Ship, flags, and incense papers for the bridge crossing ceremony. The main altar comprised of three altars. The altar in the middle was dedicated to the Nine Emperor Gods and other deities. To the left would be the altar for the ancestral tablet of the late Master Chuan Xi. To the right would be the altar for the Nine Emperor Gods armies and the Five Camps, and their respective Generals.

On the right side of tentage, there was an altar for the Nine Emperor Gods lamps. It was next to the altar for the Jade Emperor. The Ritual Ship was opposite the counter for incense and joss paper, while the palanquins of the Nine Emperor Gods and Dou Mu Niang Niang, along with the vanguard sedan chairs were lined up beside it.

龙山岩斗母宫的历史

龙山岩斗母宫是在1978至1979年间由传喜师父创办。当时该庙只有一尊九皇五帝的神像，且借宿在119A金殿路（也称四脚亭）的金兰庙。在1971年，传喜师父被九皇五帝选为乩童，由其义子杨木卿（以下简称大师兄）协助。自1977、1978年始，传喜师父开始在住家神坛供奉订做的九皇五帝神像。当时的恭迎圣驾及送驾回銮仪式在西海岸路一带举行，而且只有两座圣轿，一座为九皇五帝圣轿，另一座则是香炉圣轿。据说，当时的仪式与今日的仪式相同，只是规模较小，当时的乩童是传喜师父。

在70年代晚期，该庙搬迁至武吉巴督52街第506座组屋的一间三房式组屋，从1985至1990年，该庙改名为武吉巴督斗母宫。传喜师父在这段时间也增设更多九皇大帝的神像，同时庙宇也请到斗母娘娘为该庙的守护神。这时的恭迎圣驾及送驾回銮仪式已在林厝港码头举行，而九皇千秋的规模也越来越大，九皇大帝的神像与九皇圣轿也越来越多。在1996年左右，该庙已有属于九皇大帝与斗母娘娘全套的10座九皇圣轿和神像。圣轿是由个别成员赞助的。

在1983年，在宏茂桥一带的宏茂桥联合庙由龙山岩、壕林宫与金英堂组成。在龙山岩和武吉巴督斗母宫的理事周子惠（别名周锦顺，以下简称为周先生）的努力下，这两间庙宇在2011年合并为龙山岩斗母宫。斗母宫位于龙山岩庙宇的第二楼，以九皇五帝为主神，而龙山岩的第三楼供奉大圣佛祖。九皇大帝、法主公与大圣公的乩童由周先生担任。

九皇千秋

每年的九皇千秋从农历八月廿九日的恭迎圣驾仪式开始至农历九月九日的送驾回銮仪式结束，一共11天。

帐篷的布局

进入帐篷时，迎面而来的是帐幕入口正中的一尊财神爷神像，背对着的是玉皇大帝的神龛。帐篷的左边是售卖柜台，它售卖着祈福物品如黄色法船的祈福纸，令旗及过平安桥所需要的金纸。在桌子的右边最靠近庙宇的是主神龛。主神龛由三个神龛组成。左边神龛摆放了已故传喜师父的牌位，中间神龛摆放了九皇大帝及其他神明，右边神龛则是九皇军及五营将军的神龛。

在帐篷内的右边，有设九皇灯神桌。九皇灯神桌就在玉皇大帝神坛旁边。法船的神桌就在售卖香烛金纸柜台对面。九皇大帝的九乘圣轿、斗母娘娘圣轿和先锋神明的先锋轿都排列在法船旁边。

Preparation for festival

The grand scale of the Nine Emperor Gods Festival requires preparations to begin at least a month in advance. Preparations include the establishment of altars in the tentage outside the temple, cleaning of the deities' statues, the assembly and refurbishment of the palanquins of the Nine Emperor Gods, and the packing of sets of festival attires. For the participants, they will have to prepare white shirts, white pants, a white headscarf, white towels and a yellow waist cloth. This attire has the connotation of mourning for the Nine Emperor Gods. All committee members must wear the attire throughout the festival.

► Transportation of the fully decorated palanquins to the festival tentage in front of the temple for cleaning and mending purposes before the festival.

装饰齐全的九皇圣轿被运送到庙宇前面的庆典帐篷，庙宇理事会清理、修补并确保圣轿处于良好状态。



千秋筹备工作

九皇千秋的筹备工作在一个月前就开始了。筹备工作包括在帐篷内设置神龛，清理神像，组装和整修九皇圣轿。庙内的助手也都备好一套九皇千秋时必穿的衣服，包括：白色衬衫、白色长裤、白色头巾、一条白色头巾与一条系在腰上的黄布。龙山岩斗母宫理事在整个千秋必须穿着这套衣着，而它犹如丧服，象征着为九皇大帝戴孝。



◀ Cleaning of various deity images by committee members.

庙宇理事将神像请出清理。





▲ Transportation of the Ritual Ship into the tentage.

庙宇理事与助手将法船移到帐篷内。



▲ Raising of the Nine Lamps ritual was conducted a day before the receiving ceremony to invite and guide deities to the Nine Emperor Gods Festival.

恭迎圣驾仪式的前一天，由道士主持、乩童监督的“上天灯”仪式在庙宇帐篷外的九皇灯神龛前举行。上天灯仪式主要是将九盏灯（九皇灯）悬挂在竹篙上，而九皇灯神龛上绑着竹子。根据龙山岩斗母宫的说法，竹篙的作用像是一根“天线”，用来邀请神明前来庙宇参与九皇千秋和为神明显示千秋地点。

Receiving Ceremony

The Nine Emperor Gods Festival begins with ceremony to receive the Nine Emperor Gods. The temple committee and devotees will invite the Nine Emperor Gods at Punggol Marina Jetty.

▶ Preparing to receive the Nine Emperor Gods at Punggol Marina Jetty.

准备恭迎圣驾。



Bearing the statues of the Fifth Emperor God, Fa Zhu Gong, Mazu, Guan Gong and Sudhana, flags of the temple, the incense vessels of each Nine Emperor Gods and Dou Mu Niang Niang, and various offerings, an advance party of the temple committee members arrived at the jetty in the early evening to prepare for the night's receiving ceremony. After the setting up of the altar and other religious paraphernalia was completed, the Daoist priest would lead the committee members in paying respects to the deities using incense sticks before reading from a Daoist memorial seeking blessings for requesting the deities in blessing the temple committee and sponsors of the Nine Emperor Gods festival. He would also recite the Northern Dipper Scripture. This ritual was to prepare the area for the receiving ceremony, and to inform the relevant deities and armies that the receiving ceremony would be conducted soon.

Meanwhile, in the temple, the lion and dragon performers arrived at 6 pm. Around 7 pm, the buses and lorries arrived to bring the contingent to Punggol Marina Jetty. Before everyone got on the bus, one of the Fa Zhu Gong deities descended upon his medium, Mr. Chew. After the departure of the deity, devotees, volunteers and temple committee members boarded the buses or lorries for the jetty.

▶ Daytime ritual led by the Daoist priest for temple committee members before the evening receiving ceremony.

在恭迎圣驾仪式当天下午，庙宇理事参与了道士主持的仪式。



恭迎圣驾仪式

恭迎圣驾仪式意味着九皇千秋正式开始。庙宇理事与善信在榜鹅一代的海滨乡村俱乐部码头（榜鹅码头）迎接九皇大帝的驾临。



在傍晚时分，第一组理事抵达榜鹅码头。他们在码头为晚上的恭迎圣驾仪式设置了一个神龛，神龛上摆放着九皇五帝、法主公、天后娘娘、关公及善财童子的神像，供品以及九皇大帝和斗母娘娘专属的香炉。神龛设置完毕后，道士带领庙宇理事捻香参拜，接着吟念疏文及北斗经。道士吟诵疏文的目的是为了请求神明赐福及保佑庙宇理事以及九皇千秋的赞助商们。该仪式不仅是为了准备恭迎圣驾仪式的区域，同时也是通知相关的神明与兵将恭迎仪式即将举行。

同时，舞龙舞狮队在傍晚六点抵达庙宇。晚上七点左右，罗厘与巴士抵达庙宇，将大队接到榜鹅码头。在所有参与者上巴士前，乩童周先生突然被其中一位法主公降乩。当法主公退乩后，善信及庙宇理事登上巴士或罗厘，前往码头。

► Preparation of the Ritual Staff by temple committee members for the receiving ceremony.

庙宇理事为恭迎圣驾仪式准备法杖。



In the midst of the ritual by the Daoist priest at the altar in Punggol Marina, the receiving main party from the temple began to arrive in lorries and buses. There were altogether nine palanquins for each of the Nine Emperor Gods, and one for Dou Mu Niang Niang, all carried by different groups of palanquins carriers. The two Fa Zhu Gong palanquins were also brought to the receiving ceremony on that day.



▲ Fa Zhu Gong arrives at the temple.

法主公降乩。

道长法事在进行中，大队乘着罗厘与巴已士陆陆续续抵达榜鹅码头。九乘九皇大帝圣轿和一乘斗母娘娘圣轿都有各自的抬轿队伍。同时两座法主圣轿也一起请到恭迎圣驾的现场。

The receiving ceremony commenced after all the palanquins were rested behind the main altar. As the Daoist priest continues his chanting, an all-male invitation party then go into the water on the shallow edge of the jetty until they were immersed up to their knees, holding incense and a pail wrapped in yellow cloth. The members of the party used a small earthenware vessel to scoop the water into the pail. As the water was being collected, the Fifth Emperor God arrives through his medium, Mr. Chew, a sign that the deities have been successfully received. The accompanying drum troupe also begins to play to signify the arrival of the Nine Emperor Gods. The Nine Emperor Gods army was also invited during the receiving ceremony.

▶ Committee members inviting water.

龙山岩理事请水。



After the party returns to shore, water from the pail was then transferred into the censers of each of the Nine Emperor Gods and Dou Mu Niang Niang on the main altar. Every palanquin team will then send a representative to the main altar to pay their respects to the deities, before inviting their respective censers to their palanquins.

An incense is offered to the censer, before the selected representative then holds the censer with the single stick of incense above his head and moves back to his palanquin on his knees. After the censer is invited to take its seat and secured inside, the palanquin begins to sway as the team carries it. The procession of palanquin then proceeds to the car park with the inviting contingent and make their way back to the temple.

When the contingent returns to the temple, the Daoist priest performs a ritual at the main altar in the tentage, while the palanquins would go to each of the altars in the tentage and temple to pay their respects. Two of the Fa Zhu Gong deities also arrive through their mediums to welcome the Nine Emperor Gods. Lights at the temple would be turned off and the censers from the Nine Emperor Gods palanquins and Dou Mu Niang Niang palanquin would be and brought into the Inner Chamber of Leng San Giam Dou Mu Gong on the second storey of the temple.

圣轿都停顿在神桌后方。恭迎圣驾仪式也正式开始。道士继续诵经，这时一组男性庙宇理事缓缓步入水中直到水位高达膝盖，其中一位理事抱着由黄布包裹的水桶，其他理事手中捻香。庙宇理事用一个小陶器将水舀进桶里水。在这同时，九皇五帝降乩，随行的鼓队也开始演奏，这意味着庙宇成功迎接九皇大帝。九皇军也随着请来。

水桶里的水被带到神桌后，庙宇理事轮流将其导入各个九皇大帝与斗母娘娘的香炉中。每支抬轿队伍派出一位代表，在神桌前参拜九皇大帝，之后请该轿的九皇或斗母香炉。



◀ The palanquin representative returning to the palanquin with the censer and incense held over his head.

抬轿队伍的代表用双手将香炉捧在头上，跪着走向圣轿。



◀ The rocking of the palanquins during the return procession to the carpark signified the presence of the Nine Emperor Gods

九皇圣轿在神桌周围摇晃与摆动。激烈的摇晃与摆动象征着九皇大帝已降临圣轿中。

当大队与善信返回庙宇后，道长会在帐篷内的总神桌前进行一场法事，而九皇圣轿与斗母娘娘圣轿会逐一到各个神龛前参拜神明。为了恭迎九皇大帝，另外两位法主公也都降乩。此时，庙宇也熄灯，庙宇理事在龙山岩斗母宫内将各个九皇和斗母圣轿内的香炉取出，供奉在二楼的斗母宫内殿中。

► The Fifth Emperor God arrives at the temple.

九皇五帝驾到！



► Fa Zhu Gong welcomes the Fifth Emperor God with tea.

法主公用茶恭迎九皇五帝。





◀ One by one, the censers from the Nine Emperor Gods and Dou Mu Niang Niang palanquins are invited into the Inner Chamber.

九皇圣轿与斗母圣轿的香炉——请入二楼内殿。



◀ Kneeling temple committee members facing the Inner Chamber but with their heads down during the installations of the censers of the Nine Emperor Gods.

当香炉被供奉在内殿后，庙宇理事低头跪在内殿门前。

Birthday Ritual on the Sixth Day of the Ninth Lunar Month

Leng San Giam Dou Mu Gong regards the sixth day of the ninth lunar month as the birthday of the Nine Emperor Gods and, hence, conducts several sets of rituals from the morning till the late afternoon. Commencing with the invitation of the Jade Emperor in the morning, the day's activities in 2017 unfolded further with the invitation of other deities and a feast for the deities. In preparation for the feast, the temple arranged six tables of vegetarian dishes in the tentage, with ten chairs and ten sets of utensils per table. Adorning each chair was a deity robe, a stack of incense papers and a lit incense stick. Tea and water were served during the feast by committee members, with celebrations concluding with the ritual of sending-off the Jade Emperor at 3 pm.

► Daoist priests conducted rituals from the morning till the late afternoon.

道士从早上到下午主持仪式。



► The feast would begin after 11 am. Temple helpers and committee members will serve the deities with vegetarian food on the plates and fill the cups with tea and water.

敬桌仪式会在早上十一点后开始。有些庙宇理事和助手会在仪式中倒茶水、将斋菜盛到盘子上。



农历九月初六的九皇诞

在龙山岩斗母宫，农历九月初六被视为九皇诞。在这一天从早上到下午会举行一系列的仪式。这些仪式包括在庆典开始时恭迎玉帝与其他神明仪式，以及为神明准备食物供品的敬桌仪式。帐篷里准备六桌素菜，每桌有十张椅子和十套餐具。每张椅子都铺上了神袍、一叠金纸和一支点燃的香，而在敬桌仪式时，庙宇理事会敬茶水。下午三点，该庆典以恭送玉帝仪式结束。



Following the feast for the deities, the feast for the spirit armies involved temple helpers pouring tea and water into bowls whilst the Daoist priest blew into his horn.

犒军仪式在敬桌仪式后进行。当道士吹号角时，庙宇助手会将茶水倒入碗中。



All paper offerings and the paper palace for the Jade Emperor were burnt sending-off the Jade Emperor.

所有的纸质供品与纸屋在恭送玉皇大帝后被焚烧。

Bridge-Crossing Ritual

During the Nine Emperor Gods Festival, Bridge Crossing Ceremonies are performed to change one's luck and for purification and blessing. In Leng San Giam Dou Mu Gong, the ritual is held on the evening of the sixth day of the ninth lunar month each year.

► The Bridge-Crossing Ritual

过桥仪式



Participation in the ritual requires a set of incense papers and paper figurines corresponding to the gender of the participant. The bridge is usually set up in front of the main altar. In some years, there were about a hundred participants, both devotees and committee members, in 2017. That year, a Daoist priest performed a ritual in front of the main altar and around the bridge, consecrating the bridge and cleansing the surrounding area before the procession began.

► Committee member setting up the bridge before the Daoist priest began the ritual.

在道士开始仪式前，庙宇理事会架起平安桥。



Devotees would queue up according to their zodiac signs and follow the priest when crossing the bridge in the order announced by the master of ceremony. Before crossing the bridge, devotees would put coins (in any denomination) in a pail by the side, and a committee member would stamp a red seal on the devotees' back or arm emblazoned with the title of the Fifth Emperor God. After crossing the bridge, committee members would "sweep" the incense paper around the devotee's body. Devotees would then pray to the deities at the main altar to end the ritual.

过平安桥仪式

一般相信在九皇千秋时举行“过平安桥”仪式能起到净化、改运与赐福的作用，而在龙山岩斗母宫，“过平安桥”仪式每年农历九月初六晚上举行。

欲参与过平安桥仪式的善信需要一套供品（包括金纸与纸扎人），而2017年的仪式预计有超过100位参与者。道士会在平安桥和主神坛前进行净化仪式，为过平安桥仪式做准备。



Accompanying the priest in the ritual was a selected temple committee member carrying a basket with a stack of incense paper, sticks, and paper figurines.

道长旁边则有一位庙宇理事提着一个装了一叠金纸、一把香与纸扎人的篮子。

善信们按照生肖排序都走过平安桥后，道士会引领他们再一次绕行帐篷、过平安桥。之后，道士在神龛前主持一个仪式，就此结束过平安桥仪式。善信可以领取放在桌上已准备好的保身符，将其在香炉上方绕九圈。过平安桥进行时，九皇五帝也会降乩指示。过平安桥后，善信们也可以到隔壁问事神桌请教九皇五帝或请求其他灵符。

► Led across the bridge by the Daoist priest, participants of specific zodiac signs had to pass under the raised Nine Emperor Gods' flags and Ritual staff held by committee members.

道士引领各生肖的信众走过平安桥。善信、庙宇理事与助手在仪式中，根据生肖排队等候过桥。在桥上时，举着九皇九帝的令旗的理事会在善信过桥时挥舞令旗，象征为善信赐福。



After the devotees of all the zodiac signs had finished crossing the bridge, the priest led everyone to walk around the temple tentage and cross the bridge again. The procession would end with the priest performing another ritual in front of the main altar. Meanwhile, devotees could take prepared amulets placed on a table and circle it above incense nine times. Alternatively, they could go to the consultation table to consult the Fifth Emperor God through his medium for advice or to seek other amulets. The Fifth Emperor God would often arrive during the Bridge-Crossing Ceremony to preside over it.

► Concluding rites for the Bridge Crossing ritual carried out by the Daoist priest.

道士正在进行一项仪式来结束过平安桥仪式。





善信们按照生肖排序都走过平安桥后，道士会引领他们再一次绕行帐篷、过平安桥。之后，道士在神龛前主持一个仪式，就此过平安桥仪式。善信可以领取放在桌上已准备好的保身符，将其在香炉上方绕九圈，或者到问事桌问事或要求其他的符。

Ritual on the Eighth day of the Ninth Lunar Month

To honour the wandering ghosts and spirits known as the “good brothers”, Leng San Giam Dou Mu Gong observes prayer and offering rituals on the night of the eighth day of the ninth lunar month.

In 2017, there were six tables of steamboats each with ten sets of utensils located within a cordoned section at the right corner of the tentage facing an altar with tablets surrounded by fruit offerings in front and behind them. Fruit offerings before the tablets included dragon fruit, red apples, oranges, and pears, whilst fruits behind the tablets comprised grapes, longan, dragon fruits, apples, and oranges. Additional displays included two tables of snacks or *kueh* with a double circle formation of nine plates on the outer circle and five plates on the inner circle surrounding a stack of centrally-placed incense papers.

► The front half of the ritual area.

布施仪式的前半区域。



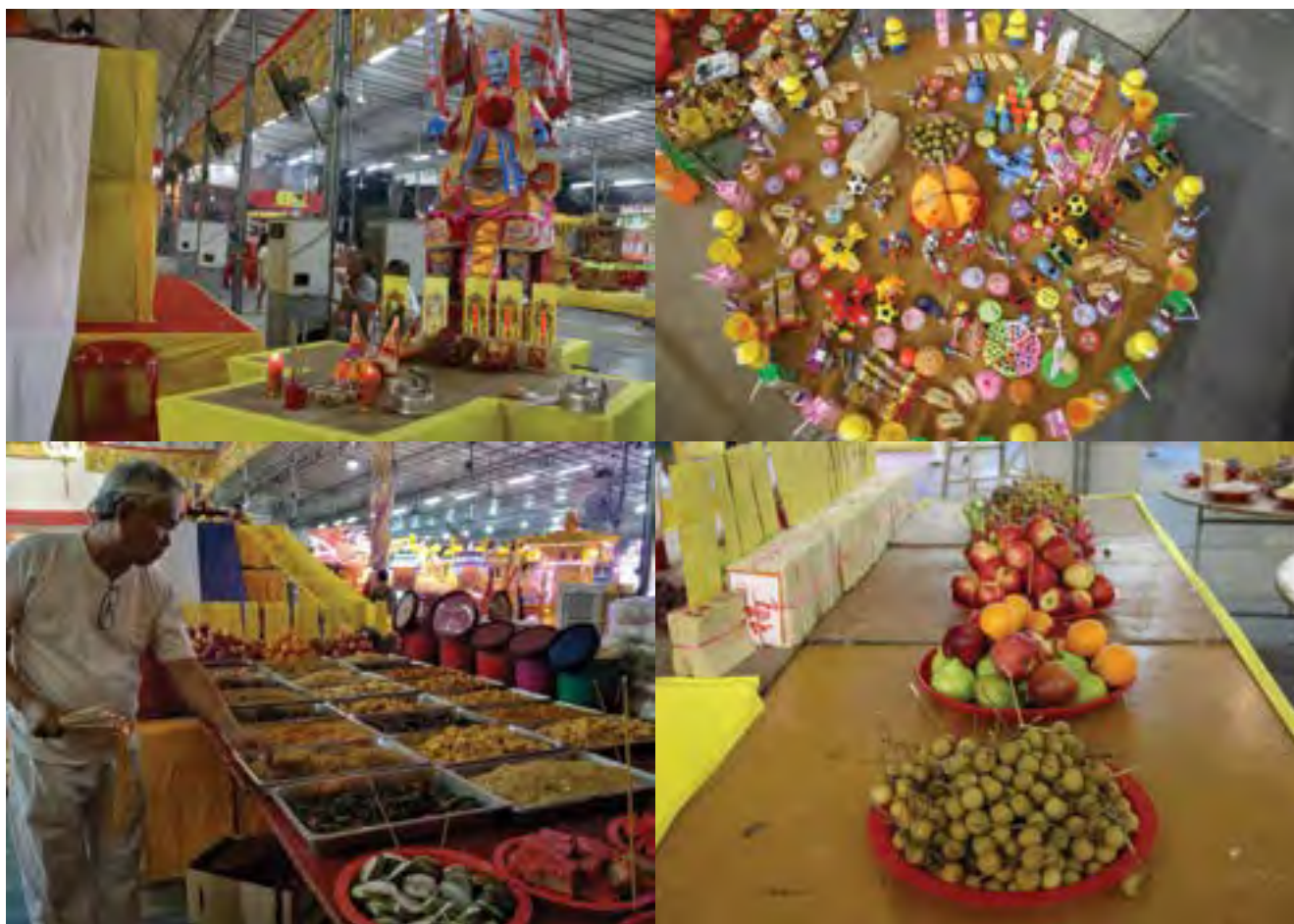
Setting the rituals in motion with chants around the altar area in the cordoned space, the Daoist priest further wrote on the long yellow, blue, and white cloths overlaying the top of the table to the ground. In addition, the Daoist priest wrote and pasted an orange notice on a yellow board. Following this was the consecration ritual of a paper statue of the Da Shi Ye, positioned near the edge of the tentage, involving the removal of the facial covering, chanting and writing on its body and back with a brush. Apart from being surrounded by table offerings, the statue faced four to five paper tablets, was flanked by a pot and had four flags behind it. Other rituals were performed by the Daoist priest before the altar with paper tablets.

After performing these rituals, the priests moved up to a raised platform, which was supported by a layer of wooden scaffolding, to continue with the rituals. On the tables, there were instruments needed for the rituals, as well as various fruit offerings.

初八晚上的布施仪式

在农历九月初八晚上，道长会主持布施仪式，为孤魂野鬼（在新加坡也被称为好兄弟）祈福并给予供品。

在帐篷的右下方被围起的区域，摆设了六桌火锅，每桌配置十组餐具。有二桌摆放了糕点如娘惹糕，而在桌子上有九个盘子组成外圈，五个盘子组成内圈，在外圈的中间有一叠金纸。在桌子前方，有个神桌摆放了牌位和供品。供品摆放在牌位的前后方，前方的供品包括葡萄、龙眼、龙珠果、苹果和橙等水果，而后方的供品包括龙珠果、苹果与橙等水果。



布施仪式由道士诵经为开始。诵经之余，道士也在从神桌一直摆到地上的一条黄蓝白布上，以及黄板上的橘色通告上书写。大士爷纸质神像以布蒙盖着脸，摆放在较接近草皮的区域。神像前的供桌上除了摆放供品，还有四至五个纸牌位，旁边放着一个罐子。神像后方也放上了四面令旗。道长主持了开光仪式时揭开了大士爷脸上的布，整个仪式的过程包括诵经及在大士爷身上和背部书写。之后，道长也在摆放牌位的神桌前主持另一项仪式。

在地面主持仪式后，道长移动到木制高架上并继续主持仪式。高架上的桌子上摆放着仪式所需的法器与水果供品。

▲ Two tabletops containing fruits, drinks, biscuits and toys were placed on the floor next to the altar where the Daoist priests conducted their rituals.

在道士主持仪式的神龛旁，有两面桌面摆放在地上。桌面上不仅摆放着水果、饮料和饼干，也有玩具。

▶ Dressed in an orange robe and an elaborate headdress, the main priest was further surrounded by a yellow cloth when seated on an elevated platform.

主持道长坐在高架台的中央，另外两位道长则坐在他的左右前方。主道士身着橘色道长袍，头饰精致。高架台有一条黄布包裹着他。



▶ Drinks and cooked food, including mock abalone, mock meat and vegetables from the steamboat, are served during the ritual.

在仪式中，身穿白衣的庙宇理事会将火锅内的素肉、素鲍鱼和菜等煮熟的食物盛到碗盘上。他们也会将饮料倒入杯中。



▶ Placements of paper items, such as shoes and joss papers shaped as gold bars or nuggets, into a large furnace by committee members and helpers.

在仪式的尾声时，庙宇理事与助手将各种纸质供品例如鞋子放入帐篷外草皮上的焚烧炉。焚烧炉装满了被折叠成金条或元宝形状的金纸。





Male committee members and helpers kneel and bow before the Da Shi Ye with paper tablets in hand.

男性庙宇理事与助手将纸牌位带到大士爷神像前跪拜。



Arrangements of the Da Shi Ye paper statue and paper tablets within the furnace coupled with pouring water or wine out of cups by male committee members and helpers.

男性庙宇理事与助手进到焚烧炉整理大士爷神像及纸牌位，将它们放在焚烧炉中央。水或酒在倒入茶杯后，被倒在焚烧炉前方的地面。



The culmination of this ritual saw the throwing of offerings, such as cigarettes, sweets, buns and oranges, by the Daoist priest from atop the raised platform towards awaiting helpers and devotees. Scattered items in the cordoned-off area were gathered by the helpers and devotees after the ritual. Aside from the additional distribution of food offerings, such as kueh and sweets, among the devotees and the helpers, the prepared steamboat offering was also heartily partaken by committee members and helpers after the ritual.

Visits Between Nine Emperor Gods Temples

Leng San Giam Dou Mu Gong also visits other temples during the festival. The visits take place over one or two days, depending on the scale of the event planned for that year. These visits are important in maintaining the connection and ties between the different Nine Emperor Gods temples. There are fixed protocols for these visits. When visiting the other Nine Emperor Gods temples, the censer master for that year will carry the censer. The temple would bring along necessities for prayers and exchange such as candles, incense, and sandalwood, as well as offerings and gift hampers. The contingent also pays their respects and there will be an exchange of incense, sandalwood, and gift hampers. At the end of the visit, the visiting contingent will be invited to a vegetarian meal. In some years, there are large-scale visits in the form of *yew keng*, when the deities, through the medium and the palanquins, will be part of the contingent, along with the devotees.

▶ Visiting Hong San Temple.

龙山岩斗母宫进香团参访凤山宫。



在仪式结束时，道长会在高架台上将供品例如香烟，糖果，包子及橙扔向庙宇理事、助手及善信。许多善信、庙宇理事及助手会聚在高架台周围试图接住被扔出的供品。当仪式结束后，庙宇理事与助手会进入仪式时被封的区域，捡起被道士扔下的供品，而食物供品如糕点和糖果也被分发出去。之后，庙宇理事与助手享用仪式时的火锅。

参访友庙

在九皇千秋中，本地各间九皇大帝庙宇会派队前往其他庙宇出游或进香交流，友庙参访也会成为各九皇大帝庙宇社群之间互动与联系的重要媒介。龙山岩斗母宫也不例外，每年都会设定一两天拜访其他九皇庙宇。九皇大帝庙宇在进行友庙参访时的仪式一丝不苟。在参访友庙时，龙山岩斗母宫今年的炉主会负责背着庙宇的香炉，理事也会带着祭拜神明所需的香烛与供品礼篮。如同到访龙山岩斗母宫的友庙，龙山岩斗母宫在参访友庙时，也会呈献一个供品礼篮，然后派代表到友庙的内殿祭拜九皇大帝。参访结束前，友庙一般会邀请进香团留下来享用庙宇所准备的斋菜。某些年份，龙山岩斗母宫也会主持大型游境。这些出游都会请九皇斗母圣轿和乩童随性。



Visit to Zhun Ti Tang.

龙山岩斗母宫参访准提堂。

► Visit to Yu Feng Jiu Huang Dian.

龙岩岩斗母宫进香团参访玉封九皇殿



► Visiting Shen Xian Gong.

龙岩岩斗母宫进香团参访神仙宫.



► Visiting Kim San Tze.

龙岩岩斗母宫参访了金山寺斗山宫。





Visit to Hougang Tou Mu Kung.

龙山岩斗母宫参访了后港斗母宫。



Visit to Leong Nam Temple.

龙山岩斗母宫参访了龙南殿。

Similarly, visiting temple contingents to Leng San Giam Dou Mu Gong in 2017 varied in composition and scale. Some involved mediums, palanquins and lion and dragon dance troupes, whilst others consisted mainly of temple committee members and devotees. Visitors would pay their respects at the various altars, and their representatives would offer tea to the deities at the main altar. There will also be an exchange of hampers and incense. The contingent will pay their respects as a group and perform three bows while kneeling or standing. Committee members of Leng San Giam Dou Mu Gong will also be on their knees at the sides of the main altar with their heads bowed. Some visitors will also be invited to offer incense outside the Inner Chamber. These visits exemplified the close relationship between Leng San Giam Dou Mu Gong and the other Nine Emperor Gods temples.

► Visit from Nan Shan Hai Miao.

南山海庙到访龙山岩参拜进香。



来访友庙团队的规模和方式也有所不同。有的友庙伴随着乩童、圣轿和舞龙舞狮团前来出游，有的则组成进香团到龙山岩斗母宫参拜神明。前来参访龙山岩斗母宫的队伍一般会在庙宇内的不同神坛前祭拜神明，友庙代表会在主神龕敬茶水，再将香供品礼篮呈献给庙宇理事。来参访的友庙会在主神龕跪着或站着鞠躬三次，而龙山岩斗母宫的理事则会在主神龕旁跪着鞠躬。有些庙宇则会派代表到龙山岩斗母宫二楼的内殿祭拜神明。这些参访凸显了龙山岩斗母宫与友庙之间的密切关系。



Visit from Choa Chu Kang Tao Bu Keng Temple.

蔡厝港斗母宫到访龙山岩斗母宫参拜进香。

Visit by Master Chuan Xi During the Festival

▶ Visit by the temple's late founder, Master Chuan Xi, where he blessed and advised the committee members, helpers, and devotees.

龙山岩斗母宫创办人，已故传喜师父，会在九皇千秋时降乩赐福及保佑庙宇理事、助手与善信。



传喜师父在九皇千秋降乩



Visit from the Fifth Emperor God on the fifth night of the ninth lunar month

▶ The appearance of the Fifth Emperor God on his birthday for internal consultation requires the lights to be switched off as per the deity's instructions.

九皇五帝会在九皇诞当天降乩，主要是五帝祝寿与内部问事。当九皇五帝降乩时，根据祂的偏好，必须将所有的灯关掉。



农历九月初五晚上，九皇五帝降乩



Daily Chantings

At noon, for the duration of the festival, Mr. Chew will lead the committee members, volunteers and devotees in a daily chanting of the Northern Dipper Scripture. In the afternoon, he will lead the congregation in conducting Buddhist rituals and chanting.

▶ Mr. Chew leading temple committee members, volunteers and devotees in scriptural chanting before the main altar in 2017.

在2017年，周先生会在主神龕前帶領廟宇理事、助手及善信誦經。



每日诵经

每天中午12点，周先生会带领理事、义工与善信吟诵北斗经。每天下午，他也会带领善信和义工理事主持佛教仪式与其念诵佛经。



Replenishing the Oil Lamps

There are two altars each with nine lamps devoted to the Nine Emperor Gods in Leng San Giam Dou Mu Gong. One is located placed outside the tentage, and the lamps there run on electricity. The other is located within the tentage itself, where there are nine oil lamps that were lit since the establishment of the temple. Select committee members will clean the lamps and refuel them. It is understood that these lamps must remain lit during the course of the festival.

► Daily cleaning, refuelling, wick-changing of the Nine Emperor Gods lamps and altar cleaning within the tentage.

帐篷内的九皇灯神龛每天都会进行清理例如为油灯添油，更新灯芯与清理神龛。



Unique Events From 2016 - 2017

Every Chinese leap year, Leng San Giam Dou Mu Gong will host a few days of special rituals for the salvation of wandering spirits. In 2017, the temple invited two groups, Hun Nam Siang Tng and He Miao Dao Tan, to perform these rituals from the fourth day to the eighth day of the ninth lunar month. Hoon Nam Siang Tng performed rituals on the fourth and fifth day, and He Miao Dao Tan performed rituals on the sixth to eighth day. For the latter, activities included the organisation of a banquet in the honour of various deities in the afternoon and the Presentation of Offerings [Minnan: *Hian Keng*].

九皇灯添油

龙山岩斗母宫有两个九皇灯神龛，一个在帐篷内，一个在帐篷外靠电运行。帐篷内九皇灯神龛的九盏九皇灯是从斗母宫创办时流传至今。指定的庙宇理事将清理神龛及为油灯添油。据悉，在九皇千秋期间，九皇灯内的灯火是不可熄灭。



2016年至2017年的特别活动

每个农历闰年，龙山岩斗母宫会举办几天的超度仪式安抚亡魂。在2017年，龙山岩斗母宫邀请了两组宗教团体——佛教团体云南善堂与道教合妙道坛。云南善堂在初四与初五进行了佛教仪式，而合妙道坛在初六至初八进行了道教仪式。农历初六至初八期间道长也有主持敬桌仪式与献供仪式。

Rituals by Hoon Nam Siang Tng from on fourth and fifth days

▶ Hoon Nam Siang Tng preparing for rituals.

云南善堂在设置神龛为亡魂举行超度仪式。



▶ Rituals carried out by Hoon Nam Siang Tng.

云南善堂在进行超度仪式。



初四、初五由云南善堂主持的仪式



Committee members assisting with the ritual

庙宇理事参与仪式中。



Hoon Nam Siang Tng performed the second day's ritual.

礼聘云南善堂清供两天连宵第二天的仪式



Usually conducted on the eighth day of the ninth lunar month, the salvation rituals for the souls of the dead were conducted on the fifth day of the festival in 2017 by Hoon Nam Siang Tng.

往生者超度仪式通常是在九皇千秋的初八晚上进行，但在2017年，该仪式在九皇千秋初五由云南善堂主持。

Sending-off Ceremony

Leng San Giam Dou Mu Gong sends off the Nine Emperor Gods in the evening of the ninth day of the ninth lunar month. In 2017, like other years, preparations had already begun on the eighth day. Committee members and volunteers could be seen preparing paper offerings in the form of paper boats, gold bars, deities' robes and the like. These offerings were placed into a metal cage to be burned after the ceremony ends the next day. The committee members and volunteers also placed other paper offerings such as paper boats, paper lotus and talismans, into the Ritual Ship. During the sending-off of the Nine Emperor Gods the next day, the ritual ship was to be transported to Punggol Jetty to be burnt.

On the ninth day of the ninth lunar month, there were rituals held throughout the day at the temple before the actual ceremony began at Punggol Marina. A ritual was conducted at the Nine Emperor Gods' oil lamps inside the tentage in the morning. Vegetarian food and joss paper were offered, and the temple committee and helpers paid their respects with incense. At the end of the ritual, the paper offerings were burnt.

The Nine Emperor Gods lamps outside the tentage, which were hung on a bamboo, were also lowered on the ninth day of the ninth lunar month. The Daoist priest oversaw the ritual. Upon its conclusion, the bamboo stalk was also lowered to the ground and sawed into pieces, before being placed into the metal burner outside the tentage and burnt. This ritual served to inform the deities that the Nine Emperor Gods Festival was coming to an end.

► The Daoist priest led the committee members and volunteers in their prayers before the Nine Emperor Gods lamp altar in 2017. After the prayers, temple helpers can be seen removing the yellow strips of cloth and flags that made up the structure.

当道士在主持仪式时，庙宇理事与助手在九皇灯神桌前，排成一排，手中捻香。与此同时，在神桌后方的帐篷支架上，一些庙宇理事与工人正在拆除黄色布条与令旗。



送驾回銮仪式

九月初九，龙山岩斗母宫会举行恭送圣驾回銮仪式恭送九皇大帝，同时象征这一年的九皇庆典正式结束。2017年，恭送圣驾仪式的筹备过程与往年一样。庙宇理事与义工在恭送九皇仪式前一晚（农历九月初八）就已经开始准备纸制供品（纸船、金纸、神明衣袍等），并将这些供品放入焚烧炉，待隔日仪式结束后进行焚烧。庙宇理事也会将其他纸制供品（如纸船、纸莲花、保身符）放入法船中。在恭送九皇仪式当天，装满供品的法船会被移至榜鹅码头进行焚烧。

九月初九当天，在信众前往榜鹅码头进行恭送圣驾回銮仪式前，龙山岩斗母宫首先在庙宇内举行了一系列仪式。首先，庙宇理事与助手会在帐篷外的九皇灯神龛进行一个仪式，将素食与纸质贡品摆放在神龛前，同时手中捻香而拜。在仪式结束时，纸质贡品被焚烧。

另一个仪式就是下天灯仪式，该仪式主要是通知其他神明九皇千秋即将结束。该仪式由道士主持，而在仪式结束前，竹子被取下，庙宇理事也将庙宇前的竹子迁走，锯成小段后放置焚烧炉内。



Lowering the bamboo and cutting it into smaller pieces to be burnt.

灯笼被移走，竹子被取下，锯成小段后置于焚烧炉内，等待恭送神明回銮的仪式中被焚化。

At around 6 pm, a lion and dragon dance troupe arrived at the temple and the festivities for the evening began. As dusk set in, all members and palanquin carriers would kneel before the main altar and bow nine times. The two Fa Zhu Gong mediums were visited by their respective deities, and the palanquins started moving towards various altars to pay their respects before being transported to Punggol Marina. It was worth noting that during the receiving of the Nine Emperor Gods, there were ten palanquins that were brought to Punggol Marina, but during the sending-off ceremony, there were only nine palanquins brought to Punggol Marina. The tenth palanquin, which belongs to Dou Mu Niang Niang, would not participate in the sending off ceremony and was left in the temple.

▶ Standing in rows facing the main altar in the tentage, the main sending-off party would kneel and bow nine times before proceeding to invite the Nine Emperors Gods censors in their respective palanquins before setting off to Punggol Marina.

大队正在庙宇内为送驾回銮仪式做准备。面朝主神龛，大队排列整齐并进行集体跪拜。之后，在前往榜鹅码头前，大队抬着各自负责的九皇圣轿到庙宇内恭请九皇香炉入轿。



Meanwhile, the first batch of the temple committee had reached Punggol Marina jetty at around 7 pm to set up the altar and to lower the Ritual Ship into the waters beside the dock. After the set-up was completed, the Daoist priests began conducting a ritual at about 7.30 pm. Halfway through the recitation of scriptures, devotees from the buses started to arrive and filled up the area.

傍晚时分六点左右，舞龙舞狮队抵达龙山岩斗母宫，为当晚的庆典活动拉开帷幕。黄昏时分，庙宇的两位法主公乩童开始起乩，向九皇大帝致敬。庙宇理事与助手也在主神龕前集合，三跪九拜后再将九乘九皇圣轿移驾至榜鹅码头。九个九皇圣轿在前往榜鹅码头前会到每个神龕神桌前参拜。值得注意的是，斗母娘娘圣轿会留在庙宇内无需参与恭送圣驾回銮仪式。



◀ The main party arrived at Punggol Marina soon after with the Nine Emperor Gods palanquins, with the vanguard palanquins and lion dance troupes.

不久后，大队与九皇圣轿、先锋轿及舞龙舞狮队抵达榜鹅码头。

与此同时，在榜鹅码头这里，龙山岩斗母宫的一组理事已经准备就绪，在码头旁完成设置神桌及停靠法船的工作。道长在大约晚上七点半开始主持仪式。诵经进行到一半时，巴士的善信陆续抵达，现场人潮涌动。

▶ Sending off the Nine Emperor Gods.

恭送九皇大帝回銮。





◀ Burning of the Ritual Ship.

点燃法船。

After the arrival of the sending-off contingent and palanquins at Punggol Marina, the representatives from each palanquin team would remove the censers from the palanquins and make their way to the main altar on their knees. There, a ritual would be performed by the Daoist priest before the censers were placed in the Ritual Ship. Designated male temple committee members would then carry the censers above their heads and move on their knees towards the jetty where the Ritual Ship was. The Ritual Ship would then be transported into open waters by speed boats, and only male temple committee members were allowed to follow the boat out to witness the burning of the Ritual Ship.

Conclusion

It was an honour to witness the dedication and hard work of all the temple committee members and helpers during the two years of our research at Leng San Giam Dou Mu Gong. They are the unspoken heroes keeping this unique culture and tradition of the Nine Emperor Gods Festival alive today. As part of our shared history, religions and religious traditions and values play important roles by providing an outlet for emotional and spiritual support to individuals of different backgrounds. Common recognition and reverence have since allowed for forming a community based on a common belief. Hence, in maintaining this tradition, these unsung heroes are disseminating and transmitting a traditional faith—one which has been held dear by preceding generations within the community—to future generations.

恭送圣驾回銮团队抵达榜鹅码头，各个圣轿的代表双手举起香炉并以跪拜姿势将其请到神桌坛前交给一位庙宇理事，理事则负责将香炉并列安置在神坛桌上。这时道士会进行恭送九皇大帝回銮仪式，庙宇理事轮流在神龛前为神明上香后，再由指定的男性庙宇理事将香炉捧在头上逐一跪着将香炉移至法船上。将香炉放入法船后，法船将由快艇运往附近海域，并在庙宇理事的见证下进行焚烧法船的仪式。见证焚烧法船仪式只有男性理事可以参与。

结论

经历两年的研究计划，我们很荣幸能够见证庙宇理事与义工们对于这个庆典所付出的一切辛劳和贡献。在我们眼里，这些人是非常重要的一群无名英雄——一群正在默默守护与传承本地九皇文化与传统的继承者们。宗教与宗教传统和价值构成我们历史的一大部分，在社会中的不同群体心中扮演着情感与心灵寄托的重要角色。来自各行各业、生活背景各异的信众秉持着相同的信念，通过九皇大帝法会的庆典活动聚集一起，形成了一个独特的社群，参与发扬这个属于本地以及东南亚的文化与传统的工作。能够将九皇文化一代代地延续并传承，龙山岩斗母宫的全体人员功不可没。



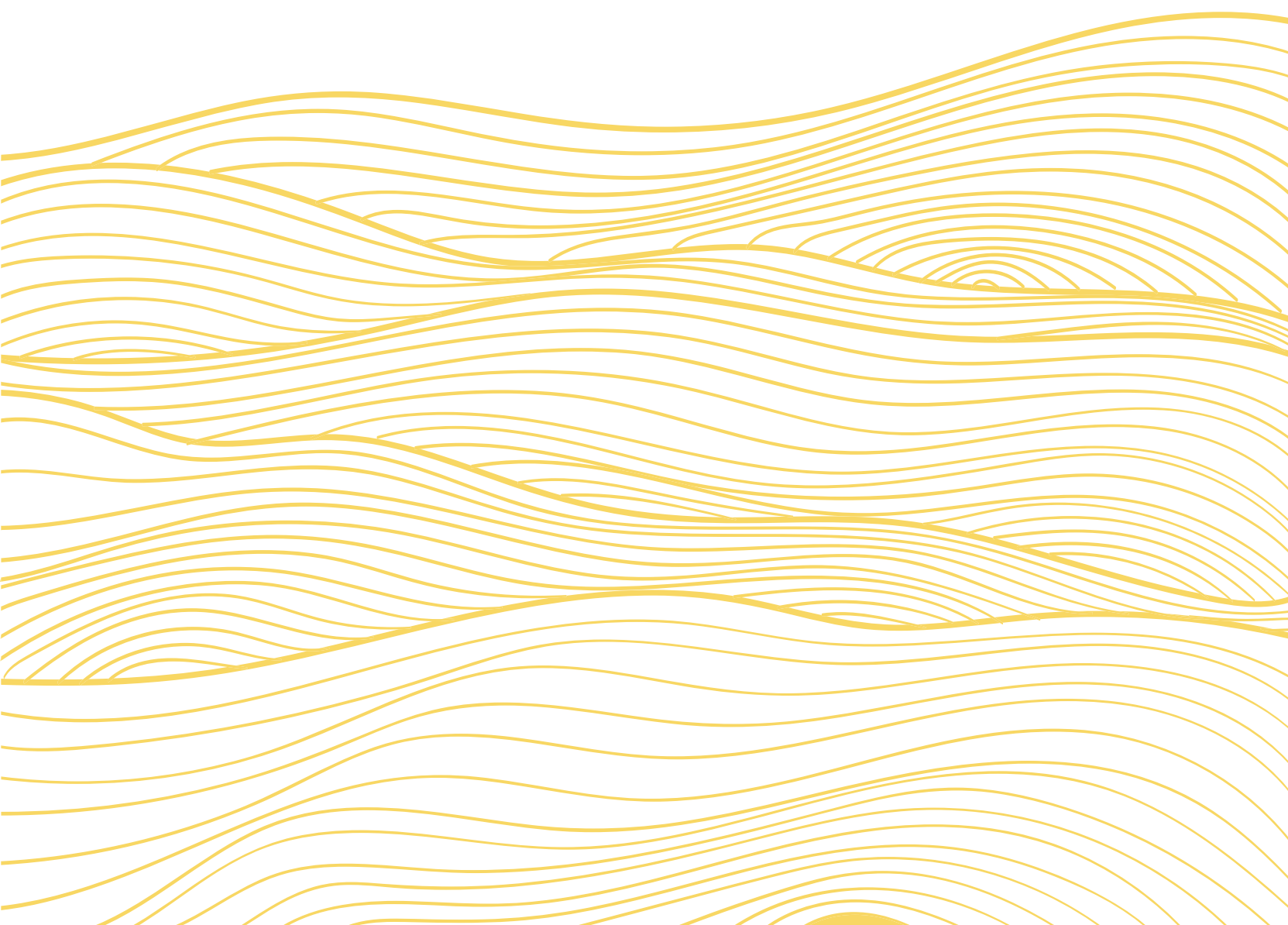
Present-day exterior façade of the tentage for the Nine Emperor Gods

Festival at Leong Nam Temple.

龙南殿举行的九皇法会帐篷外景。

第
10
章

Leong Nam Temple
龙南殿



Leong Nam Temple

Leong Nam Temple began as a small private shrine dedicated to the worship of Guan Gong in 1954 in Geylang Serai on the premises of the former Eastern Park (which housed an amusement park and shops). It was later joined by a temple dedicated to the worship of the Lady In White, Guan Yin Bodhisattva from Kampong Batah. It began worshipping the Nine Emperor Gods, namely the First and Second Emperor Gods, in 1957. In 2006, the temple had to relocate because of the redevelopment of the Geylang Serai area. In 2011, Leong Nam Temple moved into its present-day premises in a combined temple located in Jalan Kayu. The temple currently shares its landed premises with three other temples: Zhong Yi Miao 忠义庙, Bao Gong Miao 包公庙 and the Pulau Ubin Thai Buddhist temple.



▲ One of the earliest photographs of the Nine Emperor Gods Festival at Leong Nam Temple, likely between the 1960s and 1970s. The older name of the temple can be seen on the banner and the Nine Lamps are on the left in the photo. Photograph courtesy of Leong Nam Temple.

龙南殿九皇法会最早的照片之一，可能在 1960 年代至 1970 年代之間。请注意在芽笼土乃描述寺庙旧名称的横幅，以及左侧背景中的九盏灯。照片由龙南殿提供。

龙南殿

龙南殿于 1954 年在芽笼士乃路（Geylang Serai）旧东方世界（以游艺场与商店为主）场内成立，最初为供奉关帝的私人神坛，后来又增添一座供奉甘榜峇打（Kampong Batah）观音菩萨香火的庙宇。1957 年，龙南殿开始供奉九皇大二帝。受政府征地的影响，2006 年土地契约到期后，龙南殿经由陆路交通管理局的协调，与万国山忠义庙，包公庙和乌敏泰佛寺一同兴建惹兰加由（Jalan Kayu）联合庙。2011 年，这四间庙宇迁入惹兰加由新的联合庙。



◀ A Nine Emperor Gods Festival c. the late 1960s and 1970s in which the temple's founder appeared as the Bodhisattva Guanyin. Photographs courtesy of Leong Nam Temple.

由龙南殿创始人主持的九皇法会，1960年代末和1970年代之间。照片由龙南殿提供。



▲ A Nine Emperor Gods Festival hosted by Leong Nam Temple, c. late 1960s and 1970s. Photographs courtesy of Leong Nam Temple.

由龙南殿主持的九皇法会，1960年代末和1970年代之间。照片由龙南殿提供。

From 1957 onwards, Leong Nam Temple observed the birthday of the Nine Emperor Gods only on a small scale. In 1960, Leong Nam Temple hosted its first large-scale Nine Emperor Gods Festival. The occasion started to attract many devotees and the temple had to seek a new venue for the festival. In the 1960s, the temple would host the festival at Kallang Park. Thereafter, the festival was held in a field next to Eunos MRT. After moving to its current combined temple premises in Jalan Kayu, the festival came to be held there, in the open space in front of the temple.



1957年，龙南殿开始以小型活动的形式庆祝九皇诞辰。三年后1960年，龙南殿开始主持九皇法会。法会开始吸引许多信徒，庙宇不得不为其另寻新的场地。在1960年代，庙宇都在加冷公园举办胜会。迁移到惹兰加由的现址后，法会开始在友诺士地铁旁边的一个空地举行。

Preparations for the festival

Preparations for the Festival begin in earnest a month before the invitation of the Nine Emperor Gods. A tentage is erected covering the expansive courtyard in front of the Jalan Kayu Combined Temple. The nine palanquin teams of the temple will start preparing their palanquins, either in the festival premises or in their own storage places, in terms of the lighting, sound, and other implements, including the poles that are used to bear these palanquins. The nine palanquins are one of the key highlights of the festival at Leong Nam Temple. The temple was one of the first to have the full set of nine palanquins for the Nine Emperor Gods.

▶ Palanquin cleaning

清洗轿子



Temple members reveal that most palanquin chairs were crafted in Taiwan and had a five to ten-year predicted lifespan. Consequently, concerted precautions and care are taken by the palanquin teams and temple members to maintain the integrity of the palanquin chairs.

About a week before the festival, the temple begins to set up the festival grounds. At the open field just outside the temple, grey rectangular boards are placed together and cover the grass, providing the firm ground for the erecting of the metal tent frame. The metal tent frame is then erected.

法会筹备

法会的准备工作在恭请九皇爷前一个月就开始了。义工理事在惹兰加由联合庙前的广阔庭院上竖起了一个帐篷。庙宇的九个轿队也开始修理装饰他们的轿子。他们在法会场他、自家储藏室辛勤工作，确保照明、音响和其他工具，包括用来承载宝轿的杆子都能如常操作。作为最早拥有九皇九座宝轿的庙宇，九座圣轿是龙南殿九皇法会的主要亮点之一。

九皇法会前一个月，各个轿子的团队便将他们的轿子停放在庙内。据某位弟子介绍，大部分轿子都是台湾制造，可以使用五至十年，处理轿子时需要格外小心。

龙南殿九皇法会正式开始的前一周，龙南殿便开始在庙外搭建帐篷场地。整齐排列的灰色矩形板覆盖草地，为竖立金属帐篷支架提供平稳坚实的基础。随后，工人便将支架架起。



Yellow banners for each Nine Emperor Gods at the festival site.

代表九位九皇的黄色横幅悬挂在帐篷内。



The Nine Emperor Gods' flags sway above the festival tentage.

插在帐篷顶端的9支九皇爷旗帜随风飞扬。

Raising of the Bamboo Pole for the Nine Lamps

Another key part of the preparation process would be the bamboo poles used to raise and hold the Nine Lamps, which signify the presence of the Nine Emperor Gods and the Nine Emperor Gods Festival at Leong Nam Temple. Two days before the actual day of the invitation ritual, the temple would prepare vehicles for the transport of bamboo stalks into the temple's grounds. As a plant whose roots extend deep into the soil, bamboo trees also have unbending stalks. A symbol of virtue, bamboo is highly regarded in Daoism. Its deep roots and straight stem capture the essence of honour. The use of bamboo stalks also symbolise the values that are held in esteem by the participants in the festival, where they were expected to be reliable, reputable, and dependable.

► The temporary holding site of the cut bamboo is on metal table legs until its scheduled raising.

义工们将竹子从罗厘上搬下来，放在铁架上。



One of the three bamboo stalks is reserved for the invitation ritual performed by the sea on the first day of the festivities. Two other bamboo stalks form the mast and shaft for raising the Nine Lamps. Besides binding the foot of these bamboo stalks with yellow cloth, LED lights will decorate the bamboo's shorter branches and leaves. Portions of the bamboo's smaller stems and branches will also be trimmed. This would give the tree a smooth finish except for the topmost branches. Each section of these bamboo stalks will be ritually cleansed by having incense ashes scattered on them. From one of these bamboo stalks a piece of yellow cloth embroidered with the titles of the First and Second Emperor Gods will be fitted onto them.

After the erection of the first bamboo trunk, it was time to erect the second bamboo trunk, from which the actual nine kerosene lamps representing the Nine Lamps will be suspended.

► A banner and flag with the respective descriptions of “九皇二帝千秋” and “九皇大帝千秋” hung on different parts of the trunk

义工将写有“九皇二帝千秋”的旗帜挂在竹子上。另一面写有“九皇大帝千秋”的旗帜（未见于此图）也会挂在竹子上。



升起灯篙

筹备过程中的另一个关键部分，是龙南殿用来举起和支撑九皇灯的竹竿，作为法会进行的标志。在恭请九皇大帝仪式的前一天，龙南殿理事会准备车辆将竹竿运到法会场地。作为一种根系深入土壤的植物，竹子中通外直，宁折不弯。因此竹子的使用象征着法会及其庆祝者所推崇的价值观，浑厚、可信、可靠。

恭请九皇大帝仪式前两天，龙南殿理事会准备车辆将竹竿运到法会场地。今年，他们为九皇天灯准备了三根竹竿。三根竹竿中的一根将保留用于法会首日海边的迎驾仪式。另外两根竹竿将组成桅杆和轴，悬挂九盏油灯，在整个九皇法会期间点燃。除了用黄布绑住竹脚，竹子较短的枝叶周围也会挂上LED彩灯。在这期间，竹子较小的枝干部分也会被修剪。除了最上面的竹枝外，整个竹竿都是光滑笔直的。竹竿的每一节都会被象征性地用香灰撒在上面洁净。其中一根竹竿上会悬挂一块黄布，上面绣着九皇大帝和九皇二帝的称号。



◀ Climbing up the metal tower to secure the middle of the trunk to the metal tower.

理事义工爬上塔架，将竹子的中间部分与支架捆绑在一起。

竹竿主要是用来悬挂九皇天灯。点亮的九皇天灯意味着九皇大二帝的降临。作为品德高尚的象征，竹子在道教文化中非常受到重视。高直、空心、有节的竹子蕴含了令人推崇的可贵本质。

Inviting the Deities to the Festival Altars

Images of the different deities are invited to the altars on the festival grounds from the temple a day before the festival. One day before the festival, the images of the various deities are moved from the temple building to the different altars in the festival space. These deities include the Dou Mu Yuan Jun, the Nine Emperor Gods, the Southern Dipper Sovereign, and the Northern Dipper Sovereign. Before they are invited to move to the altars, the images will be cleaned, and their robes changed.

► Each image will be adorned with new robes donated by sponsors.

每尊神像都披上赞助人捐赠的新袍。



► Images of the Second Nine Emperor God, the Northern and Southern Dipper deities, and a small censer were carried towards the festival ground.

义工捧着一尊较小的九皇二帝神像和一个香炉朝法会场地走去。之所以会分别有两尊九皇二帝神像，北斗星君和南斗神君，是因为在玻璃橱窗内的神像太大，无法移动。



恭请神明入座九皇法会

法会开始的前一天，理事义工会恭请斗母、九皇大帝、南斗星君和北斗星君与其庙里各神明金身从庙内到法会场地中的不同坛位。在恭请之前，义工会先将神像清理，并更换新袍。



▲ Positioning of a large incense censer in front of the altar of the First and Second Nine Emperor Gods. Another incense censer for the Jade Emperor faced the Nine Emperor Gods' altar.

义工将大香炉摆放在九皇二帝神坛面前。位于对立面的玉皇上帝神坛前也有同样的一鼎香炉。

Receiving

Before the invitation ceremony begins, the lead Daoist priest will consecrate the palanquins that bear the Nine Emperor Gods incense censers for the ceremony. The consecration process involves the “dotting” of the individual palanquins with vermilion marks. Upon the successful completion of each ritual, the palanquins would be rocked slightly. Following the ritual, all the temple committee members and palanquin teams will gather to pay their respects to the Nine Emperor Gods before the respective teams convey the newly consecrated palanquins to the beach on lorries for the invitation ceremony.

► Consecration of the palanquins by the head priest, Xie Ze'en (dressed in yellow robes)

道长谢泽恩（黄袍）主持“开光”仪式。



恭迎圣驾

随着这些重要的仪式空间的建立，一位道长会为圣轿开光。九皇大帝的香炉将被安放在圣轿中。道长会各别为九座圣轿开光，并在之后点上朱砂。仪式完成后，圣轿都会轻微摇晃。这些圣轿分别载着九皇九位大帝的香炉，直至送水当天的圣驾回銮。每一座圣轿都会被搬上各自的罗厘，带往海边参加迎驾仪式。



Palanquin teams and participants prayed in unison before the Nine Emperor Gods.

所有理事、轿队与其他迎接圣驾仪式参与者齐声敬拜九皇大二帝。



The Seventh Emperor God palanquin departing for East Coast Park for the receiving ceremony.

九皇七帝宝轿准备启程前往东海岸公园恭迎圣驾。

Receiving the Nine Emperor Gods at the Beach

At East Coast Park beach, the Daoist priests will conduct the rituals for the inviting ceremony. The designated palanquin bearers for each of the nine palanquins would present their incense and offerings to the Nine Emperor Gods. Representatives from the temple will carry a bamboo pole and enter the sea to retrieve seawater. A talisman was burnt, and its ashes mixed with the seawater. After incense sticks from the palanquin bearers were inserted into their respective palanquin's incense censer, seawater from the bamboo receptacle would be poured into each of these censers. In addition, another talisman will also be burnt and its ashes integrated into the said-censers, thus completing the invitation ceremony by the sea.

▶ 1979 receiving of the Nine Emperor Gods by Leong Nam Temple. Photographs courtesy of Leong Nam Temple.

龙南殿1979年恭迎圣驾。照片由龙南殿提供。



在海边恭迎圣驾

到了海岸之后，九座圣轿的轿脚分别向九皇大帝致敬并奉上祭品。道长便会诵经主持恭迎仪式。然后，龙南殿代表将拿着一根竹竿，走入海中进行请水仪式。一张灵符被焚化在竹竿里的海水。轿队成员在各自宝轿中的香炉上香后，理事再将竹筒中的海水倒入每一个香炉中。最后，理事会将另外一张灵符在香炉里焚化。海边迎驾仪式也圆满结束。



◀ Rituals conducted by Daoist priests and representatives from Leong Nam Temple for the receiving of the Nine Emperor Gods.

诸位道长和龙南殿的代表进行诵经仪式，恭迎九皇。



◀ Receiving the Nine Emperor Gods at East Coast Park beach in 2017.

道长主持仪式的过程中，所有圣轿的成员面朝大海，双膝跪地，手持清香。





► The incense sticks are collected after the priest completes the chanting rituals, and presented to the censer in the palanquins,

2017. 仪式结束后，轿头从成员手中接过所有香支并献给轿子内的香炉里。



◀ Palanquin team members pouring the seawater from the bamboo pole into the censer in the palanquin before a talisman is burnt into the censer to signify the receiving of the Nine Emperor Gods (2017).

宝轿成员将竹竿内的海水倒入香炉，然后将灵符化入香炉，象征恭迎九皇爷 (2017)。



◀ Payment of respects by palanquin team members after receiving the Nine Emperor Gods into the palanquin.

轿子成员恭迎九皇爷入座之后参拜九皇爷。

The Nine Emperor Gods Return to the Temple

With swaying palanquins announcing the arrival of the Nine Emperor Gods, the contingent returned to Sengkang West towards the festival tentage. Following the installation of the incense censers in the private inner altar concealed by a curtain, representatives from each palanquin team will gather before the main altar to consult the Nine Emperor Gods using divination blocks on which palanquins are to be on duty during the festival to receive visiting temples. Subsequently, the Bridge of Blessing would be consecrated by the Daoist priest for devotees to cross to seek blessings.

Return of the palanquins and the palanquin teams from the beach. The swaying of the palanquins was indicative of the presence of the Nine Emperor Gods.

恭迎九皇爷入轿后，每个宝轿队伍从海滩出发。摇晃轿子代表九皇爷上轿了。



Likewise, spirit-soldiers and their mounts – symbolised by papier-Mache horses – will be deployed to protect the festival area and its environs. The Bridge of Blessing is installed in front of the altar for the Five Armies as the Marshal for the Central Altar oversees the bridge. Subsequently, at 4 pm each day, the heavenly generals with their spirit armies and mounts deployed to protect the festival area will be rewarded with incense paper offerings and vegetarian food. The papier-mache horse effigies representing their mounts would also be fed grass as well as water. Food offered to the spirit-generals and soldiers would then be served to the helpers as a part of the temple's dinner offerings.

Altar for the Five Camps

五营将军



九皇大帝回宫

接着，圣轿左右摇晃，喻示九皇大帝的到来。回到盛港西后，队伍就会回到法会的帐篷里，将每乘九皇圣轿里的九皇香炉请入内殿。接着，轿头聚首焚杯，征询九皇大帝的意见决定轮值接迎来访庙宇的圣轿。之后，道长会为平安桥开光，让信众渡桥，作为祭祀仪式的一部分。



◀ Group photo of the Fourth Emperor God's palanquin team.

九皇四帝轿组成员合影。

与此同时，五营军将及其兵马——以纸马为象征，也将被部署到庙宇和法会场地的各个角落，以保护庆典与信众的安全。平安桥被安置于五营的祭坛前，由中坛元帅负责镇守。随后，每天下午四时，庙方会进行犒军仪式，答谢被部署在法会四周的五营军将与其兵马，为他们献上金纸和斋食等供品，纸马也会被喂食草料和水。为犒军准备的丰盛菜肴将在晚餐时间赠予义工品尝。



▲ The head priest conducts the consecration ritual for the Bridge of Peace and Safety.

道长为平安桥开光。

Yew Keng

▶ Processions hosted by Leong Nam Temple in 1967, 1984 and 1990. Photographs courtesy of Leong Nam Temple.

1967年、1984年、1990年由龙南殿主持的遊行。
照片由龙南殿提供。



Today, a *yew keng* refers to a formal and grand entourage visiting other Nine Emperor Gods temples as a show of friendship between temples. For Leong Nam Temple, *yew keng* is typically held on a Sunday because all of the festival participants can help out and more devotees can attend. Unlike many other temples, Leong Nam Temple undertakes the *yew keng* procession every year. All the temple's palanquins will embark on a tour of selected Nine Emperor Gods temples on the islands, although the number of palanquins that will actually enter the premises of each temple will vary on the location and the space and traffic constraints.

The 2017 *yew keng* started with a performance by big-headed dolls, who danced to the rhythm set by the clanging of cymbals, drums, gongs, and the blowing of trumpets. There was then a mass prayer by all the helpers, volunteers and palanquin leaders involved in the *yew keng*. After the Nine Emperor Gods' censers from the temple's inner altar had been installed in the selected palanquins, the latter would proceed for a tour of the ritual compound. At every deity altar and the platform altar devoted to the nine lamps, the palanquins would charge towards them three times, as a mark of respect and a form of greeting. These visits also are marked by an exchange of gifts – fruits, sandalwood, and command flags – between the visiting and host temple.

▶ Group photo of the Leong Nam Temple and Kim San Tze communities.

龙南殿与金山寺的弟子合影。



游境



今天，九皇胜会的游境已经是指以隆重方式到其他九皇庙宇去参拜。与许多其他寺庙不同，龙南殿每年都会进行游境。庙里所有的圣轿都会参与游境，一同参拜选定的九皇爷庙，尽管实际进入每个庙宇场所的轿子数量会因位置、空间和交通限制而有所不同。游境是通过参拜其它九皇大帝友庙以示友谊的行为。为了让义工与信众尽情参与，龙南殿的游境通常安排于请水后的下一个星期日举行。



◀ The mass prayer by all the helpers, volunteers and palanquin leaders at the start of the yew keng.

游境开始时，所有助手、义工和轿头将带头团拜。

开始游境之前，香亭会的成员会进行仪式表演。成员吹着唢呐，敲鼓击钹，随行的大头娃娃跟着声乐有节奏地跳舞。参拜开始时，所有助手、义工和轿头将带头团拜。在选定的轿子中安放了庙宇内殿的香炉后，轿子将前往庙宇大殿。在每一个神坛和九皇天灯前，轿子都会冲锋三遍，表达尊重和问候。参访活动中还包括与友庙交换礼篮——水果、檀香木和令旗。

▶ The Eighth Emperor palanquin charging towards the main altar at Hougang Tou Mu Kung three times.

第八轿冲向后港斗母宫的主神坛三次致敬。



▶ The visiting contingent paying respects under a canopy of yellow lanterns at Hong San Temple.

龙南殿众弟子在黄灯笼高挂的风山宫集体参拜。





◀ Paying respects at Charn Mao Hern Kew Huang Keng

在葱茅园九皇宫进香。



◀ Incense exchange at Jiu Huang Dian.

在九皇殿换香。



The Nine Heavenly Lamps



▲ 1979 raising of the Nine Lamps at Leong Nam Temple, 1979. Photographs courtesy of Leong Nam Temple.

龙南殿升天灯，1979。照片由龙南殿提供。

Signifying the presence of the Nine Emperor Gods and the observance and hosting of the Nine Emperor Gods Festival, the lamps must remain lit for the duration of festival. To ensure that they remain lit at all times, they will be lowered every day at 6am and 6pm for the refilling of oil in the lamps, before they are raised again.

► Cleaning of the glass portions of the lamps following the oil refill.

为油灯添油并擦拭油灯的玻璃。



九皇天灯

九皇天灯寓意九皇大帝降临与其龙南殿正在主持九皇法会。因此，在九皇法会期间，九皇天灯不能熄灭。为了确保九盏灯不会熄灭，每天早上六点和傍晚六点，负责的弟子会降下油灯，添油再将其重新升起。



◀ The gong's simultaneous sounding alongside the Nine Lamps lowered until contact was made between the bamboo pole and the ground.

降下天灯时，庙理事会敲锣，直到油灯到达地面。



Birthday of the Nine Emperor Gods

► Birthday of the Nine Emperor Gods.

九皇大帝誕辰



The sixth day of the ninth lunar month is recognized as the birthday of the Nine Emperor Gods at Leong Nam Temple. The day is dedicated to rituals celebrating the Nine Emperor Gods and even having a birthday celebration for them. In 2017, to mark the commencement of the celebration, a Daoist priest presented another round of petitions and prayers to the Nine Emperor Gods on behalf of the temple's leadership and devotees. Other deities were invoked and invited to join the celebrations. The priests also conducted the “performing meritorious deeds and “presenting treasures” rituals, leading the temple committee members, distinguished guests, volunteers, and devotees. After everybody had taken their turn, the offering would be returned to the main altar. Eggless birthday cakes were also included as part of the offerings.

In the evening, the priests also conducted another ritual for the Nine Emperor Gods' birthday before a birthday cake was cut and distributed among the devotees.

► Birthday ritual led by the head priest.

道长带领信众，进行祝贺仪式。



九皇大帝诞辰仪式

据说农历九月初六是九皇爷的生日，所以这一天的仪式都在庆祝九皇大帝诞辰。道长会先主持仪式在仪式进行时，首先，主持道长会先将食物供品供奉给众神。。随后，庙宇理事、贵宾、义工与信众都会轮流向神明敬供供品。经过一轮传递之后，供品才被放回主坛前面。当天的供品包括不含鸡蛋的生日蛋糕。



◀ Birthday rituals for the Nine Emperor Gods by Daoist priests.

道士主持九皇爷诞辰仪式。



◀ The devotee raises the offering with both hands in the direction of the main altar as a sign of respect during the ritual.

善信理事向神明献供供品。



▲ The birthday cake for the 2017 festival.

2017年的生日蛋糕。



▲ Cutting of the Nine Emperor Gods' birthday cake for devotees' consumption.

蛋糕被切成小片，与善信分享。

Buddhist Prayer Session on the Seventh Day

Since 2006, Leong Nam Temple has reserved the seventh day of the ninth lunar month for a Buddhist prayer session conducted by Thai Buddhist monks from the neighbouring Ubin Thai Buddhist Temple.

▶ Thai Buddhist monks from the neighbouring Ubin Thai Buddhist Temple reciting Pali scriptures to bless the devotees.

乌敏泰佛寺的泰僧以巴利语朗诵经文为善信赐福。



佛教祈祷会

初七特别保留给乌敏泰佛寺的泰僧进行佛教祈祷会。



Fireworks Display on the Eighth Day

In 2017, the eighth day of the ninth lunar month was particularly memorable with organising a fireworks display graced by Ang Mo Kio GRC Member of Parliament (MP), Mr Gan Thiam Poh.

▶ Mr Gan Thiam Poh PBM, MP for Ang Mo Kio GRC (second from left), the Chief Executive of Leong Nam Temple, Mr Tiong Choo Chye (third from left), Chairman of Leong Nam Temple Mr Lee Fasheng and other VIPs posed for a group photo on a raised stage. The platform allowed them to have a better view of the fireworks.

宏茂桥集选区议员颜天宝先生（左二），龙南殿总务张祖财先生（左三），龙南殿主席李发生先生（左四）和其他贵宾在台上合影。



烟花表演（初八）

九月初八龙南殿举行烟花汇演，宏茂桥集选区议员颜天宝先生莅临与信众共襄盛举。



Sending off the Nine Emperor Gods

On the ninth day of the ninth lunar month, Leong Nam Temple prepares to send off the Nine Emperor Gods in the evening at East Coast Park beach. As a team works to prepare the ritual area at the beach, the temporary tentage bursts into a flurry of activity after sunset. In 2017, a final mass prayer led by the guests of honour was conducted. After this, the palanquin teams will then pay respects together before the main altar. Then, each of the nine palanquins would then move into the Inner Chamber, where the nine censers representing each of the Nine Emperor Gods would be invited into their respective palanquins. A fireworks display marked the climax of festivities at the temple and festival area, and the swaying palanquins with the sending-off contingent and devotees would then begin their journey to the beach.

► The Guests-of-Honour, MP for Sengkang West SMC, Mr Lam Pin Min, Minister for Transport, Mr Khaw Boon Wan and MP for Ang Mo Kio GRC, Mr Gan Thiam Poh, lead the congregation in paying respects to the Nine Emperor Gods.

盛港西区议员、交通部兼卫生部高级政务部长蓝彬明医生（右），基础建设统筹部长兼交通部长许文远（中）和宏茂桥集选区议员颜添宝（左）带领信众向九皇爷敬香参拜。



► As the Guests-of-Honour toured the festival space, the palanquin teams paid respects to the Nine Emperor Gods together and bowed three times.

在特别嘉宾参观之余，并向九皇爷叩首三次。



恭送九皇回銮

农历九月初九，九皇爷的送驾仪式在东海岸公园海滩举行。当团队在海滩进行准备仪式区时，法会场地在日落之后开启了一系列活动。庙宇在贵宾的带领下举行团拜，向九皇大二帝与其他神明敬礼。之后，九座宝轿进入内殿并分别恭请九皇大帝的香炉。随着烟花表演的开始，法会庆祝活动也达到高潮。九皇圣轿、恭送团队与其贵宾、理事与善信也都朝东海岸海边出发。摇晃被抬出内殿向大海前进。



◀ After the fireworks, the palanquin teams had to pass through a wall of sparks showering down from the metal bar above.

烟花表演结束后，轿队必须穿过一排火花，恭送九皇大帝离开法会场地。

Sending the Nine Emperor Gods off at the Beach

After the arrival of the contingent at the beach, the palanquins would be lined up along the shoreline. At the altar specially prepared for the occasion, the Daoist priests would present a final round of petitions to the Nine Emperor Gods for the sending-off ceremony. The Dragon Ships will be towed into the open sea, and set alight. Each of these ships are fully plastered with the names of devotees.

As the Dragon Ships are lit, each team of palanquin bearers formed two lines leading from their respective palanquin's niche towards the sea. The leader of each team would kneel before the palanquin then invite the Nine Emperor Gods censors to descend from their seats. The leaders would then carry the censors on their heads towards and into the sea, with accompanying offerings of incense paper and incense sticks. Upon reaching deep water, the vessels would then be allowed to float away into the horizon, thus signifying the Nine Emperor Gods' departure.

► Burning of Dragon Boats by Leong Nam Temple at Labour Park, Kallang, 1979. Photographs courtesy of Leong Nam Temple.

龙南殿在加冷劳动公园焚化龙船，1979。照片由龙南殿提供。



在海滩恭送九皇大帝回銮

九乘宝轿在海边各就各位后，道长会在海边的临时祭坛上诵经，并向九皇大帝献上疏文准备送驾回銮。然后，龙船被送入大海点燃。每艘船都贴满了信徒的名字。

当龙船被点燃时，宝轿队伍成员在轿子前跪排成两排，为轿头留出一条通行的道路。轿头从他们的宝座上请出九皇香炉，手扶在头顶上，也拿着着金纸香烛等祭品，进入水中。一旦到达深水区，轿头们便送走香炉，象征九皇圣驾回銮。



▶ Sending-off ceremony of the Nine Emperor Gods, 1997. Photographs courtesy of the Leong Nam Temple.

龙南殿恭送九皇大帝圣驾回銮，1997。照片由龙南殿提供。



▶ Arrival of the palanquin teams at East Coast Park.

轿子车队抵达东海岸公园





◀ Ritual table at the time of the arrival of the palanquin teams.

轿子抵达东海岸公园时，神坛已经设立好了。



◀ The temporary holding site of the Dragon Ships before their sending-off.

贴满善信名字据的龙船，等待进入海中。



▶ After everyone got into position, the Daoist priests commenced the sending-off ritual for the Nine Emperor Gods.

各就各位，道长开始进行恭送九皇回銮仪式。



▶ Burning Dragon Ships whilst adrift.

焚烧的龙船漂向大海。





◀ The palanquin team leaders and their team members carrying the censer as far as they could before sending them off into the sea.

轿头和他的队员涉入水中，直到不能往前时才在海里送走香炉。



The Tenth Day of the Ninth Lunar Month

▶ Ritual conducted by the head priest for the lowering of the Nine Lamps with temple members helping to dismantle the structure thereafter.

道长进行下天灯仪式。



九月初十



Dinner

A celebratory end-of-festival dinner, comprising 300 tables, was held on 31 October 2017 at the former festival space. With seven to eight courses served, the dinner also featured an auction of auspicious items.

► Transformation of the festival space into a massive dining hall.

法会场地已转换成晚宴的场地。



慰劳宴

2017年10月31日，龙南殿举行慰劳宴，庆祝法会圆满落幕。晚宴大约有300张桌子，大家在品尝7至8道美食佳肴的同时，也可以参与竞标福品。



Conclusion

Community, collaboration, devotion and family are key themes for the Nine Emperor Gods Festival at Leong Nam Temple. From Geylang Serai to Jalan Kayu, Leong Nam temple has always been an important hub for their surrounding communities, not only in terms of the festival and its events but also in terms of the immense charity work undertaken by the temple. Besides the many families involved in the temple and the festival, as helpers or as devotees, another common sight at the festival would be young residents with their families from Sengkang West and the surrounding areas, of all ethnic backgrounds, leisurely walking around the festival site and watching the performances and events in the evenings, while also participating in its rituals. Leong Nam Temple and its Nine Emperor Gods Festival is very much like a huge family gathering. Leong Nam temple is one of the most important centres for the Nine Emperor Gods Festival in Singapore today. It has managed to ensure the transmission of its traditions through the unity of its leadership and its ability to attract younger members from all over the island, and beyond, through the palanquin teams and other voluntary channels at the temple, including its charitable activities. The temple will continue to be an important guiding light both for the Nine Emperor Gods Festival in Singapore and the Sengkang West and Jalan Kayu communities.

结语

社区、虔诚、同心与家庭是龙南殿九皇胜会的重要主题。从芽笼士乃到惹兰加由，龙南殿一直是周边社区的重要中心，庙宇不仅是社区举办九皇胜会的场所，还承担了许多慈善工作。在九皇胜会期间，许多家庭会以帮手或信徒的身份参与庙宇工作和节日活动。龙南殿和九皇法会就像一个庞大的家庭聚会。盛港西和周边社区的年轻居民，无论族群背景，都会和他们的家人一起散步到节日现场，观看晚上的表演和活动，甚至参与仪式。如今，龙南殿是新加坡最重要的九皇庙宇之一。龙南殿的宫庙领导团结一致，精诚合作，积极吸引全岛各地以及其他地方的年轻人加入抬轿队伍或参与其他志愿与慈善活动，从而更好地保留和传播庙宇的传统。在未来，龙南殿仍会是指引盛港西和惹兰加由社区以及新加坡九皇胜会的一盏明灯。

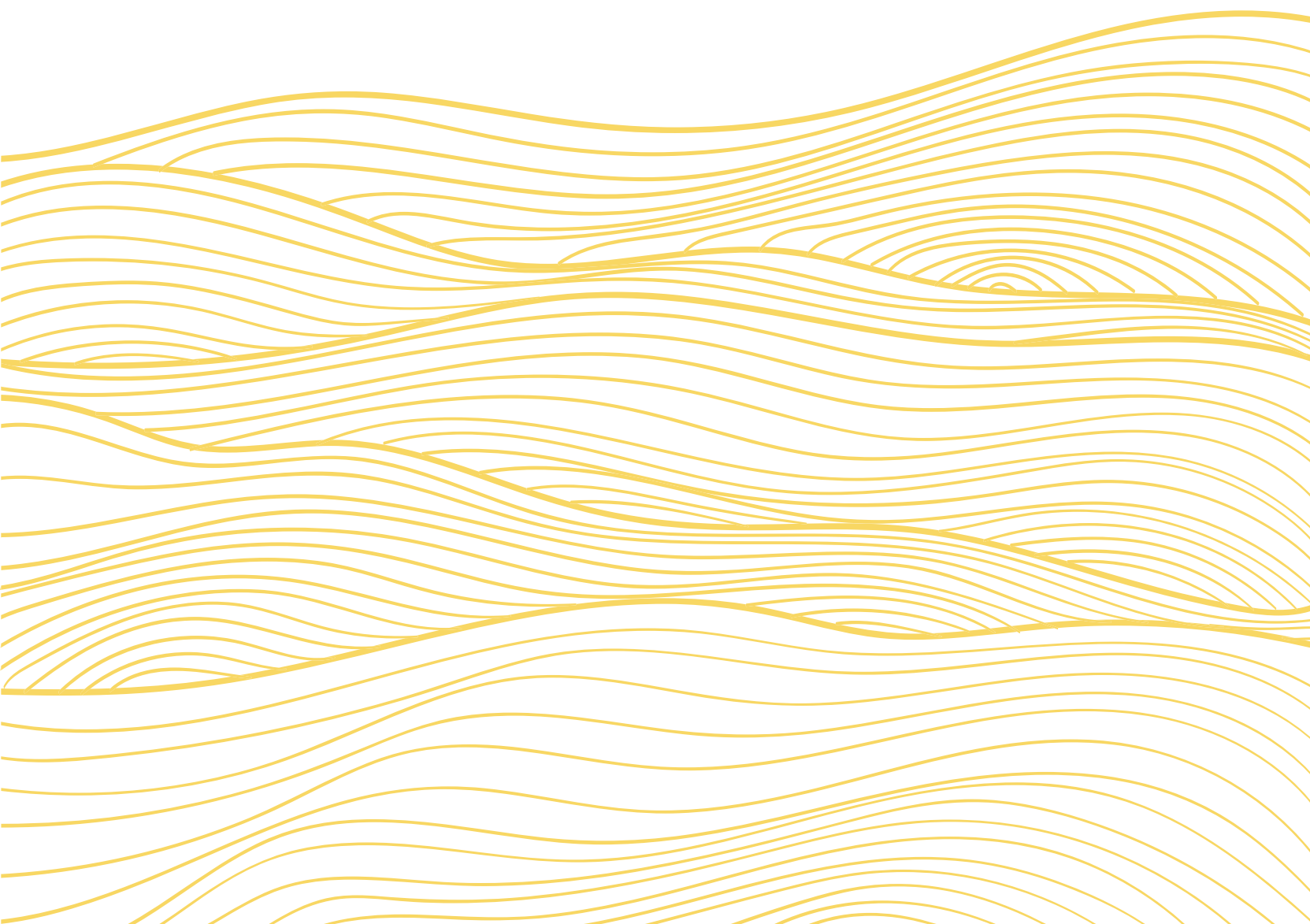


The exterior of Long Nan Sze's Nine Emperor Gods Festival tentage at Bukit Batok.

龙南寺九皇法会帐篷与布置。

第 11 章

Long Nan Szye
龙南寺



Long Nan Szye

In the third week of the eighth lunar month, a towering and spacious tentage appears in the open square next to Block 280 along Bukit Batok Avenue 4. Over the next few days, the site gradually comes to life as the committee members and volunteers of Long Nan Szye prepare for the coming Nine Emperor Gods Festival. On the 27th day of the eighth lunar month every year, devotees gather to join the volunteers and management of Long Nan Szye temple to welcome the Nine Emperor Gods. Buddhism constitutes the foundations of Long Nan Szye's Nine Emperor Gods Festival as can be seen from the various Buddhist rituals, deities and paraphernalia during the festival.

History of Long Nan Szye

Long Nan Szye was established in the early 1960s in a *kampung* at Bukit Panjang with Master Chen Zhong Xiao as the leader of the temple. When the *kampung* land was acquisitioned by the state for redevelopment, Long Nan Szye moved to the top of a small hill along the 10th milestone of Upper Bukit Timah Road (Da Xiang Shan). As several elders in the temple recall, the temple was constructed from wood. Eventually, in the early 1990s, when the government acquired the land for the Ministry of Defence, Long Nan Szye moved again. The temple is presently located at 36 Jalan Asas.

► Exterior of Long Nan Szye temple. Taken by Keith Stevens from The Ronni Pinsler Collection.

龙南寺外景。照片来自 Keith Stevens 收藏，由 Ronni Pinsler 提供。



龙南寺

每年农历八月二十左右，武吉巴督四巷大牌283隔壁的的大广场会搭起一座庞大的帐篷。在接下来的几天里，随着龙南寺的理事义工们为即将到来的九皇法会忙碌地做准备，整个场地也逐渐活跃起来。农历八月二十七日晚上，龙南寺的善信理事在法会场地集合后，一同到海边恭迎九皇大帝。龙南寺九皇法会以佛教为根基。法会的仪式、供奉的神明、法器道具与其场地装饰布置也都显示了佛教的深刻影响。

历史

龙南寺成立于1960年代初，以陈忠孝师傅为主持。庙的原址位于武吉班让的甘榜，后来甘榜土地因为国家发展计划受政府征用，龙南寺搬到武吉知马路上段十英里的大香山。据庙里前辈回忆，原庙是用木材建成。1990年代初，当政府为了在大香山兴建国防部总部而征用该地，龙南寺再次迁移，搬到现今的地址 36 Jalan Asas。



► Image of the Nine Emperor Gods at Long Nan Szye as photographed by Keith Stevens, from The Ronni Pinsler Collection.

九皇大帝神像。照片来自 Keith Stevens 收藏，由 Ronni Pinsler 提供。



► Secondary altar Di Mu Yuan Jun and other deities. Photograph from the Keith Stevens collection, courtesy of Ronni Pinsler.

地母元君与其它神明照片来自 Keith Stevens 收藏，由 Ronni Pinsler 提供。





◀ Temple altars to Guan Yin Bodhisattva, c. 1992.
Photographs courtesy of Long Nan Szye .

观音与其各佛祖菩萨的神桌与供品，约 1992年。
照片由龙南寺提供。

The site for Long Nan Szye 's Nine Emperor Gods Festival has changed over the years. Between the 1960s and 1990s, the festival was celebrated on the temple's premises in Bukit Panjang and Upper Bukit Timah Road. The celebration was very grand in scale. Devotees, all dressed in white, would gather in the temple from all over Singapore to participate in and help at the festival. Hundreds of paper and red cloth flowers were folded for decorations and offerings. Chanting of scriptures will also take place in the temple itself. In the 1970s, Long Nan Szye even organized a banquet for a thousand people during the celebration, a remarkable feat for that time. At that time, the rituals for the receiving and sending-off ceremonies took place at Kranji reservoir. On the ninth day, hundreds of devotees would walk together with the palanquins from the 10th milestone of Upper Bukit Timah Road to Kranji Reservoir to send off the Nine Emperor Gods.

When the temple relocated to 36 Jalan Asas, the festival could no longer be held on its premises due to space constraints. A temporary tentage had to be set up for the festival each year at Bukit Batok where open grounds were available. In 2016, the festival was held at Block 280 Bukit Batok East Avenue 4. This was later moved to Block 235 Bukit Batok East Avenue 4 in 2017 due to ongoing construction and renovation work at Block 280, returning to the former space only in 2018.

► The Nine Emperor Gods Festival at Long Nan Szye, 1992. Photographs courtesy of Long Nan Szye .

1992年龙南寺九皇法会。照片由龙南寺提供。



龙南寺的九皇法会地点历年来也跟着庙址更换。从上世纪60年代至90年代，法会一般都在武吉班让和大香山的寺庙场地举办，规模庞大，吸引了众多来自新加坡全岛各地的善信。他们都穿着白衣白裤来参与九皇法会，并义务提供法会期间需要的协助。龙南寺为了庆典会折叠数以百计的纸花、红布花以作装饰或供品，诵经仪式也会在庙里举行。上个世纪70年代，龙南寺甚至举办过当时罕见的千人宴。那时候的迎送圣驾仪式都在克兰芝蓄水池举行。九月初九当晚，百余名理事善信随着九皇宝轿从武吉知马路上段十英里步行到克兰芝蓄水池恭送九皇大帝，气氛隆重非凡。

The Festival Today

Preparation

As one steps into Long Nan Szye's Nine Emperor Gods Festival site, one cannot help but notice the Buddhist elements of the festival. They range from the statues and portraits of Bodhisattvas and Buddhas from Mahayana Buddhism, the Buddhist idioms on the yellow banners that decorated the festival site, as well as the stacks of Buddhist scriptures placed on the side of the altar used for chanting by the devotees during the festive period. The Buddhist influence in Long Nan Szye's Nine Emperor Gods Festival stem from the leader of the temple, Master Chen. Master Chen has been a practicing Buddhist since he was seven years old. He hopes that devotees who participate in the festival celebrations can also learn the way of a "Buddha heart." Hence, not only does he actively include Buddhist elements into the festival, he also holds classes that cover different elements of Buddhism during the festive period.

▶ Main altar within the established festival tentage.

中殿



The installation of the tentage begins a week before the receiving ceremony. In the centre of the tentage sits the central altar dedicated to Guan Yin. Behind the statue of Guan Yin are several portraits of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, with Shakyamuni Buddha in the middle. Devotees paying respects at this altar can read from a small yellow slip of paper known as the Fu Yin Biao or Tian Wen Biao. It contains instructions for the devotees on what to recite or say when praying and wishing for blessings.

Behind the central altar are three altars. In the centre is an enclosed Inner Chamber called Dou Mu Gong (Dou Mu's Palace). It is dedicated to the Nine Emperor Gods. In front of this chamber, on an altar behind a yellow veil curtain, is the image of the Nine Emperor Gods. After the receiving ceremony, the Nine Emperor Gods censer is invited into the Dou Mu Gong which is covered with a white canvas. The public is prohibited from entering the inner palace. Only Master Chen and selected disciples, who are required to maintain a strict vegetarian diet and regime of abstinence, are allowed to enter. The white canvas prevents devotees from coming into direct contact with the censer of the Nine Emperor Gods. Devotees who wish to pray to the Nine Emperor Gods can do so in front of the Dou Mu's Palace. They will then hand the incense to helpers who will proceed to the inner palace to offer the incense to the Nine Emperor Gods on their behalf. Any helpers who enter the inner palace would have to be dressed in all white, with yellow waistcloth and white head scarf. On the left and right side of the Dou Mu's Palace are two smaller altars where there are portraits of Bodhisattvas. One can pay respects to the Bodhisattvas Samantabhadra, Vairocana and Mañjuśrī to the right of the chamber to seeking blessings and protection. On the left of the chamber, one finds paintings of the Bodhisattvas Samantabhadra, Vairocana and Mañjuśrī.

当今的九皇法会

筹备

走进龙南寺九皇法会现场，并不难留意到法会浓厚的佛教元素，尤其是法会场地的菩萨佛祖塑像与画像、黄色横幅上的佛教偈语，以及摆放在祭坛旁供信众在法会期间诵读的佛经。龙南寺的佛教根基来自于龙南寺主持陈忠孝师傅。陈师傅自七岁开始学佛。他希望通过九皇法会让善信修佛心。因此，他不仅积极地将许多佛教思维与概念融入九皇法会，也经常的法会期间举办法课程。

法会的帐篷会在恭迎九皇大帝一个星期前竖立。帐篷的中殿供奉着观音菩萨的神位。观音菩萨后面有五幅佛祖的画像，中间便是释迦牟尼佛祖。善信在祭坛前祈福时可以照着一张黄色字条念诵。这些字条在庙里俗称复印表或天文表，纸上列出信徒在祈祷或祈求祝福的时候所需要念的文字内容。

观音与佛祖神位的主坛后面便是后殿，也是九皇法会的总殿。后殿分为三个神位。居于其中央便是用白帆布围盖的内殿，名为斗母宫。这也是法会期间用来供奉九皇大帝的主要宫殿。在内殿前方的黄色帷幕后面，是九皇大帝金身的神位。恭迎圣驾回来后，九皇大帝香炉会安座在内殿。内殿是不让善信理事擅自出入的。只有陈师傅和其认定的弟子才能够进入内殿。他们都需要严持斋戒。内殿是为了禁止没严格持斋戒的善信与九皇大帝圣炉接触。善信可以在斗母宫前参拜敬香，然后把香交给理事，请他们帮忙拿入内殿敬奉九皇大帝。负责内殿事务的理事弟子都得穿白衣白裤，腰系黄布带，头戴白巾。

斗母宫右侧有普贤菩萨，毗卢遮那佛与文殊菩萨的神位。善信可以向他们祈求平安幸福。左侧神位供奉着地藏王菩萨、虚空藏菩萨和观世音菩萨。



Altar deities on the left altar (from left to right):
Samantabhadra, Vairocana, Mañjuśrī.

左侧神位，从左至右，有普贤菩萨，毗卢遮那佛与文殊菩萨。



Deities on the right altar (from left to right):
Kṣitigarbha, Ākāśagarbha, Avalokiteśvara.

右侧神位，从左至右，有地藏王菩萨，虚空藏菩萨与观世音菩萨。2017

Opposite the central altar (of Guan Yin and Sakyamuni Buddha), at the main entrance to the tentage, is the altar dedicated to the Jade Emperor and Four Heavenly Kings .

▶ Altar of Jade Emperor and Four Heavenly Kings.

玉皇大帝与四大天王神位。



Another prominent feature of the festival layout are the two long stretches of tables that extend before the main altar. Longevity Lamps are arranged neatly on the tables. Each lamp is accompanied by offerings of food items such as peanuts, fruits (such as oranges), rice, sugar, and rice vermicelli, as well as a yellow card for the devotee to write his or her name and address. Devotees can light Longevity Lamps during the festival for prosperity and longevity. On the first day of the ninth lunar month, devotees will bring the Longevity Lamps to the Nine Emperor Gods altar to pray and seek their blessings. Then they will place it on the long table to keep it lit. The lamps will stay lit throughout the festival. The devotees can invite the lamps home on the last day of the festival.

▶ Keeping the Longevity Lamps lit during the festival.

生命灯继续点燃九天到恭送圣驾晚上。



Long Nan Szye has also prepared Dragon ships for the Nine Emperor Gods Festival. Devotees can purchase a slip of paper to write their names, address and wishes. The dragon ships are burnt during the sending-off ceremony. With the burning of the dragon ships on the ninth day of the festival, the wishes of the devotees written on the slips of paper would come true.

在法会场地主要入口处，面向着观音菩萨释迦牟尼佛祖中殿的，是玉皇大帝与四大天王的神位。

龙南寺九皇法会的另一个特色是在中殿两旁长桌上整齐排满的生命灯及供拜品，每一组都有水果和不同的食物供品如花生、白米和面线，同时也配上一张黄牌，可以写上名字地址。善信可为祈求幸福与长寿点生命灯。九月初一，善信会点燃生命灯并手持到斗母宫前祈求九皇大帝保佑赐福。拜了之后，他们会把生命灯安放在长桌上，持续九天不灭，在法会期间会保持常亮。初九晚上，善信就能够把生命灯请回家。

龙南寺为了九皇法会也准备了两艘纸质龙船。善信乐捐后可以把名字、地址和祈求写在一张粉红色的纸条上，贴在船身。众人相信当龙船在恭送九皇大帝当晚焚化时，他们写在纸条上的祈求愿望也能实现成真。



◀ Dragon Ship.

龙船。



◀ Devotee pasting the paper slips with their names and wishes on the Dragon Ship.

善信把写有名字和愿望的粉红色纸条贴在龙船身上。

Receiving the Nine Emperor Gods

► Night view of the exterior of the Nine Emperor Gods Festival tentage.

夜晚的帐篷与布置。



The receiving of the Nine Emperor Gods takes place on the 27th day of the 8th lunar month. In the evening, devotees gather at the Long Nan Szye festival tentage to prepare for the ceremony. Strips of yellow and white cloth are distributed to be worn around the waist and forehead respectively. After which, devotees board the bus that is headed to Kranji reservoir for the ceremony, while the palanquins depart for the reservoir in lorries.

At the reservoir, religious paraphernalia and offerings to be used for the ritual are neatly arranged in an orderly manner on a mat, with two ritual flags at its two upper corners. Between the flags, flowers, incense, prosperity cakes (*huat kueh*), and fruits are placed alongside a censer and scriptures. Master Chen carefully arranges the items, which had symbolic meanings relating to the Five Elements – Metal, Wood, Water, Fire and Earth. Two palanquins are carried down from the lorries and placed with their entrances facing the open straits. The cloth covering their doorways are lifted. Giant flags are also neatly arranged on the grass, with red and orange ones representing each of the Zodiac signs whilst green ones represent the Southern Dipper, Eastern Dipper, Western Dipper, the Northern Dipper, and Central Dipper.

► Moving the palanquins up the lorry for transporting to Kranji Reservoir.

义工把九皇宝轿搬到罗厘车上准备载到克兰芝蓄水池恭请圣驾。



迎接九皇大帝

龙南寺在农历八月二十七日迎接九皇大帝。当天傍晚，善信理事都会聚集在法会帐篷准备恭迎圣驾。庙方会为善信理事准备黄腰带和白头带。之后，善信都会乘坐庙方所安排的巴士跟随乘坐罗厘的圣轿和大旗前往克兰芝蓄水池迎接圣驾。在蓄水池岸边，仪式道具、鲜花与其他供品整齐地排列在垫上。最靠近水边的两角安插了黄色令旗，垫子的中央也安有香炉，佛钵/铜磬与其他法具。陈师傅细心地摆设各样供品法具，且每样东西都有象征意义。两座宝轿也被掀起布盖，面朝水安置在岸边。大旗按照秩序排列在草地上。红色橙色的旗帜代表十二生肖；青旗代表南斗、东斗、西斗、北斗与中斗。



◀ The arrival of the Nine Emperor Gods palanquin at the reservoir.

九皇宝轿抵达蓄水池准备恭迎九皇大帝。



◀ Master Chen and the entourage preparing for the receiving ritual.

陈师傅与理事善信准备恭迎九皇大帝仪式

The atmosphere is quiet and peaceful, as everyone was told to be solemn and respectful of the affair. Master Chen and his two assistants clad in white robes sat on the mat facing the sea. Devotees gather behind Master Chen, each holding a joss stick and a stalk of flower. The group begins to carefully recite chants from the *True Scripture of the Northern Dipper*. Occasionally, Master Chen will give cues on when to ask for blessings and recite verses for blessings, as well as when to bow.

After recitation, upon the instruction of Master Chen, helpers enter into the water to scoop up two pails of water. The Fa Zhang (ritual staff) is also soaked in the water. It is said that the Fa Zhang is a ritual or magic weapon (*fa bao*) of the Nine Emperor Gods. The devotees shouted “*Huat Ah*” three times. Master Chen lights up three joss sticks for each of the two censers placed on the mat. Joss papers are then burnt. The devotees, in the meantime, continue to recite the scripture in honour of the Nine Emperor Gods. As the ritual concludes, volunteers collect the joss sticks from the participants, who are each given a flower. Upon a cue from Master Chen, the devotees pluck out the petals and throw them in the air.

The Nine Emperor God has been formally received and the entourage returns to the festival area. The two censers, each with three joss sticks, are carried by the Chief censer master and Deputy censer masters, while the palanquins swayed from left to right, signifying the presence of the Nine Emperor Gods. The helpers and devotees pack up the items, return to the lorry and the entourage makes their way back to the tentage at Bukit Batok.

迎接九皇大帝的场面幽静祥和。理事善信听从庙方嘱咐保持庄严肃穆。陈师傅与两位穿白袍的助手坐在垫子上面朝水方。善信都在陈师傅的领导下，各自手持一支清香和鲜花一株，念诵北斗真经。陈师傅时时也会嘱咐众善信祈福参拜。诵经完毕，陈师傅会请理事到水边盛满两桶水并把法杖也浸入水中。众善信相信法杖是九皇大帝的法宝。那时，善信会三度高喊“发啊”（闽南语发音）。随后，陈师傅各别点燃三只清香，插入垫子上的两个香炉。同时，理事们会焚烧金纸，而善信也会继续念诵观音咒。到了这里，恭迎圣驾仪式也就圆满结束，善信把手里的清香交给理事们，各自跟他们拿一朵鲜花。信徒和助手会根据陈师傅的指示，摘下花瓣，扔在空中。

九皇大帝恭迎仪式顺利结束后，九皇宝轿开始摇晃，显示了神明的到来。两个香炉由炉主、副炉主护送，带领迎驾队伍回到法会场地。众理事也收拾好场地的道具，乘坐罗厘，返回武吉巴督法会场地。



◀ Arrival of the Nine Emperor Gods palanquin outside the festival tentage.

九皇宝轿回宫。



◀ Master Chen leading the committee members, volunteers and devotees to pay respects before the main altar at the festival tentage. The male and female devotees stand on the left and right side of the altar respectively.

陈师傅带领众信团拜。男生站在总坛的左边，女生站在总坛的右边。

Festival Events

Crossing of the Bridge of Blessing

▶ Crossing of the Bridge of Blessing, undated.
Photograph courtesy of Long Nan Szye .

过平安桥所使用的仪式，日期未定。 照片由龙南寺提供。



▶ Religious paraphernalia was used during the Bridge of Blessing ritual crossing.

过平安桥所使用的仪式法器道具和福物



From the beginning of the festival, a Bridge of Blessing is set up for devotees to cross for their blessings and to enhance their fortune. In 2016, this was to the right of the main altar. Unlike several other temples, where a day is set aside for the bridge-crossing ritual, the Bridge Crossing ritual for Long Nan Szye is incorporated as part of the process of paying respects at the altar. Devotees coming to pay respects during the Nine Emperor Gods will first pay respects at the Jade Emperor altar before proceeding to pay respects to Guanyin, Shakyamuni Buddha, and the other deities in the central altar, before making their offerings at Doui Mu's Palace and adjacent altars.

The Bridge of Blessing will be the last station. Holding the remaining lighted joss sticks, devotees will proceed to cross the bridge. At the end of the bridge, the devotee places the three joss sticks in the incense vessel which sits before a deity. In 2016 and 2017, it was Ne Zha, the Third Prince. After devotees make their prayer, the temple helpers on duty will hit the gong before stamping a Nine Emperor Gods' seal on the back of the devotee's shirts, or on their back. The ritual is seen as a 'cleansing process' whereby crossing the bridge without any accidents symbolizes blessing and prosperity in the upcoming year.

法会节目

过平安桥



◀ The Bridge of Blessing.

平安桥。

龙南寺在总殿的右侧安了一座平安桥让善信祈福补运。龙南寺的过平安桥仪式与其他庙宇不同，不是认定一个特别日子时间举行，而是融入善信的参拜仪式程序。善信会先参拜玉皇大帝与四大天王的神位，接下来的参拜顺序是主坛的观音佛祖及其他神祇神位，最后才到斗母宫和两边的菩萨佛祖神位。

平安桥是善信参拜的最后一站。善信在各神位参拜后会手持清香过平安桥。过了桥，善信会参拜桥尾端的神明，把三支清香插入安在神明面前的香炉。2016与2017年的神明是哪咤三太子。理事会为每位过平安桥的善信敲一下佛钵/铜磬，帮他们在背上盖上九皇大帝的玺印。过平安桥被视为一种净化仪式。顺利的过桥象征着来年的幸福与平安。

Worshipping of Confucius

Long Nan Szye conducts the Confucius ritual on the sixth day of the ninth lunar month. Catering to children, the ritual involves students praying to the Confucius deity for good academic results.

The ritual begins with children lining up in front of Master Chen. Master Chen will do some palm reading before dotting a red dot of vermilion on their thumb. For females, the ink was dotted on the right thumb while for the male children, the red dot was made on the left thumb. After this, they will sit in front of the altar at the right of the altar in front of Dou Mu's Palace, where a statue of Confucius was placed in front of a painting of Guan Yin. They begin to recite verses and chants seeking blessing to encourage them to be focused and attentive in their studies, to lay the foundations for academic success. The ritual also propounds values such as uprightness in conduct and filial piety.

► Pre-commencement of the 2016 Confucius ritual.

2016年拜孔子仪式即将开始。



At the end of the ritual, Master Chen will stamp the ritual seal of Confucius on the head of each of the children and make a vermilion dot with the inkbrush on their forehead, between their eyebrows. The vermilion dotting grants the wishes of the children and allow them to acquire knowledge and intelligence needed for their studies. Finally, Master Chen will dip flowers into a bowl of holy water and spray them on the children and youth. This concludes the Confucius ritual.

拜孔子

龙南寺的拜孔子仪式在每年九月初六举行。当天会有许多少年儿童聚集在法会场地的孔子像前祈求学业进步和良好成绩。

参与仪式的孩童会先在陈师傅面前排队，让陈师傅替他们看手相，然后陈师傅会在他们的拇指上点朱砂。若是女生，会点右拇指。若是男生，则点左拇指。斗母宫右侧神坛前设了观音画像的神坛，在神坛前摆放着孔子像。点朱砂仪式完毕后，孩童们会集合在孔子像前诵念诗咒。这个仪式的目的在于鼓励他们专心勤奋向学，奠定学业成功顺利的根基。拜孔子仪式也向前来参与的孩童与青年宣扬耿直行事及对父母家里长辈孝顺的美德。

诗咒诵念完毕，陈师傅会用孔子玺印在孩童的头上盖个印，然后用朱砂墨在他们的额头眉间点上一点，以回应孩童们的祈愿并帮助他们吸取学业上所需要的智慧和知识。最后，陈师傅会用鲜花在孩童头上洒圣水。拜孔子仪式也就此结束。



◀ Master Chen advises a young devotee on her studies.

陈师傅开导前来参与拜孔子仪式的善信。

Vegetarian feast on the Seventh Day



▲
1992 banquet attended by a thousand guests.
Photographs courtesy of Long Nan Szye .

1992年九皇法会的千人宴。照片由龙南寺提供。

初七斋宴



◀ Guests at the vegetarian feast today.

斋宴贵宾。



Miscellaneous Activities During The Nine Emperor Gods Festival

► Jia Zhui Kang Dou Mu Gong visiting delegation led by their Chairman, paying respects.

洪水港斗母宮主席帶領參拜團員敬禮。



Selections of the Censer Master and Towkays

► Choosing the Censer Masters and Towkays with the tossing of divination blocks before the main altar.

大殿神壇前擲筊選頭家爐主



其他活动



Hokkien opera performance during the festival.

九皇法会期间的歌仔戏表演。

选头家炉主



Sending off of the Nine Emperor Gods

Like the other Nine Emperor Gods temples, Long Nan Szye sends off the Nine Emperor Gods on the ninth day of the ninth lunar month. Helpers gather in the tentage early in the morning to prepare for the sending off ceremony. A unique item for the sending-off is the float that is built to carry the censer when it is sent off into the sea. The float is decorated with lotus flowers, nine lotus lamps and nine yellow flags with the names of Long Nan Szye temple, the Northern and Southern Dipper Star deities and the Nine Emperor Gods printed on them.

▶ Float customised to bear the censers released into the sea during the sending-off ceremony.

为了恭送九皇大帝特别设计的仪式浮板。



▶ Conveying of the Dragon Ship to Kranji Reservoir.

将龙船运到克兰吉蓄水池。



The sending-off ceremony in the evening begins with a lion and dragon dance performance. After the performance, devotees and helpers, dressed in white shirts and trousers, yellow cloth belts and white headbands gather in the centre of the tentage. Males and females will stand on the left and right of the tentage respectively. The censer master stands in the front at the centre.

恭送圣驾

九月初九是恭送九皇大帝的大日子。理事一早抵达法会场地进行准备。龙南寺恭送仪式的一个独特之处是香炉被送入海中时，使用了为送炉而造的仪式浮板。浮板上安置了莲花，九盏莲灯与其九支印有九皇九大帝、南辰北斗星君与其慈航普渡龙南寺的黄色令旗。

晚间的恭送九皇大帝仪式以龙狮队的表演开始。表演结束后，身着白色衬衫和长裤、绑着黄色布条和戴着白色头巾的善信理事聚集在帐篷中央。男性和女性善信必须分开，男善信被分配到帐篷的左侧而女善信则站在帐篷的右侧。炉主带领着善信，站在帐篷的中央。



◀ The arrival of the Lion and Dragon Dance troupes for the sending-off ceremony of the Nine Emperor Gods.

龙狮队来替恭送九皇大帝仪式助阵。



◀ Preparations of the lotus lamps for the sending-off ceremony.

替恭送团队准备莲花灯。



◀ Community's payment of respect as spearheaded by Master Chen.

陈师傅带领众善信敬礼。

Upon Master Chen's instructions, the temple assistants standing beside the *lor zhu* guide him in leading the entourage in a procession around the tentage. They are followed closely by a group of helpers carrying the Nine Emperor Gods flags, and then by the devotees. As they circle the tentage in an anti-clockwise direction, they repeat the verses that Master Chen recites through his loudspeaker. After the circumambulation is complete, the palanquins are carried to the Inner Palace entrance, and the incense vessels from the Inner Palace altar are invited onto the sedan chairs. With that, the contingent is ready to start their journey to Kranji.

▶ Invitation of the Nine Emperor Gods to board the palanquins.

恭请九皇大帝登宝轿。



在陈师傅的指示下，理事与手持九皇大帝旗帜的助手带领众善信绕行帐篷。当他们逆时针方向绕行时，也跟着陈师傅念诵经文。绕行完毕后，轿队会把九皇宝轿抬到内殿入口，香炉也从内殿请入宝轿。准备就绪后，恭送九皇团队就可以启程了。



◀ Sending off the Nine Emperor Gods.

恭送九皇大帝回銮

The contingent then leaves the tentage and walks for a short distance to the lorries waiting in a car park to bring the group to Kranji Reservoir. The devotees followed the contingent closely, each holding a joss stick and flower. Leading the transport convoy is the float, followed by the lorries with the lion and dance troupes, censer masters, flags and palanquins, and the buses with the devotees.

▶ Sending-off the Nine Emperor Gods.

恭送九皇大帝回銮



The devotees and helpers alight a short distance away from the Kranji Reservoir. They walk a short distance in a ceremonial procession towards the sending-off area on the banks of the reservoir. At the reservoir, the nine golden flags that represent the Nine Emperor Gods and the twelve flags that represent the Chinese Zodiac are raised. The palanquins are placed behind the flags and beside the devotees. Devotees are told to separate once again into two groups according to their gender. Males are told to stand on the left while females stand on the right.

▶ Lining up the flags at the sending-off site.

在恭送仪式地点安置九皇九大帝与五斗星君的旗帜。



恭送团队离开法会场地后要走一段路才能乘坐等候在停车场的罗厘到克兰芝蓄水池。善信各自手持一支清香与一株鲜花跟随其后。恭送队伍由花车带头，载运龙狮队、炉主、旗帜与宝轿的罗厘车则紧跟其后。



善信与理事助手在克兰芝蓄水池附近下车，然后步行到恭送地点。助手将九支金黄色的九皇大帝旗帜与其代表十二生肖的旗帜竖立在蓄水池岸边。宝轿也安置在旗帜的后方与善信的侧边。众善信都跟着指示，按照性别，男左女右，分为两队。

► Sending-off the Nine Emperor Gods at Kranji Reservoir.

在克兰吉蓄水池恭送九皇大帝。





◀ Sending off the Nine Emperor Gods, undated.
Photographs courtesy of Long Nan Szye .

恭送送九皇大帝，日期未定。照片由龙南寺提供。

► Sending-off the Nine Emperor Gods from Kranji Reservoir.

在克兰吉蓄水池恭送九皇大帝。





▶ Preparations of religious paraphernalia for the sending-off ceremony.

理事助手安排恭送仪式的供品与法器道具。



▶ Chanting of sutras led by Master Chen during the sending-off ceremony.

陈师傅带领众善信理事诵经恭送九皇大帝。





▲ Sending off of the Nine Emperor Gods at Kranji Reservoir.

在克兰吉蓄水池恭送九皇大帝。

Sitting in front of the participants in the centre of the mat, Master Chen, accompanied by his two assistants, begins to recite the sutra for the sending-off of the Nine Emperor Gods. As each of the Nine Emperor Gods depart, one of the nine flags is lowered, starting from the First Emperor God. After all the flags are lowered, the censers are placed on the floats and sent out into the water.

▶ A segment of the evening sending-off ceremony.

在克兰吉蓄水池恭送九皇大帝。



After the sending-off of the censers, Master Chen instructs the devotees to stand behind the flags of their zodiac sign. He then recites prayers for them seeking blessings from their respective zodiac animal. At the same time, devotees pluck the petals off the flowers and scatter them into the air.

To conclude the sending-off ceremony, the dragon ships on their floats are move into the water, and set alight. Devotees and assistants remove their headbands and waistbands, and threw them onto the burning dragon ship. This is believed to get rid of misfortune and bad luck. This concludes the Nine Emperor Gods Festival.

众善信面前，端坐于垫子中央的陈师傅在两位助手的陪同下，开始为恭送九皇大帝诵念经文。从九皇大帝开始，九皇旗帜轮流下降，遂代表每位九皇的逐一离去。当旗帜全部下降后，九皇大帝香炉被请到仪式浮板，放在水面上飘送。

仪式结束后，陈师傅吩咐众善信排列在各自所属生肖的旗帜后面，然后为他们诵经向生肖祈福。善信同时拔出花瓣，撒在空中。

最后，理事助理将绑在浮板上的龙船推入水中点燃。理事善信也把头巾和腰带抛入燃烧的龙船，象征着消灾解厄。恭送九皇大帝仪式和九皇法会也圆满结束。



◀ Assistants pushing the Dragon Ships into the water for burning, undated. Photographs courtesy of Long Nan Szye .

助手准备把龙船推到水里远处点燃, 日期未定. 照片由龙南寺提供。

▶ Sending the Dragon Ships out into the water for burning.

助手准备把龙船推到水里远处点燃。



▶ The Dragon Ships, which are tied to floating boards, are pushed into the water

理事将绑在浮板上的龙船推入水中。





▲ Igniting of the Dragon Ships.

在岸边水上燃烧龙船替众善信消灾解厄。



▲ Sending off the Nine Emperor Gods.

恭送九皇大帝回銮。

▶ Devotees returning to the festival site.

善信们回宫。



Conclusion

Long Nan Szye's Nine Emperor Gods Festival has come to an end. Throughout the festival, it could be seen that there were many devotees and helpers from different walks of life coming together to help and join Long Nan Szye's celebration of the festival. Led by the master of the temple, Master Chen, the festival was carried out according to strict Buddhist principles. It was a serious and solemn affair. The festival was an opportunity not just to seek the blessings of the Nine Emperor Gods, but also to practice the Buddhist faith and to transmit traditional values. As the Nine Emperor Gods Festival comes to an end, the temple once again returns to the state of serenity, waiting for next year's festival to begin. Nevertheless, the values and traditions of the Nine Emperor Gods Festival continue to inspire the devotees and helpers in their everyday lives. Thus, we hope that Long Nan Szye continues to transmit and inculcate these values through the Nine Emperor Gods Festival for years to come.



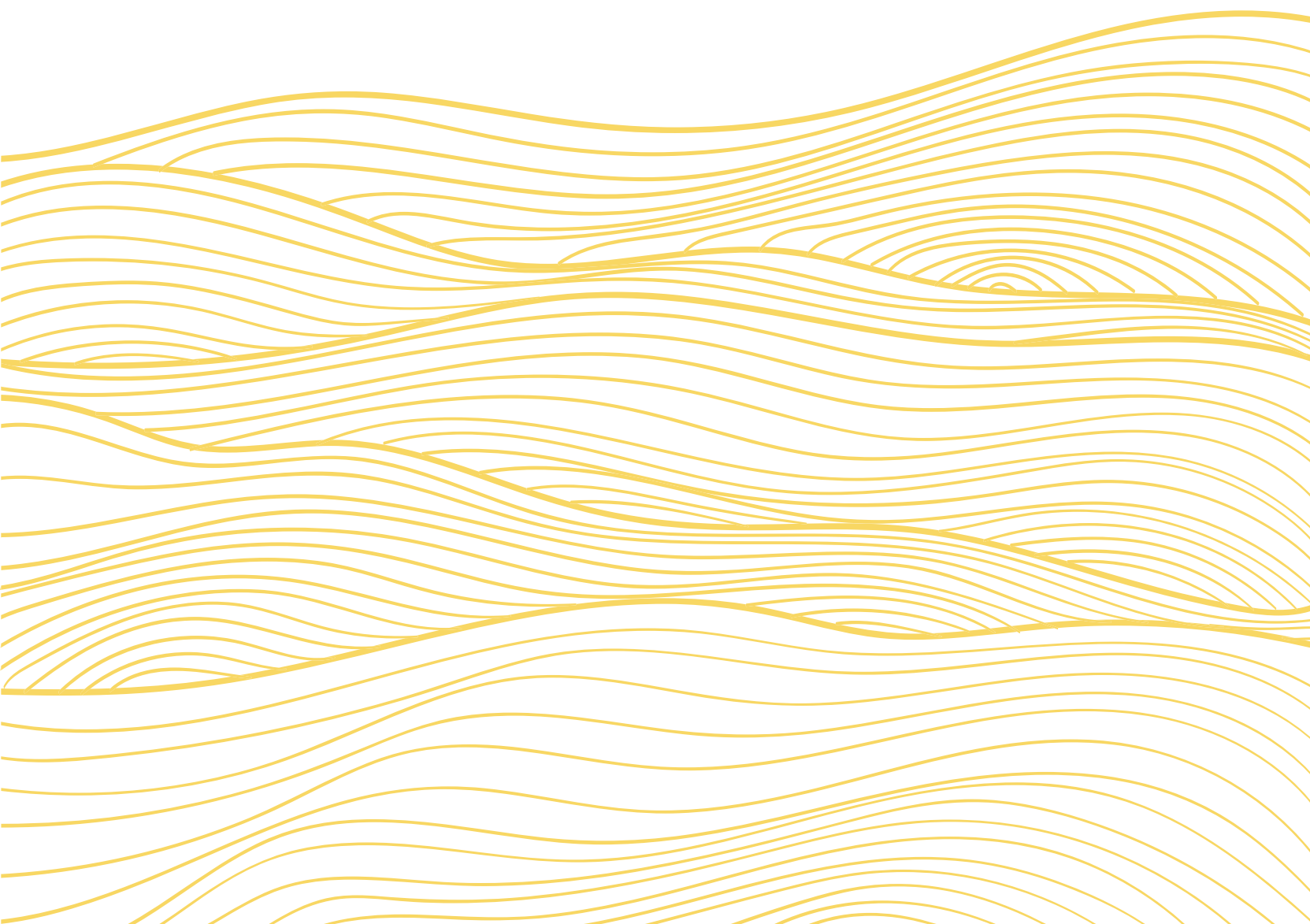
结论

龙南寺一年一度的九皇法会也随着恭送九皇仪式圆满落幕。法会期间，可见来自各行各业的善信和义工助手前来帮忙并参与龙南寺所举办的活动和仪式。在陈师傅的带领下，龙南寺的九皇法会遵循佛教的原理和教诲进行，气氛庄严严肃。法会不仅让善信供奉九皇，祈求幸福平安，也让他们学习与修行佛法。九皇法会结束后，龙南寺也恢复往日平静，等待明年大日子的来临。然而，九皇法会的传统与价值观仍会在善信与理事义工的日常生活中发挥重要的引导作用。我们希望，在未来的日子里，龙南寺能够继续通过九皇法会，传承和推广这些价值观和传统。



第 12 章

Nan Shan Hai Miao
南山海庙



Introduction

In 1971, a 21-year-old spirit medium, Goh Cheng Hoe, was instructed by the netherworld deities Great Uncle and Second Uncles [Minnan: *Tua Li Ya Peh*] to host the Nine Emperor Gods Festival for as long as he lived. Gathering his friends and followers, Mr Goh began organizing the Festival that very year, receiving detailed instructions on how to do so from the deity in the process.

Celebrations of the Nine Emperor Gods Festival have continued annually at the Nan Shan Hai Temple, which Mr Goh had founded, until his death in 2003. Mr Goh had fulfilled his promise to *Tua Li Ya Peh*. After his passing, his daughter, Anna Goh, continues to organize the festival every year to continue the tradition and preserve her father's legacy.

► The Nine Emperor Gods through his medium performing rites for the festival in 1991. Photograph courtesy of the Nan Shan Hai Temple.

九皇大帝降乩为九皇千秋主持仪式，1991。照片由南海庙提供。



引言

1971年，21岁的吴清河先生受大二爷伯的指示，在他有生之年必须办九皇千秋庆典。此后，吴先生与好友和信徒便在大二爷伯的引导下开始举办九皇千秋庆典。

从那年开始，九皇千秋每年都会在吴先生开创的南山海庙如期举行。他可说是兑现了与大二爷伯的承诺。吴先生2003年过世后，他的女儿吴女士依旧每年举办九皇爷千秋，以传承她父亲在生的事业。

The Nan Shan Hai of Yesteryears

The festival was first held at the original location of Nan Shan Hai Temple at Jalan Tau Geh (off Jalan Ang Teng) until the land on which the village or kampong was situated was acquisitioned and the temple moved with the family of Mr. Goh to a HDB flat at 701 Bedok Reservoir Road. In the village, the temple helpers and devotees would go to East Coast Park for inviting and sending off the Nine Emperor Gods. The festivities would be simpler than what is usually done in Bedok Reservoir today. On the sixth day, they would put up a long table for devotees and helpers to present their offerings to the Nine Emperor Gods. In certain years, on the instruction of *Tua Li Ya Peh*, there would also be a firewalking ritual for purification and luck changing. In 1982 and 1986, the temple organized a tour of the kampong by the Nine Emperor Gods to bless the inhabitants. In these years, they had also visited Nan Tian Gong in Ampang.

▶ Nan Shan Hai temple building in Jalan Ang Teng, undated. Photograph courtesy of the Nan Shan Hai Temple.

南海海庙位于Jalan Ang Teng的旧址，日期不详。照片由南海海庙提供。



▶ The festival at Jalan Ang Teng, undated. Photograph courtesy of Nan Shan Hai Temple.

位于Jalan Ang Teng的 九皇大帝千秋庆典，日期不详。照片由南海海庙提供。



After moving to Bedok Reservoir, the festival was initially held in the void deck of Block 702, next to the car park, for a few years, until the basketball court next to Blk 701 (current premises) was completed.

往日的南山海庙

南山海庙的九皇胜会起初在Jalan Ang Teng 附近的Jalan Tau Geh 的旧庙主持。直到甘榜土地被政府征用，南山海庙才随着吴先生一家搬到勿洛水池路大牌701号的新组屋。在Jalan Ang Teng 甘榜的时候，南山海庙理事善信都会到东海岸迎接和恭送九皇大帝。当时的千秋庆祝活动比起后来在水池路举行的简单。 不过，庙里九月初六还是会摆一张长桌让善信供奉祭品祭拜九皇大帝。某些年份，大二爷伯也会吩咐庙方举办过火仪式，帮信众净化改运。1982年和1986年，庙方也会主持甘榜绕境保佑村民。



◀ Nine Emperor Gods Festival *yew keng*, undated. Photograph courtesy of Nan Shan Hai Temple.

九皇大帝在甘榜的游境， 日期不详。照片由南山海庙提供。

一九八零年代末搬到勿洛水池路后，九皇胜会起初在停车场隔壁的大牌702组屋底层举办。 几年后，大牌701组屋隔壁的篮球场建好，九皇胜会才移到现在的地点。

► Gateway at Blk 701 Bedok Reservoir (void deck), post 1980s. Photograph courtesy of Nan Shan Hai Temple.

勿洛蓄水池第701座组屋底层, 1980年代后. 照片由南山海庙提供。



► Nine Emperor Gods lantern and dragon staff bearers on the bus *en route* to the beach, undated. Photograph courtesy of Nan Shan Hai Temple.

九皇大帝灯队与抬龙船成员前往海滩的路上, 日期不详。照片由南山海庙提供。





◀ Receiving the Nine Emperor Gods during the day, undated photograph. Photograph courtesy of Nan Shan Hai Temple.

恭迎九皇大帝, 日期不详。照片由南山海庙提供。



◀ Feast for the Nine Emperor Gods. Second Uncle 二爷伯 [*Li Ya Pek*] leading assistants and devotees on a procession around the feast tables for the Nine Emperor Gods, undated photograph. Photograph courtesy of Nan Shan Hai Temple

为九皇大帝准备的盛宴。二爷伯引导助手与善信们围绕九皇大帝盛宴中的桌席， 日期不详。照片由南山海庙提供。

Yew Keng

▶ Nan Shan Hai contingent going on tour to visit other Nine Emperor Gods temples, undated. Photograph courtesy of Nan Shan Hai Temple.

南海山庙代表前往其他九皇友庙参拜, 日期不详。
照片由南海海庙提供。



Sending-off ceremony

▶ The combustion of the incense that signals the beginning of the sending off ceremony for the Nine Emperor Gods at Nan Shan Hai temple, undated photograph.

香炉的“发炉”标志着南海山庙九皇大帝恭送仪式的开始, 日期不详。照片由南海海庙提供。



游境



◀ Nan Shan Hai Nine Emperor Gods palanquin entering the gateway at Leong Nam Dian temple, undated. Photograph courtesy of Nan Shan Hai Temple.

南海山九皇大帝宝轿进入龙南殿，日期不详。照片由南山海庙提供。

恭送圣驾回銮



◀ Palanquins of the Nine Emperor Gods, undated. Photograph courtesy of Nan Shan Hai Temple.

九皇大帝宝轿，日期不详。照片由南山海庙提供。

► In some years, there are nine Dragon Ships for the sending off, undated. Photograph courtesy of Nan Shan Hai Temple.

在某些年，恭送仪式中出现了九艘龙船，日期不详。照片由南山海庙提供。





◀ Sending off the Nine Emperor Gods, 1991 and undated photograph. Photographs courtesy of Nan Shan Hai Temple.

恭送九皇大帝回銮，1991年，日期不详。照片由南山海庙提供。

The Festival Today

The Nine Emperor Gods Festival is held in the first nine days of the ninth lunar month of the Chinese calendar. According to a temple elder, the *Tua Ya Peh* had told them in one of his visits that the Nine Emperor Gods were nine beggars who had helped to fight pirates who ravaged coastal communities. However, they were killed by the pirates and their bodies thrown into the sea. They were adopted as god-children by Dou Mu Niang and they were propitiated by the inhabitants in these coastal areas in memory of their good deeds and out of respect for their efforts in fighting against the pirates. Hence, even today, the temple will never chase away beggars who come into the festival area.

Today, the Nan Shan Hai Nine Emperor Gods festival continues to be held in the basketball court and field next to Block 701, Bedok Reservoir Road. Preparations for the Nine Emperor Gods Festival at Nan Shan Hai temple begin weeks ahead of the actual festivities. Logistical arrangements were made for paper offerings, a makeshift kitchen in the void deck, and manpower for different roles during the festival. A month before the start of the festival, temple committee members attending the inner chamber (housing the Nine Emperor Gods and Dou Mu Yuan Jun) during the Festival began a strict vegan diet that also prohibits garlic and onion.

A few days before the receiving of the Nine Emperor Gods, a tentage is set up at the basketball court under Block 701. Volunteers and temple committee members would work tirelessly in the following days to set up the altars and equipment within the tentage to prepare the space for the festival. Deity statues are then invited from the temple to the festival area and cleaned. Festival flags are hoisted within the festival area and erected along the surrounding roads, while celebratory banners unfurled. For many volunteers and committee members, this was a time of reunion, as they have not seen each other for a year, and there is much catching-up to do.

Once everything in place, a consecration ritual is then performed, in which joss sticks and paper money are offered at the center and four corners of the tentage, representing the five cardinal directions. Flags are put up and the holy whip is used at these spots to purify and spiritually secure the festival area. The stage is now ready for the arrival of the Nine Emperor Gods.

▶ Nan Shan Hai Volunteers setting up the Festival tentage.

南海山庙义工搭建帐篷。



如今的九皇千秋

九皇九大帝千秋在每年的农历九月举行。根据庙里前辈回忆，大爷伯曾透露九皇九位大帝原本是九位为民抗拒海盗而被杀害的乞丐。他们后来被斗姆收为义子，而靠海的村民也为了感激这几位乞丐每年都会在九月初九祭拜他们。因此，时至今日，九皇千秋期间，若有乞丐来千秋地点，庙方理事都不会赶他们走。

如今的南山海庙九皇千秋每年依旧都会在勿洛水池路大牌701组屋前面的篮球场举行。农历八月初旬，九皇千秋的筹备工作便陆陆续续开始了。节日的一切大小事物，从人手、祭品到厨房用具等，都必须提前安排好。负责斗姆殿事物的理事们也在节日开始一个月前已经斋戒了，连葱蒜也严禁入口。

农历八月二十五，千秋帐篷搭好后。理事和义工们一同将庙里的神台和各种仪器安置在帐篷内。庙里神明的金身也从庙请到帐篷，先清理一遍再安上神坛。邻里的大街小巷也排满了南山海庙九皇大帝的旗帜。帐篷内的彩旗也都一一挂起。不论是在视觉或听觉上，整个邻里逐渐充满了九皇爷千秋的气氛。对于一些义工来说，这不单是祭拜九皇九大帝的盛会，也是他们在忙碌的生活中一年一次的友情聚会。

千秋场地一切准备布置好后，理事们便主持安坛与安营仪式。他们在帐篷的五方位 - 东南西北中- 献上香和金纸，再用龙鞭驱邪净化，让坛内不受无关魂灵的侵犯骚扰。万事俱备齐全后，便是恭迎九皇九大帝与斗姆元君圣驾的时候了。



◀ Moving the deity statues to the festival area for cleaning before they are installed on the altar.

将神明金身移到庆典会场清洗才重新安在神坛。

► The Nine Emperor Gods altar.

南海山庙九皇大帝主坛。



Receiving the Nine Emperor Gods

On the 29th day of the eighth lunar month, devotees, volunteers, and committee members decked out in white begin to gather for the receiving of the Nine Emperor Gods, which marks the beginning of the festival. In the late afternoon, the lion and dragon dance troupes arrive to pay their respects and perform for the gathering crowd as the temple prepares for the receiving. The five vanguards of the receiving contingent change into their uniforms and pay respects at the different altars. The Daoist priest leads the committee members in prayers and the palanquins are carried into the Dou Mu chamber to prepare for the departure for the beach to receive the Nine Emperor Gods. When all are ready, the contingent boards the lorries to start their journey to the beach. Buses are charted for the occasion to bring the devotees there.

► The Five Vanguards waiting to greet the receiving delegation as they set out for Changi Beach.

迎驾队伍准备前往樟宜海边时，等待迎接的五名先锋。





◀ Nine oil lamps representing the Nine Emperor Gods.

代表九皇九位大帝的九皇灯。

恭迎圣驾

农历八月二十九日傍晚时分，穿着白色衣裤的理事、义工与善信都会纷纷到庆典帐篷集合，准备到海边迎接九皇九大帝，这一热闹的场景标志着九皇大帝千秋的开端。从黄昏时分开始，舞龙舞狮和道长在帐篷内一一上场，迎接队伍在主要坛位参拜之后，也准备前往樟宜海岸迎接九皇爷。善男信女都会乘大巴士前往迎接地点。



Night has fallen as the contingent arrives at Changi Beach. A mat has been laid out on the grass area next to the beach and the main offerings and ritual paraphernalia for the receiving ritual are placed on it. These include a plate of fruits, joss paper, six teacups placed in rows of three and two tea pots, as well as two yellow candles and a large round yellow vessel. After the arrival of the palanquin, the incense censer representing the Nine Emperor Gods is then invited from the palanquin and placed in front of the candles and offerings facing the sea. The rituals for receiving the Nine Emperor Gods are then led by the Daoist priest. The priest starts chanting the scriptures for the receiving, and reads the petition, while giving instructions for the offering of incense sticks and joss paper, and for when devotees should kneel and arise during the ritual. At a designated moment indicated by the Daoist priest, the large censer from the palanquin is carried by designated committee members along with large yellow container into the sea to invite the deities. The censer is then carried back to shore and back into the palanquin. The entourage then begins the journey back to the festival area.

► The offerings for the receiving of the Nine Emperor Gods at Changi Beach.

樟宜海边恭请九皇大帝仪式的供品。



► Daoist priest leading the palanquin team members and temple entourage inviting the Nine Emperor Gods.

道长带领轿队成员与庙宇的理事善信恭迎九皇大帝。



恭迎团队抵达樟宜海边时，已是夜幕低垂。理事们在靠近海滩的草地摆好了迎接仪式要用到的祭品如水果和金纸、六个茶杯(列成两排，每排三杯)、两个茶壶、一对黄蜡烛及两个黄色的大杯子。在道长的带领下，迎接团队也开始举行“请水”仪式。道长在诵经和读疏文时，也会指引理事和香客们如何献香、摆放金纸与何时跪拜等。接着，在道长指示下，指定理事会将香炉和黄色杯子带到海中迎接九皇九大帝。仪式结束后，理事们会将香炉请回宝轿内。迎驾团队便可以启程回到千秋场地。



◀ The earthenware censer to be carried into the sea for the inviting of the Nine Emperor Gods sits in front of them.

将被抬入海中恭请九皇大帝的陶土香炉。



▲ The receiving contingent running to the palanquin with the Nine Emperor Gods censer after the receiving.

迎驾队伍抬着香炉在恭请九皇大帝仪式结束后跑向九皇大帝宝轿。

Upon returning to the festival area, the palanquins will do a few rounds in the main compound and the grass field next to it signifying the return of the Nine Emperor Gods for the festival. They are then brought into the Inner Chamber for the sacred objects to be transferred to the altars within, before the palanquins are brought out to their resting stations for the festival. The Daoist priest then leads the committee members to pay respects at the different altars, starting with the Nine Emperor Gods altar, the altar for the other deities. He then goes on to consecrate the horses representing the five spiritual armies and their generals. The lions and dragon also perform for the crowd of devotees to bring an end to the evening festivities to welcome the Nine Emperor Gods.



◀ The Nine Emperor Gods return to the festival site.

九皇大帝回宫。

回到千秋地点后，两乘宝轿会先在坛前与前面的场地以跑轿的方式速绕几圈，向各坛位敬礼，也标志着九皇九大帝的降临。随后，理事们会把宝轿抬到斗姆殿内，以便把香炉和其他圣物请到殿内的神桌，再把宝轿请到殿外认定的地方安置。接着，道长会在九皇九大帝坛前带领理事们念经读疏文，再引领他们到众神神桌前敬拜。团拜结束后，道长便会替五营将军的军马开光。最后，醒狮舞龙团队会为理事善信表演，为晚上的迎接圣驾仪式与节目拉上帷幕。



◀ The Daoist priest consecrates the horses belonging to the Five Encampments of Spirit Soldiers and Generals.

道长为五营军马进行开光仪式。

Yew Keng

A very important feature of the Nine Emperor Gods festival will be the exchange of visits between Nine Emperor Gods temples. In 2017, Nan Shan Hai Temple organized a *yew keng*, which involves the Nine Emperor Gods from the temple visiting the other temples to pay respects and exchange gifts and greetings. The *yew keng* took place on 21st October 2017. The Nine Emperor Gods would travel in their palanquins, accompanied by a large entourage and full array of vanguards. The temples visited included, in order of sequence: Nan Bei Dou Mu Gong, Kew Huang Keng, Koo Chye Ba Sheng Hong Temple, Leng San Giam Dou Mu Gong, Leong Nam Temple, Hougang Tou Mu Kung, and Hong San Temple.

The visiting entourage was preceded by a lion and dragon dance troupe, which announced their arrival. The core contingent followed, with the five vanguards at its helm. They were followed by the incense censer and flag bearers, then the palanquins. The rest of the devotees rounded off the procession. The vanguards ‘purified’ and cleared the path with their whips whenever the contingent crossed a boundary. At the entrances to some of the temples visited, the vanguards for Nan Shan Hai temple and the host temple would greet each other with the cracking of the whips. During the visit, greetings, gifts and incense were exchanged between temples, as the Nan Shan Hai contingent would pay their respects collectively. Crowds thronged the various temples to witness these visits and exchanges.

Other Nine Emperor Gods temples would also visit the Nan Shan Hai temple during the festival. There are two forms of visits. The first is the larger scale *yew keng*, in which the Nine Emperor Gods in their palanquins, and for some temples, spirit mediums, visit the temple. They will be accompanied by a large contingent of volunteers and devotees, as well as lion dances and dragon dances. The second would be the *can bai* which consists of a much smaller contingent, led by the incense censer, other symbols of the temple, and a small group of temple committee members. They are sometimes accompanied by a small group of devotees and a single vanguard.



▲ Palanquin bearers paying respects outside Kew Huang Keng.

宝轿的抬轿队员在殿外致敬。

游境

九皇千秋一个重要的活动便是九皇庙宇之间的互相拜访与参拜。所谓“游境”是以隆重的方式到其他九皇庙里进行参拜仪式。除了宫庙理事和头家炉主，南山海庙的“游境”队伍也包括九皇圣轿、五营先锋与其善信。南山海庙2017年就举行了游境，先后拜访了南北斗母宫、九皇宫、龙山岩斗母宫、龙南殿、后港斗母宫及凤山宫。游境会在农历九月初二举行。当天的游境队伍由五营先锋带领。随后便是一对码头锣、持着坛香香炉和灯笼旗子的理事与两乘九皇宝轿。众善信都跟随其后。到访团队抵达宫庙的大门时，若东庙也有先锋，两方会先用神鞭敬礼。然后受访宫庙的先锋也会为来访团队行礼和开路，大队才会正式入庙参拜。在团拜礼仪后，两方代表会交换香火和礼品。两方的理事也有机会交流，气氛即亲切又隆重。

九皇千秋期间，其他九皇庙也会到南山海庙来参拜。有些庙会以游境方式来拜访，也有些庙也会以形式上较为简单、人数也较少的“参拜”方式来拜访，一般只有炉主和庙理事前来换香火和礼品，有时一小批善信和一名先锋也陪同前往。



◀ Nine Emperor Gods palanquin leaving the Inner Chamber.

九皇大帝宝轿离开内殿。

► Nan Shan Hai Temple visiting before Lorong Koo
Chye Sheng Hong Temple

南海海庙向菲莱芭城隍庙进香



► Nan Shan Hai Temple visiting at Leng San Giam Dou
Mu Gong

南海海庙向龙山岩斗母宫进香





◀ Nan Shan Hai Temple visiting Hougang Tou Mu Kung

南海庙向后港斗母宫进香



◀ Nan Shan Hai Temple paying their respect at Hong San Temple

南海庙向凤山宫进香



Temple Visiting

Over the next two days, Nan Shan Hai receives further visits from other temples and returns these visits as well. In this small-scale *Yew Keng*, or “offering of incense” without the pressure of time and crowds, devotees from both sides have the time to linger to chat.

▶ A procession from Kew Huang Keng comes by Nan Shan Hai.

九皇宫理事炉主向南海庙进行参拜。



▶ Hougang Tou Mu Kung visits Nan Shan Hai Temple with their palanquins.

后港斗母宫理事炉主圣轿向南海庙进行参拜。



友庙来访

在接下来的两天里，南山海庙会继续接待友庙来访，也会回访。在这个“小型绕境”或敬香活动中，在没有时间与人潮的压力下，双方都能自在闲聊。



▲ Leong Nam Temple pays their respects.

龙南殿代表致敬。

► Nan Shan Hai Temple offering incense and paying respects at Yu Hai Tang

南海海庙向玉海棠进香



► Nan Shan Hai Temple visiting Kim San Tze

南海海庙向金山寺进香



► Nan Shan Hai Temple paying respects at Jia Zhui Kang Kew Ong Yah Temple

南海海庙向洪水港斗母宫进香





◀ Nan Shan Hai Temple paying their respects at Jiu Huang Dian.

南海海庙代表参拜友庙九皇殿。

“Actual Day” of the Nine Emperor Gods Festival

A nine-table feast is held for the Nine Emperor Gods at the turn of midnight, which marks the start of the sixth day or “actual day” (*zheng ri*) of the Festival. Each table is laid out with sumptuous spread of vegetarian dishes for each of the Nine Emperor Gods. Temple volunteers and devotees offer tea at every table, in a ceremony that involves kneeling and pouring the tea on joss paper placed on the ground. The arrangement of the nine tables also highlights the special status of the Ninth Emperor God in Nan Shan Hai Temple. A table with the same offering of food is also laid out at each of the altars in the festival area. After the Nine Emperor Gods have feasted, devotees then partake of the food.

▶ White and yellow candles at altar. The use of a pair yellow and white candles as part of the offerings is unique to Nan Shan Hai temple. They signify both mourning for the Nine Emperor Gods during the festival and the imperial status of the deities.

神坛上的黄色和白色香烛。以一对黄白色香烛为祭品的做法，是南海庙所独有的。它们既象征着九皇千秋期间对九皇大帝的祭奠，也象征着众神之大帝的地位。



▶ The table for the Ninth Emperor God in the center of the feast arrangement.

盛宴中居于中心的九皇九帝之席。



九皇千秋正日

九皇千秋的初六，也即“正日”，整整九桌的盛宴将在午夜时分举行。每张桌子上都摆满了丰盛的素食，供九皇九位大帝享用。庙里的义工善信到每桌敬茶，之后也进行跪地和把水倒在地上金纸的仪式。九桌盛宴的布置，凸显了九皇大帝在南山海寺的特殊地位。在胜会场地的每个神坛上都放上一张桌子，上面摆着同样的食物。九皇大帝享用过大餐之后，善信们也一起共享美食。



◀ Devotee offering tea. A committee member pours the tea for his colleague to offer to the Nine Emperor Gods.

善信奉茶。理事们倒茶以便敬献给九皇大帝。



◀ Arranging food offerings.

安排食物供品。

▶ Temple committee members burning paper offerings for the Nine Emperor Gods and other deities after the feast.

庙宇理事在盛宴后为九皇大帝焚烧纸扎祭品。



▶ Devotees enjoying a vegetarian feast

信徒们在享受素食盛宴



▶ A puppet show, as well as lion and dragon dances are also performed on this day. Mr Victor Lye from the People's Action Party graced the occasion and was invited to consecrate the lions and dragons.

布偶戏与龙狮团也在盛宴中演出酬神。新加坡人民行动党的赖添发先生受邀为龙狮开光。





▲ Puppet Performance during the festival.

节日期间的木偶表演。

Daily Activities at the Festival

On ordinary days at the festival, a steady stream of devotees make their offerings as helpers assisted with preparations for upcoming events. Volunteers continue to tie and embellish the dragon ship to be used for the sending off of the Nine Emperor Gods. They will check and secure the palanquins. They also change the offerings at the altars every day, and offer tea to the deities.

There is always someone at the reception. Behind this counter, volunteers pack joss sticks (33 a bunch) and fold joss paper ingots. Devotees can make cash donations, sponsorships, or purchase paper robes, joss paper, and incense at this station.

▶ Devotees wait to offer tea at the entrance to the Dou Mu chamber, which is also the inner chamber restricted to selected temple committee members.

在斗姆殿等待奉茶的信众，这个内殿只有指定理事成员能够进入。



The Nan Shan Hai community is a close-knit one. Many devotees have known each other for years, and were neighbours either in Jalan Ang Teng or in the present location on Bedok Reservoir Road. Exclamations of “You have grown so big now” and “Long time no see” are often heard during the festival. Devotees ate together sharing dishes, and get together to arrange the offerings on the altars, to make *popiah*, or just to chat and catch-up.

九皇千秋日常

九皇千秋期间，日常中都会有信众陆续前来祭拜九皇九大帝。理事助手也都忙着筹备来日的主要仪式。理事义工们不断装饰美化恭送九皇用的龙船，也时不时检查和装饰宝轿。他们每天都会更换神桌上的祭品，按时供茶献香。

大日子期间每日24小时都有理事、义工看顾场地。有空档时间时，他们会将焚香整理成33柱一组，也将金纸折成纸元宝。善信可随缘捐款、赞助，或是购买纸袍、香、金纸等。

南山海社区是个紧密联系的社区。许多理事信众即相识多年，也曾在Jalan Anteng 或勿洛水池路当邻居。大日子期间常听到“你长这么大了！”和“好久不见”这类感叹。理事善信们在这期间同饮共食，一起摆设神台、做薄饼，或聊天叙旧等。



▲ Devotees making popiah.

信徒们一同做薄饼。

In the 14 years since Mr. Goh's passing, members of the temple committee have stepped up to support Anna in organizing the Nine Emperor Gods Festival. The priest has also become the authority on matters of ritual. Younger devotees, some of whom have never met Mr. Goh, have taken up key roles in the festival such as serving as the Vanguard, or bearing the palanquins.

Mr Goh's influence continues to be felt strongly in the temple and during the festival. Particularities of the festival introduced by him, such as the offering of tea to the Dou Mu in the inner chamber, and the nine-table feast, continue to be practiced and are unique to Nan Shan Hai. Just as the Nine Emperor Gods are mourned and celebrated for their heroic deeds over the ten days of the festival, memories and stories of Mr Goh are collectively relived every year.

▶ Group photo of volunteers. Fourth from the left is Anna.

理事和义工们的合照。左边第四位便是吴女士。



吴先生已逝世十四年，但庙宇理事仍积极支持吴女士举办九皇千秋庆典。道长成为仪式相关事务的权威。年轻信众即使没有见过吴先生，也在庆典中扮演重要的角色，如担任先锋，或成为宝轿队队员。

吴先生的影响在庙宇及庆典中仍可强烈地感受到。庆典中的细节，如向内殿中的斗姆元君奉茶、九桌盛宴，仍在延续，且已成为南山海庙独有的特色。十天庆典中，善信们在庆祝和悼念的同时，也会忆起吴先生和他的许多故事。



Sending off the Nine Emperor Gods

The ninth day of the ninth lunar month is also the busiest day at the Nan Shan Hai temple. It is the day for the sending-off of the Nine Emperor Gods. In the morning and through the day, the final preparations are being made. The waves on the platform for the Dragon Ship are painted, for example. In the late afternoon, the Daoist priest will lead the temple committee and devotees in sending off the Jade Emperor and other deities and burning the offerings prepared for them. The Dragon Ship is then carried to the transport in the car park. The sending-off does not begin until the incense in the different censers in the festival bursts into flames. When this happens, the palanquins are carried into the Dou Mu chamber to invite the Nine Emperor Gods to embark on their journey to the beach for the sending-off. The core contingent with the Dragon Staff and lantern, as well as the smaller censer, then leave for the beach. After paying their respects at each of the altars, and being carried around the festival area, the palanquins are then conveyed onto the lorries to make their way to the beach. There are also buses to convey the devotees to the beach.

► The Dragon Ship ready for sending off, with waves and other decorations applied to it.

整装待发的龙船准备出发恭送九皇大帝。



恭送九皇大帝回銮

九月初九是恭送九皇九大帝回銮的大日子，也是南山海庙最繁忙及热闹的一天。理事们当天一早便开始为最后的筹备工作忙碌，如在龙船浮板上画上的海浪装饰等等。黄昏时分，道长也会开始引导理事善信恭送玉皇大帝与众神，然后为神明焚烧天公座、金纸、神袍与其他祭品。龙船也被提前搬到停车场的罗厘准备运到海边。恭送九皇九大帝仪式一般是会等到各个神明香炉“发炉”后才会正式开始。届时，两乘宝轿会被抬到斗姆殿恭请九皇启程到海边恭送。手持龙杖、灯笼、小香炉的九皇恭送主队也开始启程。团队和宝轿在每个坛位敬礼之后便陆续出发。出发前，宝轿会在千秋场地与周围草地绕行几圈。善信也乘坐庙方提供的巴士到海边去。



◀ Sending off the Jade Emperor and the deities

九皇大帝圣驾回銮。



▲ Transporting the Dragon Ship to the beach.

把龙船运到海边。



◀ The sending-off begins when the incense in the Nine Emperor Gods altar censer combusts into flames.

九皇大帝恭送仪式在香炉“发炉”后开始。

► The core ritual contingent emerging from the Inner Chamber with the ceramic and metal censers and sandalwood, and incense, on the platter, and a committee member carrying the dragon staff, with the lantern of the Nine Emperor Gods.

从内殿出来的恭送主队，盘子上装有陶制香炉、金属制檀香炉、焚香。一位理事成员手里拿着龙杖及灯笼。



As the entourage arrives at Changi Beach, the offerings have been laid out on the grass on the edge of the beach. The offerings include sandalwood incense, five oranges, tea leaves and joss paper, as well as two rows of teacups (three in a row) and two teapots. The palanquins are rested behind the offering area, while the Dragon Ship is positioned close to the water. The censer is once again invited to the offering area from the palanquin. The Daoist priest oversees the sending-off ceremony, chanting the scripture, reading the petition, and instructing the entourage on when to bow. At a certain juncture, all the incense is collected from the committee members and devotees, and placed into the censer, and the incense tied with a strap of yellow cloth. The yellow cloth on the palanquins are all removed and placed in the Dragon Ship. A pile of joss paper in front of the offering area is burnt and the Dragon ship is pushed into the water by a group of committee members and volunteers. Similarly, the censer full of incense is carried into the water by another group of temple committee members and volunteers as the rest of the entourage watches on. The dragon and lion dance troupes also go into the water performing as the ship and censer are pushed further and further out to sea. Many on their knees, hands together in prayer, and some with eyes closed, saying their prayers and wishes as the Nine Emperor Gods depart. At a certain distance, the dragon ship is set on fire and the censer sent off.



◀ The Nine Emperor Gods prepare to depart from the festival site.

九皇大帝准备回銮。

恭送队伍与众善信抵达樟宜海边的送驾地点时，靠近沙滩的草地上已摆放好供品，这当中包括檀香、五粒鲜橙、茶米建合、金纸、两排茶杯(每排三杯)与两个茶壶。理事们将宝轿停置在祭祀区后方，龙船则安置在靠水的沙滩上。随后，理事们从宝轿请出九皇香炉安在祭祀区前方且面朝大海。一切准备妥当后，道长便主持恭送仪式，在念诵经文和宣读疏文的同时，也指示信众何时鞠躬。仪式进行中时，理事们会向信众收集手中的线香再插入香炉内，然后以黄布将其捆绑。宝轿上面的黄布条也都一一拆下放入龙船中。一切就绪后，置于祭祀区前的金纸会被点燃，龙船被一群理事义工缓缓推入水中，插满了线香的香炉也在其他随行李事的抬举下入海。随着龙船和香炉被越来越远地推向大海，舞龙和舞狮团也下水表演。此时，信众们跪在地上，双手合手祈祷，他们有的恭敬闭眼，有的则在恭送九皇爷时念念有词。龙船队伍在海中走到一段距离后，理事义工们便点燃龙船、恭送香炉。

▶ Nan Shan Hai Temple arrives at the beach.

南海海庙抵达海边。



▶ A core party of devotees enter the sea with the Nine Emperor Gods censer filled with thick burning incense.

恭送主队抬着插满焚香的香炉涉水入海。





▲ Temple committee members sending off the Nine Emperor Gods censer with burning incense, behind the burning dragon boat.

庙宇理事们在点燃的龙船后恭送九皇香炉。

▶ Nan Shan Hai Temple successfully sends off the Nine Emperor Gods.

南山海庙恭送九皇大帝回銮。



Back at the main venue after the sending-off, the volunteers have also come to an end of the strict diet. Red candles are then lit to mark the end of the festival and mourning.

▶ Changing the candles back to red after the sending-off of the Nine Emperor Gods.

恭送九皇大帝回銮后，将白蜡烛换成红蜡烛。





恭送九皇大帝回銮后，理事义工与善信们便回到帐篷开荤，九皇千秋到此圆满结束。理事们也收起白蜡烛，点燃红蜡烛，为节日与祭奠画上句号。



◀ Bringing out the meat.

开荤。

Banquet

A day after the sending off of the Nine Emperor Gods, a celebratory banquet and auction was held. The Blk 701 basketball court spilled over with guests, including devotees and their family, friends, and colleagues. Member of Parliament Mr Low Thia Kiang and the People's Action Party representative for the constituency, Mr Vincent Lye, were in attendance.

Guests arrive decked in colourful clothes. Popular hits from JJ Lin and Jay Chou blared from the audio system, courtesy of a young devotee.



After the banquet, volunteers proceeded with the moving of the deity statues, incense vessels, banners, and other equipment to the temple, with the rest of the set-up packed for storing in a warehouse.

宴席

恭送九皇九大帝隔天晚上，南海庙为善信理事举行了一场宴席。大牌701的篮球场上坐满了宴客，包括信众及其亲友。阿裕尼集选区的刘程强议员及人民行动党代表赖添发先生也都前来赴宴。宾客们穿着五彩缤纷的衣着坐满了宴席。帐篷里的音响系统播放的是年轻信众所点播的华语流行音乐。

宴席结束后，义工们迅速将场地收拾一番。神像、焚炉、横幅等都移回庙内或整理后被发往仓库。



◀ Deity images are returned to the temple.

将神明金身抬回庙中。

Conclusion

Nan Shan Hai Miao's history has mirrored the transformations of Singapore since independence in 1965. It has grown from the traditions of the Nine Emperor Gods Festival in Singapore and the experiences of Mr. Goh, its founder, as a medium for the *Tua Li Ya Peh*. Like other temples in Singapore, it has faced the challenge of evolving from the kampong environment to the new public housing estates. Nevertheless, it has succeeded in building communities in both these places and connecting them, creating a new generation of temple members, helpers, and devotees under the leadership of Anna, her mother, and her husband, and with the support of many senior members of the temple who had assisted Mr. Goh, and the devotees from the old kampong. Visiting Nan Shan Hai during the festival is like visiting a family. It is an important building block of community. Nan Shan Hai will continue to be a stalwart for the Nine Emperor Gods Festival and continue to transmit its traditions and values to future generations.

▶
Group photograph.

团体照



结论

南山海庙的历史反映了新加坡自1965年独立以来的变迁。南山海庙的建立源于新加坡九皇胜会的传统，以及作为大二爷伯乩童的创始人吴先生的经历。与新加坡的其他庙宇一样，南山海庙也面临着从甘榜迁移至新的公共住宅的挑战。在安娜、她的母亲和她的丈夫的领导下，也在许多曾经帮助过吴先生的庙宇资深理事和老甘榜的善信的支持下，南山海庙成功地在老甘榜和新公共住宅区建立了社区，并将两者连接起来，吸引了新一代的庙宇成员、义工和善信。南山海庙是社区的重要组成部分，九皇胜会期间的南山海庙如同一个其乐融融的大家庭。我们相信，在未来，南山海庙仍会是九皇胜会的中坚力量，并继续将九皇胜会的传统和价值观传递给后代。

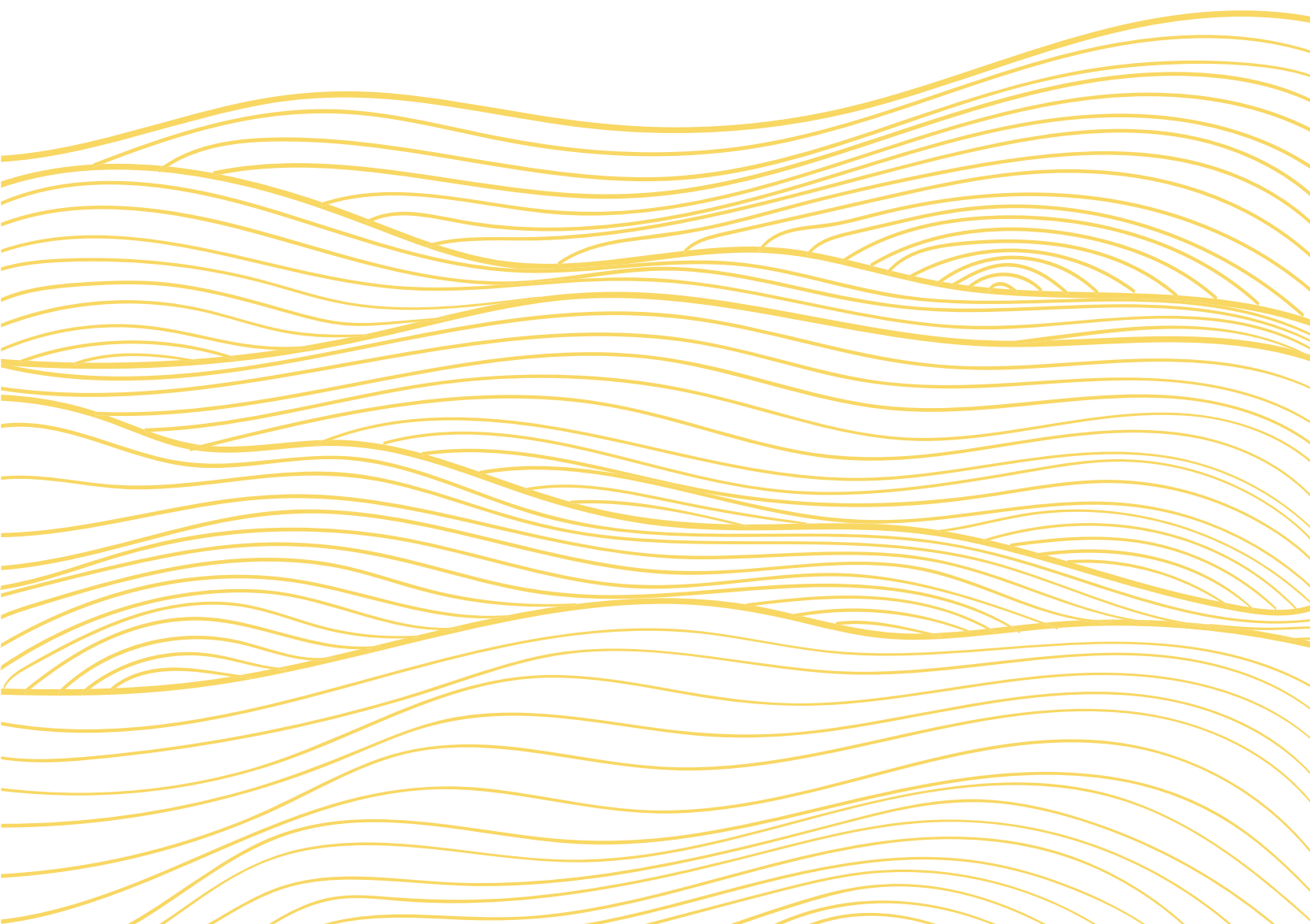




Shin Shen Keng's Nine Emperor Gods Festival tentage at Jurong West Street 42.
神仙宮在裕廊西42街大牌402对面场所竖立的九皇大帝千秋帐篷场地。

第 13 章

Shin Shen Keng
神仙宮



Shin Sen Keng

Shin Sen Keng has been hosting the Nine Emperor God Festival since the 1920s when it was located in the outer reaches of the Sang Kao Dia kampong. Based on the memories of its oldest member, it was on a hill which used to sit at the current location of Queenstown Secondary School. Urban renewal led to its several relocations, to Henderson Road in the Bun Soh Poh kampong, Ganges Avenue (Singapore Improvement Trust flat), the Gan cemetery (at present-day Redhill MRT), and Margaret Drive. Since 2009, it hosted the Nine Emperor Gods Festival in the open field next to Block 402, Jurong West St. 42.

The festival begins officially each year with the receiving of the Nine Emperor God on the evening of the last day of the eighth lunar month. Like other Nine Emperor God temples hosting the festival, a strict vegetarian regime is maintained by those assisting in the festival. It concludes with the sending-off of the Nine Emperor God on the evening of the ninth day of the ninth lunar month, and the lowering of the nine lamps the next day.

▶ Front entrance of the temple at Bun So Poh (present-day Henderson/Lengkok Bahru), 1950—1951. Photograph from the Alan J. A. Elliot collection, Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology (MAA), University of Cambridge.

神仙宮在享德申旧址的宫庙。庙旁边可看到九皇天灯。照片来自剑桥大学考古与人类学博物馆 (MAA) Alan J. A. Elliot 收藏。



神仙宫

神仙宫自1920年代在亚历山大路双口鼎外鼎的旧庙宇主持九皇大帝千秋。据当年老理事会议，旧庙址就在现今女皇镇中学地址的小山丘上。市区发展使神仙宫迁移数次，从亨德申路甘榜到乌桥头五十年代的新政府组屋到姓严坟山(现今红山地铁站一带)和蓝玻璃的政府组屋区(玛格烈道)。自2009年，神仙宫就在裕廊西42街大牌402对面草场举行九皇大帝千秋庆典。

每年农历八月最后一晚（一般八月三十晚），神仙宫理事与善信都会聚集在庆典场地，然后到樟宜海边迎驾。九皇大帝千秋迎送圣驾仪式都会在河边、连到大海的河港或海边举行。与其他九皇庙宇一样，神仙宫的理事善信在九皇大帝千秋期间都得吃斋，直到初九晚上恭送九皇大帝回銮之后才能开荤。然而，有一班负责天灯的理事必须等到初十早上降天灯之后才能结束斋戒。降了天灯，九皇千秋才算圆满结束。



◀ Nine Lamps. Photograph from the Alan J. A. Elliot collection, Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology (MAA), University of Cambridge.

九皇天灯。照片来自剑桥大学考古与人类学博物馆 (MAA) Alan J. A. Elliot 收藏。

▶ Inviting the Nine Emperor Gods. Photograph from the Alan J. A. Elliot collection, Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology (MAA), University of Cambridge.

恭请九皇大帝。照片来自剑桥大学考古与人类学博物馆 (MAA) Alan J. A. Elliot 收藏。



▶ Attaching the generals to a vanguard. Photograph from the Alan J. A. Elliot collection, Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology (MAA), University of Cambridge.

替先锋带营。照片来自剑桥大学考古与人类学博物馆 (MAA) Alan J. A. Elliot 收藏。





Altar dedicated to the Nine Emperor Gods between the 1990s and 2009. Photograph courtesy of Ng Kian Huat.

九皇大帝神龕與神桌, 1990 年代至 2009 年間。照片由 Ng Kian Huat 提供。



Altar dedicated to Dou Mu Yuan Jun between the 1990s and 2009. Photograph courtesy of Ng Kian Huat.

斗姆元君的神桌, 1990 年代至 2009 年間。照片由 Ng Kian Huat 提供。

Preparations

A week before the receiving of the Nine Emperor God and the start of the festival, a huge tentage is erected in the open field next to Blk 402, Jurong West Street 42. The container with the furniture and implements for the festival arrives, and the assistants begin to set up the different altars and stations in the festival area. The Dragon Ship for the festival also arrives and is installed in front of the main altar. When the festival area is ready, the tablet of the Nine Emperor Gods and the deity statues are invited from the home-temple to the respective altars at the site.

▶ Re-painting the Dou Mu Yuan Jun sedan chair.

理事专心的替斗姆元君宝轿加上新的一层金漆。



Moving the deities

▶ Inviting the tablet of the Nine Emperor Gods to be conveyed to the festival site alongside other deities.

理事们从宫主家里恭请九皇大帝牌位与其他神明金身到九皇千秋庆典场地。



筹备

农历八月二十左右，九皇大帝千秋庞大的帐篷在裕廊场地竖立。装有大日子布置材料、设备工具与其宝轿的集装箱也同时抵达场地。官庙的理事开始设置坛位与其它所需千秋布置。工作完毕之后，理事们便到庙里把九皇大帝神牌与其他神明金身请到庆典场地，安在各自的坛位上。



Setting up the altars and banners

竖立坛位与横幅

恭请神明到九皇千秋庆典场地



Pre-transportation cleaning of deity images.

理事们在请神明金身到神桌前先作修复清理。

Raising of the Nine Heavenly Lamps

The Nine Heavenly Lamps constitute one of the key ritual centres of the Nine Emperor God Festival at Shen Xian Gong. Aimed at informing deities, spirits and mortals about the upcoming festival and its location, the Nine Heavenly lamps also facilitate in summoning spirit soldiers to serve the Nine Emperor Gods during their imminent descent and the protection and blessing of the community and environment. As such, the pole support structure is usually erected one or two days prior to the receiving ceremony. Accordingly, the installations of the Nine Heavenly Lamps and other ceremonial paraphernalia, including the flags of the Five Camps and their Celestial Generals, on the pole occur a day before the said ceremony.



▲ Working together to set up the Nine Heavenly Lamps

宮主理事齊心合力豎立天燈燈篙。

升九皇天灯

升九皇天灯在在神仙宫的九皇大帝千秋庆典中是最为核心的仪式之一。据宫主解释, 升九皇天灯主要是让天上神明知道神仙宫正在举行九皇大帝千秋, 也有招兵买马和消灾解厄的作用。天灯通常在迎驾一、两天前升起。理事义工们齐聚一堂, 将天灯及支撑的铁柱准备好, 他们替天灯铁柱包上黄布, 也在上端安置草帽与槟榔树身与树叶。筹备完毕, 理事们会在所定地点打好地基, 再同心协力把灯篙竖立。最后, 理事们会再在灯篙旁安置五方将军的旗帜。



◀ The complete Nine Heavenly Lamps set-up.

神仙宫九皇天灯

Consecration of the Festival Area

Another important ritual in preparing the site for the Nine Emperor Gods Festival would be the consecration of the festival area. The Marshal of the Central Altar is invited to oversee the consecration of the festival area through the ritual deployment of the spiritual armies in each of the five cardinal directions. After the consecration is complete, the site is ready for the festival.

► Performance by youths representing the Five Armies in front of the temple with an opera stage in the background, 1950—1951. Photograph from the Alan J. A. Elliot collection, Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology (MAA), University of Cambridge.

少年营脚在庙前表演操营仪式，1950-1951。观众后面可以看到为大日子设立的戏台。照片来自剑桥大学考古与人类学博物馆 (MAA) Alan J. A. Elliot 收藏。



安坛

神仙宫九皇大帝千秋场地准备工作中另一个重要的仪式就是安坛。理事把神明请到庆典场地安置好后，便会请中坛元帅降乩来主持安坛仪式。在中坛元帅的指挥监督下，宫内的先锋营脚都会用法索与符水在五方施法安五营。每个位置都会摆些供品。安好后，筹备大日子的仪式才算完成。



◀ Supervision the consecration of the festival area and the deployment of the Five Encampments of Spirit Generals and Soldiers by the Marshal of the Central Altar.

中坛元帅指挥安坛仪式与五营军将的部署。



◀ Inspection of the consecration process by the Marshal of the Central Altar.

中坛元帅检阅安坛仪式。

Receiving the Nine Emperor Gods

The key ritual event marking the beginning of the festival will be the receiving of the Nine Emperor Gods at Changi Beach on the evening of the last day of the 8th lunar month. In the afternoon, the final touches are made to the preparations. The palanquins and the sedan chairs with their deities seated in them are ready. In the late afternoon, the Daoist priest arrives to invite and deploy the Five Camps and their Celestial Generals. As evening descends, preparations begin in earnest as the vanguards and spirit mediums start to cleanse themselves. The vanguards then wear the heads of the spiritual generals on their forearms. When all are ready, the master of the inviting ceremony for the deities will pay respects at the different altars as the drum and cymbal troupe starts to play. As he returns to the main altar area, the spirit mediums sit on their chairs and the troupe and temple committee members begin to sing the invocation to invite the deities accompanying the receiving entourage into their respective spirit mediums. In 2016, two deities arrived to oversee the receiving of the Nine Emperor God, namely the Marshal of the Central Altar and Shan Cai Tong Zi. In 2017, it was the Marshal of the Central Altar. After the arrival of the deities, and ensuring that all was ready, the entourage departs for Changi Beach with the Nine Emperor God palanquins.

► The altar of the Nine Emperor Gods.

九皇大帝神台与神龛。



► Invitation of Dou Mu Yuan Jun onto a sedan chair.

理事请斗姆元君入座宝轿。



恭迎九皇大帝

农历八月最后一天的傍晚，神仙宫理事善信会一起到樟宜海边恭迎九皇大帝，为九皇大帝千秋大庆做掀幕仪式。当天下午，理事义工都忙着为恭迎圣驾做最后的准备。宝轿、宝座上的神明已经请到并安放完毕。大概五点左右，道长会主持放军仪式。傍晚六、七点左右，庆典场地香烟密布，乩童与先锋理事们也各自开始清静仪式，准备迎接圣驾来临。在锣鼓的助阵下，神仙宫宫主为先锋理事带营。一切准备就绪后，请神先锋便到各神桌敬香，然后在金鼓队的陪伴下回到坛前，坐在各自的椅子上开始进行请神仪式。在场的理事义工与金鼓队开始唱请神咒，邀请神明降乩。2016年，他们请中坛元帅和善财童子来主持恭迎圣驾仪式。2017年则是中坛元帅主持仪式。神明降临后，确保一切准备就绪，就发令一同前往樟宜海滩。在2016年，在迎驾团启程前，金鼓队还在神明面前进行了一场表演。



Palanquins for the Nine Emperor Gods

九皇大帝宝轿



Sedan chairs for the vanguard deities, namely the Third Prince and The Great Sage of Heaven.

先锋神明三太子与齐天大圣宝轿

Deploying the Armies

The first ritual involves the deploying of the Five Camps and their Celestial Generals for the receiving and the duration of the festival by the Daoist priest. The priest and his father have been conducting the rituals at Shin Sen Keng since at least the late 1940s.

Deployment of the armies for each of the five cardinal directions with specific direction flags by the presiding Daoist priest.

道长用五色旗发布五方的军将。



Inviting the Deities

The vanguard wore the generals and armies on his arm, lighting the incense to invite the deities.

手臂带营的先锋烧香准备请神仪式。



The next ritual involves the inviting of the deities who are overseeing the receiving and welcoming of the Nine Emperor Gods at Changi Beach. In 2016, the deities performing these duties at Shin Sen Keng are the Marshal of the Central Altar and the Shan Cai Tong Zi respectively. In 2017, these duties were performed by the Marshal of the Central Altar. To prepare for this ritual to invite the deities, and the subsequent journey to receive the Nine Emperor Gods, several committee members and ritual assistants, especially those in the role of vanguards or the representatives of the Five Camps, have to cleanse their bodies through a special ritual, and wear the heads of the celestial generals on their arms to bring the generals and armies with them when they go to the beach for the receiving ceremony.

放军

恭迎圣驾的第一项仪式便是道长主持的放军仪式。仪式主要功能是部署五方将士的岗位以保护庆典场地。现任道长在神仙宫主持仪式已经有二十多年。黄道长的父亲自四十年代末已经开始在神仙宫主持仪式。



请神



◀ The vanguard paying respects at the altar of the General of the Black Flag to begin the invitation of the deities for the receiving ceremony.

先锋向黑领将军与其坛内各神台敬礼，开始恭请神明降乩仪式。

在迎驾团出发前，接下来的仪式包括恭请负责监督樟宜海滩九皇大帝迎驾仪式的神明。2016年，在神仙宫履行这些职责、前来助阵的神明分别是中坛元帅与善财童子。2017年的迎驾仪式由中坛元帅助阵。在请神和迎驾之前，几位理事和仪式助手，尤其那些扮演先锋或其他仪式护驾角色的理事助手，都会先用特别仪式净化身子，然后宫主会帮他们在手臂上带营。这意识着庙宇神明出游到海边恭迎九皇时，先锋营脚携带天将天兵护驾。

► Shan Cai Tong and the Marshal of the Central Altar greeting each other before the entourage departs for the beach.

在迎驾团前往海边之前，善财童子和中坛元帅互相敬礼。



► The Nine Emperor Gods palanquin prepares to depart.

九皇圣轿准备出发迎驾。



► Sacred objects and the Nine Emperor Gods' robes and parasol, respectively carried by temple elders and assistants.

神仙宫长老手持令旗与九皇大帝法宝。理事携带九皇大帝神袍。





◀ The helpers lifting the palanquin for the Nine Emperor God censer up to the lorry bound for Changi Beach. This lorry is strictly for males only.

轿队成员帮忙把九皇大帝宝轿搬上罗厘。这辆罗厘只能让持斋的男生乘坐。



◀ ▲ Receiving the Nine Emperor Gods

迎接圣驾

▶ The return journey of the palanquin bearing the Nine Emperor God censer to the temple.

九皇大帝宝轿启程回庙。



▶ Nine Emperor Gods returning to festival area.

九皇大帝回宫。





▲ The Nine Emperor Gods and his entourage led by a temple member holding a large earthenware censer on his head.

理事高举香炉护送九皇大帝。

Raising of the Heavenly Lamps

Raising the Nine Lamps is an important ritual in the receiving ceremony which marks the beginning of the festival. As the contingent returns to the tentage area, the Nine Emperor Gods will make his way to the altar for the Heavenly Lamps with the Daoist priest and other assistants. They will oversee the raising of the lamps before entering the tentage area and going into the Inner Chamber. The lamps will remain lit and raised for the duration of the festival. The lamps are lowered for cleaning with fragrant wood and refilling of the oil every day at about 5 am and 5 pm respectively.

▶ The Nine Emperor God's medium oversees the Heavenly Lamps' raising amidst chants and rituals conducted by the Daoist priest and kneeling assistants.

九皇大帝乩童见证升天灯仪式，道士诵经与主持仪式，其他助手则低头跪下。



▶ Nine Heavenly Lamps.

九皇天灯。



升天灯

升九皇天灯为庆典场地迎接圣驾的重要仪式，象征着九皇大帝千秋正式开始。迎驾团队回到庆典场地后，九皇大帝、道长与助手们会一同前往天灯的祭坛，然后在进入内殿之前见证升天灯仪式。升了天灯后，九皇大帝会直接到内殿。天灯在大日子期间都会被持续点燃。天灯每天分别在凌晨5时和下午5时左右降下，以便用香木清静并添油。



◀ Nine Emperor Gods palanquin returning to temple

九皇大帝圣轿回宫



◀ Leader of Shin Shen Keng consecrating the Dragon Ship

神仙宫宫主替龙船开光



◀ Nine Emperor Gods consecrating the sail of the Dragon Ship

九皇大帝替龙船帆开光。

Blessings

The Nine Emperor God and Marshal of the Central Altar are invited on certain days to conduct blessing rituals for devotees.

► Conclusion of blessing the ritual where devotees received a seal on their clothed or unclothed backs.

仪式的最后，九皇大帝在善信后背盖上玺印，补运仪式才算圆满结束。



Consultations

On selected days, the Marshal of the Central Altar will arrive at the festival to allow devotees to consult him. Some devotees will ask about their health issues, and the Marshal and his assistant will advise and help them with their ailments. The head of the temple and assistants will also consult the Marshal about various arrangements at the festival area, and on upcoming events.

► Assistance was rendered to an ailment-inflicted devotee by the Marshal of the Central Altar and a temple assistant.

中坛元帅帮善信调治脚伤。



补运

在九皇千秋大日子期间，九皇大帝和中坛元帅会降乩替善信主持补运仪式。



◀ Blessings of temple committee members and volunteers by the Marshal of the Central Altar.

中坛元帅赐福予庙宇理事义工们。

救世

在指定日子，中坛元帅会降乩救世，让善信请示问事。一些善信会询问他们的健康问题，中坛元帅和他的助手也会给他们提供建议和帮助。宫主和理事们也会就大日子布置、仪式和项目的安排，咨询其意见。



Visiting Other Temples

An important part of the Nine Emperor Gods Festival today revolves not only around the community spirit within a temple but also between Nine Emperor Gods temples. During the festival, Shin Sen Keng will designate a day on which they will visit other temples to pay respects and exchange gifts, greetings, and goodwill. Every three years, they will do a major *yew keng*, during which the Nine Emperor Gods palanquins and other deity sedan chairs will lead the entourage, with lion and dragon dance troupes. Otherwise, a smaller contingent consisting of key temple committee members, the vanguards with the ritual flags of the Five Camps, a drums-and-cymbals troupe, and other temple helpers will visit designated temples.

▶ Exchange incense with the committee members of Jia Zhui Kang Kew Dou Mu Gong.

与洪水港斗母宫交换香火。



▶ Leading the Shin Shen Keng visiting contingent.

带领神仙宫参拜团队。



参拜/晋香

如今，九皇大帝千秋在促进庙宇团结精神与凝聚力的同时，也非常重视与其它九皇庙之间的关系。在九皇大帝千秋期间，神仙宫会选定一天到友庙参拜、互送礼物、问候与祝福。每三年神仙宫会主持一个大型的绕境，出动宝轿和龙狮队拜访几间指定的九皇庙。每年例常的参拜团队一般比绕境队伍较小型，包括庙理事、先锋和金鼓队。



◀ Group tribute to the Nine Emperor Gods at Hong San Temple.

参访团队在凤山宫集体敬拜。



◀ Exchanging incense at Hougang Tou Mu Kung.

在后港斗母宫交换香火。

▶ Paying respects to the Nine Emperor Gods at Leng San Giam Dou Mu Gong.

参访团队向龙山岩斗母宫九皇大帝致敬。



▶ Offering incense to the Inner Chamber of Kim San Tze.

与金山寺交换香火。



Other Temples Visiting

▶ Leong Nam Temple group prayer at Shin Shen Keng

龙南殿拜访神仙宫举行团拜





◀ Visiting and paying respects at Jiu Huang Dian.

参访团队在玉封九皇殿集体敬拜。

友庙来访



◀ Kim San Tze prayers at Shin Shen Keng

金山寺神仙宫坛前敬香

► Jia Zhui Kang Dou Mu Gong visits

洪水港斗母来访



The Ninth Day

The busiest day for Shin Sen Keng during the Nine Emperor God Festival will be the ninth day. It begins with the invitation of the Jade Emperor at about 8 am. A team of three priests will then perform a Qing Jiao ritual, which lasts the whole morning with intervals in between, in which they will worship the different Dipper Star deities of the different directions.

► Invitation of the Jade Emperor for the *Qing Jiao* ritual by the Daoist priests.

道长们恭请玉皇大帝的清醮仪式。





◀ Leng San Giam Doui Mu Gong and Shin Shen Keng leaders

龙山岩斗母宫与神仙宫领导交流

九月初九

神仙宫九皇千秋最忙碌的一天便是九月初九。当天早上八点就由三名道长恭请玉皇大帝，然后主持清醮仪式。仪式将持续一整个上午，间中会进行礼斗仪式，向不同方位的北斗众神致敬。

Presentation of Offerings

The Dipper Worship ritual is followed by the Presentation of Offerings ritual during which the three priests will lead the temple assistants and devotees to offer a number of auspicious items to the Jade Emperor. A large platter containing the personal belongings of the temple assistants and devotees and a platter with the seals and ritual paraphernalia belonging to the temple will also be offered.



▲
The chief Daoist priest led the Hian Keng ritual.

道长带领理事善信进行献贡仪式。

献贡

礼斗仪式过后便是献敬仪式。三位道长会带领理事和善信将不同吉物献敬给玉皇大帝。吉物包括一对灯笼，水果、面线、发糕、一个装有神仙宫神明印玺及祭祀用品的大盘，以及一个装有理事善信随身用品的托盘。



▲ Temple member presenting offerings to the Nine Emperor Gods.

理事向九皇大帝献供品。

Lor Guan Ritual and Geng Tian Zho Ritual

In the mid-afternoon, at about 2 pm, the *Lor Guan* ritual and *Geng Tian Zho* [Paying Respects to the Heavenly Court] ritual are performed respectively, with the Daoist Priest and the Marshal of the Central Altar leading and presiding over them. These rituals are specially conducted to initiate the new spirit medium for the Nine Emperor God, as well as the relatively newly chosen spirit medium for the Marshal of the Central Altar. After several years of not having a medium for the Nine Emperor Gods, Shin Sen Keng has had a new medium selected between 2015 and 2016.

► The ritual packages ready for the *Geng Tian Zho* ritual. There are two sets, one for the Marshal of the Central Altar and the Nine Emperor God mediums respectively.

敬天座仪式道具，一共两套，各为中坛元帅和九皇大帝所用。



路关与敬天座

神仙宫在2016年的仪式行程与往年不一样。献敬仪式过后，大约下午两点左右，理事们会请中坛元帅降乩与道长主持路关和敬天座仪式。这是为了引导两位新乩童而主持的仪式。这两位新乩童分别是九皇大帝新认定的乩童与较早前认定的中坛元帅乩童。在多年未有九皇大帝乩童后，神仙宫于2015年与2016年迎来了认定的新乩童。



◀ The new Nine Emperor Gods medium follows the Marshal of the Central Altar with his flag as the Daoist priest sings the invocation, and the others play the music accompanying the ritual during the *Lor Guan* ritual.

在路关仪式中，九皇大帝的新乩童在道长的唱诵与鼓乐伴奏下跟随举着令旗的中坛元帅。



◀ The new Nine Emperor God medium making an offering to the Jade Emperor and Heavenly Court during the *Geng Tian Zho* ritual.

新任九皇大帝乩童给玉皇大帝与天庭献敬供品。

Sending Off of the Jade Emperor

► The Nine Emperor Gods with his entourage and Taoist priest in a procession in the Margaret Drive/Strathmore Avenue area to send off Jade Emperor on the ninth day, late 1990s to early 2000s.

初九下午三位道长、五位营脚护送九皇大帝与其诸位理事和善男信女恭送天公，1990年代末至2000年代初。



The sending-off of the Jade Emperor is the most important day ritual on the ninth day, before the sending-off of the Nine Emperor Gods in the evening. The Daoist priests and the Marshal of the Central Altar preside over the ritual. After the prayers before the Jade Emperor altar, they lead the temple committee members and participants to the designated burning area next to the tentage. Instead of walking directly to the area across the grass from the side of the tentage, they have to exit the tentage area formally along the designated pathway and pavement, making a round before cutting across the grass to the burning area. The procession will be led by the Daoist priest and the Marshal of the Central Altar. They will be preceded by the temple committee members carrying the incense censer and Sacred Decree tablet, the bamboo stalks with their paper offerings, and the elaborate paper altars of the Jade Emperor. They are placed in a large metal receptacle where large quantities of incense paper have already been deposited and arranged. The Marshal of the Central Altar will perform a ritual to purify the site and drive away malevolent spirits using various weapons as the contingent leaves the offering area.

► Sending off the Jade Emperor, 2017.

送天公, 2017。



送天公



◀ The Nine Emperor Gods paying respects to the Jade Emperor before the sending-off.

九皇大帝与神仙宫理事善信在送天公时敬香敬茶，1990年代末至2000年代初。

在恭送九皇大帝之前，送天公或恭送玉皇大帝是初九的白天里最重要的仪式，由道长与中坛元帅乩童主持。玉皇大帝祭坛前的仪式结束后，他们会带领理事善信，把天公桌的香炉，圣旨牌，纸制的天公座，甘蔗与其他供品带到焚化区。虽然地点就在帐篷旁边，恭送团队不会从帐篷的一侧穿过草地直接走到帐篷的另一侧，而是要用正式的场地出口，沿着指定的人行道或通道绕一圈，才能抵达焚化区。恭送团队将由道士和中坛元帅带领。2016年，宫主带领理事们在天公坛前敬茶后，才开始焚化天公座、甘蔗与金纸供品。2017年，宫主和理事们在帐篷内天公坛前敬茶，再把供品带到恭送地点焚化。供品焚化的时候，道长会带理事善信走绕一圈。中坛元帅也会用钉球法宝清净场地。



Crossing the Bridge of Blessing

► The Daoist priest leads the temple helper across the bridge as part of the consecration ritual, 2016.

道长为平安桥主持开光仪式带领庙宇成员过平安桥, 2016年。



The final community ritual before the sending off in the evening was the crossing of the Bridge of Blessing 平安桥. The ritual is conducted by the Daoist priest. He will first consecrate the bridge and then lead the devotees and committee members across it according to their animal zodiac sign. Every person who crosses the bridge will receive a stamp on his or her back from the Nine Emperor God seal. He will be assisted by a boy or youth carrying a basket with towels and other offerings. He will say auspicious words while also making friendly banter with the crowd. He will also play tricks on his assistant and the participants by making accelerating and stopping suddenly. The ritual creates an atmosphere of fun and joviality.

► Each person crossing the bridge will receive a stamp from a Nine Emperor Gods seal on his or her back.

每位过桥者的背部都将被盖上九皇大帝玺印。



过平安桥



Consecrating the Bridge of Blessing, 2017.

道长主持平安桥开光仪式，2017年。

恭送九皇大帝前最后的仪式便是过平安桥。该仪式由道长主持。在替平安桥开光之后，道长会随着生肖的排序带领在场的理事善信过平安桥。参与者在过桥后都会在背上盖九皇大帝的玺印。道长的助手是一名男孩或少年，手捧装满毛巾与其它祭品的篮子。他会一边说着祝愿的吉祥话，一边与善信谈笑风生。他偶尔也会逗逗助手或善信，时而加快脚步，时而停下，让整个仪式的氛围诙谐而欢乐。



The priest and his assistant lead members of the community born under the different Chinese zodiac animals to cross the bridge.

道长与他的助手们带领善信按照生肖排序过平安桥。

Rewarding of the Armies

Shin Sen Keng conducts *Ko Gun* (Rewarding the Armies) rituals on the first, third, sixth, and ninth days of the festival. A special *Ko Gun* ritual in the late afternoon of the ninth day to give special thanks to the Five Camps and their Celestial Generals for guarding the festival area before the sending off of the Nine Emperor God. The food and paper offerings on the ninth day ritual are the most lavish. After laying out the food, the generals and armies will be invited to partake of the feast. After some time, a representative from the temple seeks their approval using the divination blocks. After making sure that the generals and armies were satisfied, they will burn the incense paper they prepared and bring the food back into the tentage for everyone to enjoy.

▶ Bringing the food from the Ko Gun table back to the tentage area for the committee members and volunteers.

将犒军仪式上的食物抬到庆典场地与善信理事们分享。



犒军

九皇千秋期间，神仙宫会在初一、初三、初六与初九举行犒军仪式。犒军的意思是犒赏护驾与保护千秋场地的军将兵马。初九下午的犒军仪式总是特别隆重，筹备的菜肴也是最丰富的。食物摆放整齐好后，理事们会请军将用膳。过了一段时间，理事的一名代表会用圣杯询问军将是否满意。得到胜杯的答复后，他们会把准备好的金纸烧给军将门。同时，祭拜军将的佳肴也会带回庆典会场，让理事善信们一同享用。



Sending-off Ceremony

▶ The banner and flag contingent leading the sending-off procession, with a representative clearing the way by the scattering of salt and rice, late 1990s till early 2000s.

旗彩马头锣队伍成员撒盐米为圣驾与恭送团队开路,1990年代末至2000年代初。



The sending-off of the Nine Emperor Gods is the highlight of the festival at Shin Sen Keng. By dusk, the crowd and the incense smoke at the festival begins to thicken as volunteers and devotees arrive to prepare for the rituals and ceremonies. Key committee members acting as the vanguards and core ritual roles began to prepare themselves, ritually cleansing themselves before the ritual attachment of their respective generals and armies. The ceremonies begin with special ritual performances by the opera troupe, before the arrival of the lion and dragon dance troupes and their performances provide entertainment for the devotees as the committee members prepare for the sending off. Deities are then invited to accompany the Nine Emperor God and to oversee the sending off ritual along with the Daoist priests. After the arrival of the Nine Emperor God and the other deities through their spirit mediums, the contingent sets off for Changi Beach on the lorries and buses for the sending-off ceremony.

▶ Performance of the Eight Immortals and Ban Xian in the main festival venue by the opera troupe at dusk.

黄昏时分,戏班成员进入庆典会场演出八仙祝寿和扮仙。



恭送九皇回銮



◀ The vanguard leading the Nine Emperor Gods palanquin after the greeting by the lion dance contingent in sending-off procession, late 1990s till early 2000s.

狮队向九皇大帝敬礼后，先锋护送九皇大帝宝轿前进，1990年代末至2000年代初。

初九晚上的恭送九皇大帝回銮是神仙宫九皇大帝千秋最重要、最隆重的仪式。黄昏时分，庆典场地已是浓烟弥漫、人潮涌动，理事义工们纷纷忙碌起来，为自己所分配的任务作最后的准备。担任先锋与参与仪式的重要理事也开始清静自身，以便在仪式前带营。大概六点左右，戏班的演员会在坛前表演八仙祝寿和扮仙仪式，娱乐善信。不久后，龙狮队也抵达会场开始表演。接着，指定先锋会带领理事和金鼓队恭请神明降乩恭送圣驾。九皇大帝与其他神明降乩后，恭送团队便开始启程，到樟宜海边恭送圣驾。



◀ Transportation of the Dragon Ship to the beach.

把龙船送到海边。

▶ The banner and flag contingent ready to leave the tentage for the beach.

旗彩队伍准备离开帐篷前往海边。



Inviting the Deities for the Sending-off

The deities are invited for the sending-off of the Nine Emperor God. In 2016, the deities invited were the Marshal of the Central Altar and the Shan Cai Tong Zi. In 2017, it was the Marshal of the Central Altar who accompanied the Nine Emperor Gods for the sending-off ceremony. While these deities are invited in the space before the main altar, the invitation of the Nine Emperor Gods took place in the Inner Chamber.

▶ The arrival of the Nine Emperor God for the sending-off ceremony.

九皇大帝降临现场。





◀ Wearing of the Armies.

带营。

请神

每年恭送圣驾，神仙宫都会请神明来助阵。2016年，神仙宫恭请中坛元帅与善才童子降乩护驾。2017年由中坛元帅负担重任。恭请神明仪式都会在坛前举行，而九皇大帝则会在内殿降乩。



◀ The Marshal of the Central Altar.

中坛元帅。

▶ The procession of the Nine Emperor Gods and his entourage en route to Zion Road canal during the late 1990s till the early 2000s for the sending-off ceremony.

九皇大帝在宫主、桌头、先锋与各位理事护送下向恭送圣驾地点迈进，1990 年代末至 2000 年代初。



▶ Greetings of the Nine Emperor Gods and his entourage by the Lion Dance troupe between the late 1990s to the early 2000s.

龙狮队向九皇大帝与其护驾团队敬礼，1990 年代末至 2000 年代初。



▶ The Dou Mu Yuan Jun sedan chair and its team alongside their female vanguards, between the late 1990s to the early 2000s.

斗姆元君宝轿队伍与两位先锋，1990 年代末至 2000 年代初。





◀ The bearing of the Dou Mu Yuan Jun sedan chair was restricted to female temple helpers.

庙宇的女性助手负责抬起斗姆元君宝座。这座宝轿的抬轿成员只能是女性。

► The five vanguards of the Five Camps escorting the Nine Emperor Gods, late 1990s to 2000s.

五营先锋营脚护驾，1990年代至2000年代。



► The banners and flags vanguard contingent late 1990s to 2000s.

横彩彩旗开路团队，1990年代至2000年代。





◀ The procession for the sending-off ceremony.

恭送九皇大帝回銮的游行队伍。

▶ Beach altar set-up for the sending-off ceremony.

在沙滩上筑坛恭送九皇回銮



▶ The arrival of the leading contingent amidst greetings by the lion and dragon troupe performers.

舞狮舞龙迎接送驾团队的开路队伍。



▶ Observation of the sending off of the Nine Emperor Gods from the shore.

抬轿成员看着宫主及随行人员涉水入海，恭送九皇大帝。





◀ Sending off of the Nine Emperor Gods at the Zion Road canal opposite Great World City during the late 1990s till the early 2000s.

诸位理事、先锋，桌头和善男信女恭送圣驾，1990年代末至2000年代初。



◀ Witnessing the temple leader and assistants sending-off the Nine Emperor Gods in the sea by the spirit medium of the Nine Emperor Gods and the entourage.

九皇大帝乩童与余下的恭送队伍成员旁观宫主及随行人员涉水入海。



◀ The sending-off team alongside the Dragon Ship team in waist-deep seawaters.

恭送队伍与抬龙船队员并排缓缓步入海中。

▶ The assistant with the earthenware censer and incense during the sending off of the Nine Emperor God.

2017在恭送九皇大帝时，高举陶土香炉的助手。



▶ The incineration of the Dragon Ship was symbolic of the departure of the Nine Emperor Gods.

燃起的龙船标志着九皇大帝的离开。



▶ Return to the temple.

回到神仙宫。





▲ Sending off the Nine Emperor Gods

恭送九皇大帝回銮

Sending off the Other Deities

After completing the sending-off of the Nine Emperor Gods at the beach and returning to the festival area, the Daoist Priest conducts the ritual for the sending off of the other deities who had been invited to join the celebrations.

► Preparations for the sending-off of the deities by the presiding Daoist priest.

道长恭送仪式做准备。



Lowering of the Nine Heavenly Lamps

The Nine Lamps are lowered on the morning of the tenth day to mark the end of the festival. There will also be a ritual and food offerings to reward the Five Camps.

► Lowering of the Nine Lamps.

降天灯。



送众神

回返庆典地点后，道长开始主持送众神仪式，答谢与恭送来参与九皇大帝千秋的神明。2016年，这个仪式由中坛元帅和善财童子监督。2017担此重任的神明为中坛元帅。



Prayers were led by the Daoist priest and the Marshal of the Central Altar amidst the burning of offerings and the offering of tea.

恭送大队代表在敬茶与焚化祭品时，道长与中坛元帅引领其他成员敬拜。

降天灯



Dinner

On the evening of the tenth day, a feast will be hosted by the temple for the devotees and supporters, with an auction of auspicious items and the prosperity censer to raise funds for the temple and to provide the community with items of blessing that they can bring home with them after the festival.

▶ The arrival of the Guest-of-Honour.

贵宾抵达。



▶ Commencement of bidding for the prosperity censer.

香炉投标正式开始！



Conclusion

Shin Shen Keng is one of the oldest Nine Emperor Gods temples in Singapore. It had been an important centre of the Nine Emperor Gods Festival in southwestern Singapore, namely in the Alexandra-Queenstown-Redhill-Tiong Bahru area between the 1920s and 2000, before moving to Jurong West. Despite its relocations, it has been able to connect with surrounding communities while contributing to them at the same time through charitable causes. It has also succeeded in maintaining the values and traditions of the festival and its unique ritual traditions as one of a few medium temples dedicated to the Nine Emperor Gods. The combination of these three traditions of community, Chinese popular religion, and charity has allowed Shin Shen Keng to play an important and unique role in the preservation and transmission of the values and traditions associated with the festival, the unique religious traditions connected to mediumship in Singapore, and the traditional ties between Chinese temples, especially medium temples, and Chinese communities in Singapore.

晚宴

初十晚上，神仙宫理事会安排晚宴答谢善信们和区域领袖，同时拍卖福物及香炉，为庙宇筹款。



▲
Post-festival celebratory group photograph

任务圆满结束，来年再见！

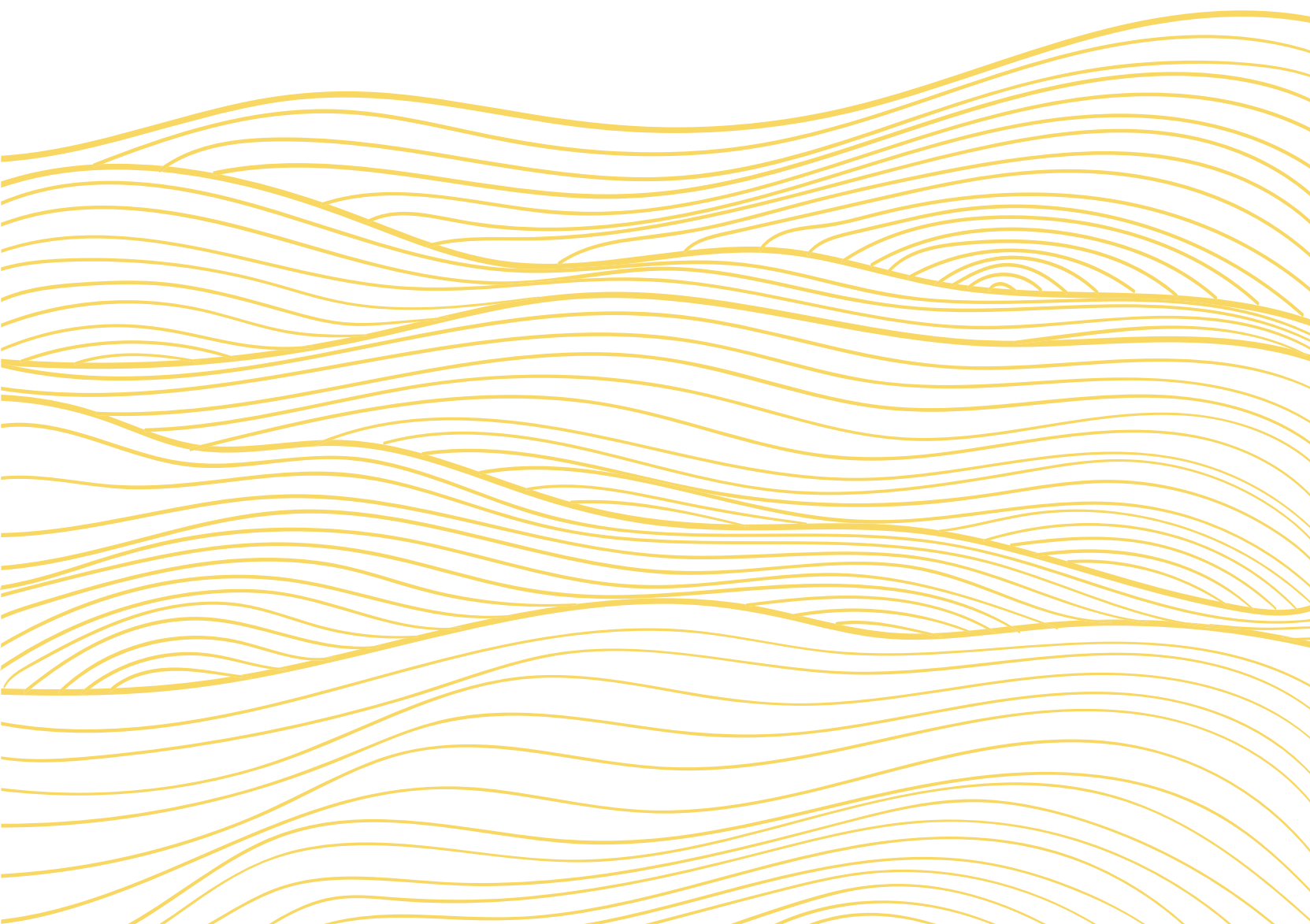
结论

神仙宫是新加坡最古老的九皇庙宇之一。自上世纪20年代至2000年庙宇搬迁之前。神仙宫一直是新加坡西南部，即亚历山大-皇后镇-红山-中峇鲁地区的九皇胜会重要中心。神仙宫与周边社区建立起联系，通过慈善事业为周边社区做出贡献。2009年搬迁到裕廊西之后也是与新的社区建立关系贡献社区。神仙宫不仅保留着九皇胜会的价值和传统，作为少数几座有九皇大帝乩童的庙宇之一，神仙宫特仍坚持着这一独特的仪式传统。九皇胜会与乩童文化都是新加坡华社与道教非物质文化遗产的重要组成部分。神仙宫结合社区、华人民间宗教和慈善这三种传统，在传承九皇胜会相关价值观和传统、乩童文化有关的独特宗教实践和庙宇与华人社会的密切关系发挥了重要而独特的作用。



第
14
章

Xuan Wu Shan Han Lin Yuan
Qing Nang Lao Yu Lou Chun
玄武山翰林院青囊老玉楼春



Xuan Wu Shan Han Lin Yuan Qing Nang Lao Yu Lou Chun

In Jurong East Street 21, next to Blk 238, a tentage is set up every year for the Nine Emperor Gods Festival by Xuan Wu Shan Han Lin Yuan Qing Nang Lao Yu Lou Chun, a family home temple that is deeply devoted to the Nine Emperor Gods. The heads of the family, Mr. and Mrs. Ng, oversee the preparation and running of the festival. They are assisted by their children, neighbours, and close friends. Every year, during the last week of the eighth lunar month, the area comes abuzz with life and energy as the temple prepares to welcome the Nine Emperor Gods.

History

Xuan Wu Shan Han Lin Yuan Qing Nang Lao Yu Lou Chun was formed in the 1960s. The incense ash came from Mrs. Ng's father, Mr Lim. Mr. Lim came to Singapore from China in the 1960s, taking the route through Siam and Malaya. As he travelled with his opera troupe, he brought with him the incense ashes from Xuan Wu Shan temple in China. Between the 1960s to the 1980s, he lived with his family and members of his opera troupe in a shophouse at 71 Kim Yam Road. Every year, the members of the troupe and the neighbourhood community would organize the Nine Emperor Gods under the auspices of Xuan Wu Shan.

A close examination of the temple's name “玄武山翰林院青囊老玉楼春” (Xuan Wu Shan Han Lin Yuan Lao Yu Lou Chun) reveals the dynamic history of the temple and its close associations with the Teochew opera troupes. The name Xuan Wu Shan derives from the origins of the incense ashes of the temple. The inclusion of “Han Lin Yuan” came about as a result of a friend of Mr. Lim, who had invited the incense from Xuan Wu Shan and established a new Nine Emperor Gods temple at Mangga Kar [Boon Keng Road]. This new temple was called “Han Lin Yuan”. Before his passing, he had told Mrs. Ng that he wanted to return the incense ashes to the temple. In accordance with his wishes, Mrs. Ng incorporated the name of his temple into the name of her father's temple. The addition of “Qing Nang Lao Yu Lou Chun” came about because it was the name of one of the opera troupes that Mr. Lim had owned, in addition to Lau Chit Kee Hiang, both of which were located at the Kim Yam Road house in the 1980s. He had asked Mrs. Ng to preserve the memory of the opera troupe before he passed on. After the troupe was dissolved with his passing, Mrs Ng incorporated the troupe's name as a form of remembrance that the festival and temple had started originally from an opera troupe.

▶ The office and quarters of the Lau Chit Kee Hiang Opera Troupe, 1980s. Photograph courtesy of Ronni Pinsler, from the Ronni Pinsler Collection, National Archives of Singapore.

老一支香戏班办事处与宿舍，也是庆祝九皇胜会的地方（图左的窗口挂着青囊老玉楼春的招牌），1980年代。照片由 Ronni Pinsler 提供，来自新加坡国家档案馆的 Ronni Pinsler 收藏。



玄武山翰林院青囊老玉楼春

玄武山翰林院青囊老玉楼春，一座九皇家庙，每年农历八月底都会在裕廊东21街大牌238附近竖立帐篷庆祝九皇胜会。一年一度的胜会由黄伟奇先生与夫人林亚妮女士负责筹备主持。他们与家人、邻居、亲友和来自各地的善男信女一起，虔诚供奉九皇佛祖与斗母娘娘。每年农历八月的最后一个星期，随着庙宇准备迎接九皇佛祖的到来，这一带也逐渐活跃热闹起来。

历史

玄武山翰林院青囊老玉楼春创立于1960年代。其香火是由黄太太的父亲，林智臣，从中国玄武山庙带来南洋。林先生当时拥有一支戏班，从中国南下时路过泰国与马来亚，最终落脚在新加坡，而玄武山香火也随着林先生来到了新加坡，坐落在金炎路71号的店屋，这里也是老一支香和青囊老玉楼春戏班的办公室与住宿。上个世纪60到80年代，他和家人以及戏班成员都住在这个地址。每逢农历九月，林先生的戏班成员与邻里一带的居民都会以玄武山的名义庆祝九皇胜会。

单从“玄武山翰林院青囊老玉楼春”这个名字，我们便可了解该庙的发展历史及其与潮州戏班的渊源。其名称的前半段“玄武山”反映了庙宇香火的来源。名称中间的“翰林院”源自林先生的朋友借了玄武山香火在文庆路所成立的九皇庙庙名。这位先生在临终前向黄太太表示想把香火还给玄武山，黄太太遂其所愿把翰林院的名字加在玄武山后面。名称后半段“青囊老玉楼春”则是为了追忆家族的戏班。80年代时，林先生在金炎路71号拥有两个戏班，一为老一支香，另为青囊老玉楼春。在去世之前，他曾经吩咐黄太太要保存戏班的名字和回忆。随着老班主的过世，戏班也解散了。黄太太将把戏班名字加入庙名之中，以提醒庙宇理事和成员，庙宇历史是来自戏班，由戏班而起。



◀ The Qing Nang Lao Yu Lou Chun Opera Troupe, 1980s. Photograph courtesy of Ronni Pinsler, from the Ronni Pinsler Collection, National Archives of Singapore.

1980年代的青囊老玉楼春。照片由 Ronni Pinsler 提供，来自新加坡国家档案馆的 Ronni Pinsler 收藏。

▶ Entrance of Han Lin Yuan. Photograph courtesy of Ronni Pinsler, from the Ronni Pinsler Collection, National Archives of Singapore.

1980 年代的翰林院。照片由 Ronni Pinsler 提供，来自新加坡国家档案馆的 Ronni Pinsler 收藏。



▶ Return of the entourage to Kim Yan Road following the conclusion of the receiving ceremony, 1980s. Photograph courtesy of Ronni Pinsler, from the Ronni Pinsler Collection, National Archives of Singapore.

1980 年代，玄武山宝轿恭迎圣驾回返金炎路。照片由 Ronni Pinsler 提供，来自新加坡国家档案馆的 Ronni Pinsler 收藏。





◀ The stage for the main altar for the Nine Emperor Gods Festival, 1980s. Photographs courtesy of Ronni Pinsler, from the Ronni Pinsler Collection, National Archives of Singapore.

1980 年代，九皇胜会的主神坛（图片上方可以看到，神坛挂有玄天上帝的红彩和灯笼）。照片由 Ronni Pinsler 提供，来自新加坡国家档案馆的 Ronni Pinsler 收藏。

► Nine Emperor Gods Festival's palanquin, 1980s. Photographs courtesy of Ronni Pinsler, from the Ronni Pinsler Collection, National Archives of Singapore.

1980 年代，玄武山宝轿。照片由 Ronni Pinsler 提供，来自新加坡国家档案馆的 Ronni Pinsler 收藏。





◀ Ladies charging with the palanquin during a procession, 1980s. Photographs courtesy of Ronni Pinsler, from the Ronni Pinsler Collection, National Archives of Singapore.

1980 年代，玄武山的女信徒抬着宝轿往前冲。照片由 Ronni Pinsler 提供，来自新加坡国家档案馆的 Ronni Pinsler 收藏。



◀ Devotees were accompanying the Nine Emperor Gods' and Dou Mu Niang Niang's palanquin, borne by the ladies from Xuan Wu Shan in the 1980s. Photograph courtesy of Ronni Pinsler, from the Ronni Pinsler Collection, National Archives of Singapore.

1980 年代，玄武山妇女队抬着九皇佛祖斗母娘娘宝轿从九皇胜会场地出发恭送圣驾。善信们持香送驾。照片由 Ronni Pinsler 提供，来自新加坡国家档案馆的 Ronni Pinsler 收藏。



◀ Xuan Wu Shan's palanquin of the Nine Emperor Gods and Dou Mu Niang Niang visiting Leong Nam Temple, 1980s. Photograph courtesy of Ronni Pinsler, from the Ronni Pinsler Collection, National Archives of Singapore.

1980 年代，玄武山九皇佛祖斗母娘娘宝轿拜访龙南殿。照片由 Ronni Pinsler 提供，来自新加坡国家档案馆的 Ronni Pinsler 收藏。



▲ Tradition and modernity, the 1980s. Photograph courtesy of Ronni Pinsler, from the Ronni Pinsler Collection, National Archives of Singapore.

1980 年代，传统与现代的交汇。照片由 Ronni Pinsler 提供，来自新加坡国家档案馆的 Ronni Pinsler 收藏。



◀ A procession headed by the mediums of Xuan Tian Shang Di, San Cai Tong Zi, and the Marshal of the Central Altar in the 1980s. Photograph courtesy of Ronni Pinsler, from the Ronni Pinsler Collection, National Archives of Singapore.

1980 年代，玄武山九皇佛祖斗母娘娘出游，玄天上帝、善财童子与中坛元帅乩童护送。照片由 Ronni Pinsler 提供，来自新加坡国家档案馆的 Ronni Pinsler 收藏。

► Procession during the sending-off ceremony to the beach headed by the Black Command Flag, 1980s. Photograph courtesy of Ronni Pinsler, from the Ronni Pinsler Collection, National Archives of Singapore.

1980 年代，黑令旗为恭送圣驾团队前往海边开路。照片由 Ronni Pinsler 提供，来自新加坡国家档案馆的 Ronni Pinsler 收藏。





◀ Preparation of offerings for the receiving ceremony, the 1980s. Photograph courtesy of Ronni Pinsler, from the Ronni Pinsler Collection, National Archives of Singapore.

1980 年代，庙宇成员正在准备供品以迎接九皇佛祖。照片由 Ronni Pinsler 提供，来自新加坡国家档案馆的 Ronni Pinsler 收藏。

▶ Inviting the Nine Emperor Gods, 1980s. Photograph courtesy of Ronni Pinsler, from the Ronni Pinsler Collection, National Archives of Singapore.

1980 年代，众人在海边恭迎圣驾。照片由 Ronni Pinsler 提供，来自新加坡国家档案馆的 Ronni Pinsler 收藏。



▶ Preparations for sending-off the Nine Emperor Gods and Dou Mu Niang Niang, the 1980s. Photograph courtesy of Ronni Pinsler, from the Ronni Pinsler Collection, National Archives of Singapore.

1980 年代，准备恭送九皇佛祖与斗母娘娘。照片由 Ronni Pinsler 提供，来自新加坡国家档案馆的 Ronni Pinsler 收藏。



▶ The contingent from Xuan Wu Shan huddled alongside the medium of Xuan Tian Shang Di at the coast to send off the Nine Emperor Gods and Dou Mu Niang Niang 1980s. Photograph courtesy of Ronni Pinsler, from the Ronni Pinsler Collection, National Archives of Singapore.

1980 年代，玄武山送驾队伍与玄天上帝乩童在海边恭送九皇佛祖与斗母娘娘。照片由 Ronni Pinsler 提供，来自新加坡国家档案馆的 Ronni Pinsler 收藏。





◀ Sending-off ceremony of the Nine Emperor Gods and the Dou Mu Niang Niang at the coast, the 1980s. Photograph courtesy of Ronni Pinsler, from the Ronni Pinsler Collection, National Archives of Singapore.

1980 年代，恭送九皇佛祖斗母娘娘回銮仪式。照片由 Ronni Pinsler 提供，来自新加坡国家档案馆的 Ronni Pinsler 收藏。

Festival Preparations

Preparations for the Nine Emperor Gods usually begin on the 26th day of the eighth lunar month. A yellow tentage is set up at Blk 238, Jurong Street 21. Palanquins, flags, banners and other religious paraphernalia are unloaded from a container. Assisted by their children and god-children, Mr. and Mrs. Ng clean the religious peripherals before placing them in their respective position under the tentage.

▶ View of the festival site's canopy tentage and its surroundings.

胜会场地帐篷的入口与内部布置。



▶ Preparations and cleaning of the religious paraphernalia by Mrs. Ng.

黄太太与理事们清理胜会道具与横幅布柱。



The main highlight and most important artefact for the Nine Emperor Gods Festival at Xuan Wu Shan is the three-tiered palanquin. On the top of the layer is an imperial edict. In the middle layer is the Nine Emperor Gods, while Dou Mu Niang Niang occupies the bottom layer. Its unique design also meant that, in contrast to other Nine Emperor Gods palanquins in Singapore, it is usually carried by women.

筹备工作

农历8月26日，玄武山开始积极展开九皇胜会的筹备工作。裕廊东21街大牌238已竖立起黄色帐篷。黄先生、黄太太及其他家人和理事义工们从集装箱取出宝轿、旗帜、横幅布柱与其它大日子需用的道具，进行清理补漆后，再把它们在胜会场地安置好。



Setting up and decorating the Jade Emperor altar.

理事们为玉皇大帝起坛。

玄武山的九皇胜会与其它九皇庙宇最为不同的特征就是他们的九皇斗母宝轿。玄武山的宝轿有三层：底层为斗母娘娘的神位，中层为九皇佛祖神位，最高一层是玉皇大帝的神位，以一个圣旨牌位代表。由于宝轿底层是斗母娘娘宝座，因此与其它九皇庙宇不同的是，玄武山抬轿队成员都是女性。

The festival set-up consists of four main altars, dedicated to the Jade Emperor, the Nine Emperor Gods, the Five Camps, and other deities respectively. The inner chamber of the Nine Emperor Gods altar is sealed off, and accessible to only a few. Devotees who wish to pay respect to the Nine Emperor Gods altar are only allowed to place offerings in front of the altar outside the inner chamber. Many deities are invited to sit on the altar to the left of the Inner Chamber for the festival. They include Da Bo Gong, the Bodhisattva Guanyin, Ji Gong, Mazu, Fa Zhu Gong, and Taisui. At the edge of the tentage, there is an altar dedicated to the Tiger Deity. In addition, there are two altars for the Five Camps and their Celestial Generals, one inside the tentage and one outside, next to the Nine Lamps.

► An altar is dedicated to all of the temple's other deities.

众神坛位。



► Altar of the Five Camps and their Celestial Generals

五营军将坛位。



玄武山九皇胜会场地内有四个主要坛位，即玉皇大帝、九皇佛祖、五营将军以及其他众神。九皇佛祖的内殿只限几位指定理事或“有缘人”可以进入，并不对外开放。善信仍然可以在内殿外面的坛前祭拜，把供品放在坛前神桌上，然后把清香交给把守内殿的理事，让他们拿进内殿供奉。黄先生家里的神明金身都会被请到内殿左侧的众神神桌坛位，包括大伯公、观音菩萨、济公活佛、法主公和太岁爷。帐篷的一角设有虎爷坛位。此外，两个五营将军坛则分别设在棚内及棚外靠近九皇天灯处。



Altar dedicated to the Tiger Deity with the altar for the external Five Camps above.

虎爷与向外五营坛位。

▶ Altar dedicated to the Jade Emperor.

玉皇大帝坛位。





Altar of the external Five Camps.

向外五营坛位。



Accessibility to the Inner Chamber behind the main altar is restricted to a small group of designated committee members.

内殿在主坛后面，只有指定理事才能自由出入内殿。



The Dragon Ship that Xuan Wu Shan acquired for the Nine Emperor Gods Festival is beautifully crafted. It is one of two made every year by Yeo Sweet Huat, a famous craftsman in Singapore, for the Nine Emperor Gods temples here. The entire ship is made with paper and bamboo, as well as layers of coloured paper and aluminium layer. Small paper figurines are placed inside the dragon ship. At the bottom of the boat, oil, salt and rice packets are also placed as offerings inside the boat.



▲ Intricately crafted Dragon Ship.

制作精美的龙船。

The last step of the preparation process is the raising of the Nine Lamps. A long stalk of bamboo is erected. At the tip of the bamboo is the Jade Emperor Lamp. The nine lamps help guide the spirits and deities to the festival site.

玄武山为九皇胜会订制的龙船特别精美，是著名纸扎师傅杨瑞发的杰作。在新加坡，他只为两件九皇庙宇制作龙船。龙船由彩色纸、铝箔纸、竹条、与其它材料制成。龙船上的装饰包括纸扎人像等。胜会期间，船身装满善信供奉的素油、盐与福米等供品。

筹备工作的最后步骤便是升九皇天灯。立升九盏灯的铁架上附加竹篙。竹篙顶端悬挂着一盏黄色的天公灯。天公灯上写着“天地父母”四个字，引导神灵到达节日现场。



◀ Raising the Heavenly Father and Earthly Mother Lamp.

理事升起天父地母灯。



◀ The lighting of the Nine Lamps.

点燃九皇天灯。

Receiving the Nine Emperor Gods

On the day of the receiving, preparation starts early. Everyone is dressed in white. The main temple helpers had a yellow girdle tied around their waist. The first step of the preparation on this day is the preparation of the talismans. Talismans are placed on all the altars as well as the four corners of the tentage and the middle. This protects the venue by securing the five cardinal directions' space. In addition, Mr. Ng will also proceed to prepare several talismans and talisman water for those that will be participating in the ritual.

▶ Talisman preparations for the festival by Mr Ng.

黄先生准备安坛灵符。



The lion dance troupe begins to play the drums and gongs. With the sound of the drum, the Marshal of the Central Altar arrives through the medium and performs the consecration ritual for the Dragon Ship and the Five Camps. After which, he will proceed to the deities altar to write talismans for the ladies who will be carrying the palanquin. One of the talisman is burnt, and the ashes are thrown into a bowl of water. The ladies drink the talisman water for protection. The next deity to arrive at the festive site is Qi Tian Da Sheng. With the help of the helpers, he dresses up and pays respects in all the altars.

▶ The Marshal of the Central Altar arrives.

中坛元帅降乩。



恭迎圣驾

迎接圣驾当天，大家一早就开始准备。每位参与者都穿着白衣白裤。主要的庙宇理事都系上了黄腰带。准备工作的第一步是将灵符安放在各个坛位以及帐篷中央与四方角落，以保佑胜会场地。黄先生也会为参与迎接仪式的理事与助手准备灵符与符水。

随着醒狮团的锣鼓响起，迎接圣驾仪式也掀开了序幕。同时，中坛元帅降临现场，为龙船与其五营将军坛位开光。 开光仪式完成后，中坛元帅来到众神坛前，在神桌上为抬宝轿的女士准备灵符，将一张灵符化水给诸位女士喝平安。接着，齐天大圣也来到节日现场。助手替他穿上神袍后，他便到各坛位参拜敬礼。



◀ The Great Sage Equal to Heaven arrives.

齐天大圣降乩。



◀ Preparation of a talisman by the Marshal of the Central Altar.

中坛元帅开灵符。

▶ Palanquin carriers drinking talisman water for protection.

抬轿女士喝符水祈求平安。



The helpers proceed to carry the palanquin, as well as the incense censers of Dou Mu Niang Niang and Nine Emperor Gods, out from the inner chamber. The vessels are placed in a carrier and conveyed by two helpers. With the palanquin and censers in-hand, they pay respect at the altars. The contingent which comprises of the palanquin, spirit mediums and censers prepares to leave the venue for Changi Beach. Before they leave the tentage, the ritual whip is cracked nine times at the entrance to the tentage.

▶ The Nine Emperor Gods and Dou Mu Niang Niang censers.

九皇佛祖和斗母娘娘香炉。





◀ Folding and keeping of talismans for protection.

把灵符折小以便随身携带。

喝了符水，宝轿队便到内殿抬出九皇宝轿，两名助手从内殿请出九皇佛祖与斗母娘娘香炉。他们到各个坛位敬礼。然后，两位乩童、宝轿与香炉一起出发往樟宜海边。在临走前，先锋在帐篷出入口用法索挥鞭九次，为迎接队伍驱邪开路。



◀ The ladies carrying the Dou Mu Niang Niang and Nine Emperor Gods palanquin.

妇女队抬起斗母娘娘九皇佛祖宝轿。

► Ritual whips are cracked to clear the way for the palanquin and the contingent to set off.

先锋挥舞法索，为队伍和乩童开路。



At Changi Beach, Command Flags representing the Five Directions are placed on the beach to call forth the Five Camps and the Celestial Generals. The palanquin is placed on the floor with a mat laid out in front of it. Sand is collected from the beach and placed in the censers for Dou Mu Niang Niang and Nine Emperor Gods. These censers are placed on the mat, together with offerings such as incense and tea. A basket containing incense ashes and a lit lamp are also placed beside the mat of offerings.

► Deployment of the armies at the beach by the Marshal of the Central Altar and the vanguard for the receiving ceremony.

中坛元帅与先锋在海边部署五营兵将，为恭迎仪式做准备。



Leading the contingent in prayer, Albert, Mr Ng's son, read the petition for the invitation of the Nine Emperor Gods prior to burning it. Devotees believe that the Nine Emperor Gods respond to the invitation via the results of a pair of tossed divination blocks, where an affirmative answer indicates the official invitation of the deities. Witnessed was the rather synchronised descent of Guanyin onto Mrs Ng with the attainment of a positive result from Albert's tossed divination blocks in 2017.

到了樟宜海边，理事们会先安五方旗，为迎接圣驾仪式招集五方军将。九皇斗母宝轿会停置在草席上。理事也会用海滩的沙填满九皇斗母香炉，再把香炉摆在宝轿的中间。草席上还有其他供品和道具，包括香、茶、装满香灰的篮子和一盏点燃的油灯。



Offerings are laid out in front of the palanquin in preparation for the receiving ceremony.

理事在宝轿前安奉供品。



Offerings prepared for the receiving ceremony.

恭迎圣驾仪式的供品。

供品摆好后，参与仪式的理事善信都面海下跪。黄先生的儿子Albert开始念诵恭迎九皇佛祖的疏文，读完之后将其焚化。接着，他开始掷筊杯，询问九皇佛祖与斗母娘娘是否满意恭迎仪式。若得到胜杯就意味着神明正式降临。就在此时，观音菩萨也通过黄太太降乩。

▶ Albert, Mr. Ng's son, reads a petition to invite the Nine Emperor Gods.

黄先生儿子Albert念疏文恭请九皇佛祖与斗母娘娘。



With the invitation completed, the mediums, palanquin carriers and lion dance troupe prepare to leave the beach and return to the temple. Before they leave the beach, the whip is cracked to clear the way. As the contingent returns to the temple, the palanquin pays respects to all the altars before returning to the Inner Chamber. The deities depart from their mediums one by one.



◀ Assistants offering incense in censers after the Nine Emperor Gods and Dou Mu Niang Niang are received.

迎接九皇佛祖和斗母娘娘之后，助理为九皇斗母的香炉上香。

恭迎仪式完毕后，醒狮团、乩童与九皇斗母宝轿的轿脚准备离开樟宜海边返回胜会场地。在离开海边前，先锋用法索驱邪开路。团队抵达胜会场地后，宝轿先向各坛位敬礼，然后才进入内殿。随后，护驾神明也逐渐退乩。

Devotees and Daily Rituals

Over the next few days, devotees arrive to pay respect to the Nine Emperor Gods. Incense, fruits, and tea are offered. Devotees are able to buy incense coils to hang as blessing from Nine Emperor Gods. At times, medium consultations are also offered to devotees who are seeking advice and remedies for health problems. Mazu and the Great Sage Equal to Heaven will arrive occasionally through their mediums to help devotees with their ailments. Some devotees will bring their home deities to the festive site to be consecrated by Mr. and Mrs. Ng. They will also sometimes bring their personal cloth talismans to be re-consecrated by them.

▶ The Great Sage Equal to Heaven assisting a temple helper with his ailment.

齐天大圣降乩救世。



The Five Camps and their generals and armies are rewarded daily for the protection of the festival area and environs. Vegetarian dishes are cooked and offered to the Celestial Generals of the Five Camps. A roll of fodder is placed into the mouth of the five coloured horses that represented the armies and cavalry along with a pail of fodder and water.

▶ Rewarding the horses of the Five Camps.

犒赏五营兵马。



善信与日常仪式

九皇胜会期间，善信络绎不绝地到胜会场地祭祀九皇佛祖。除了清香、水果与清茶，善信也能供奉盘香祈福。神明会在指定日子降乩，让善男信女向神明寻求健康问题的建议或请教生活上所面对的忧虑。妈祖天后和齐天大圣偶尔也会降乩救世。有善信理事也会带来家里的神明金身或个人的布符，请黄先生黄太太为之开光和加持。

理事和助手每天会主持犒军仪式。厨房每日都会准备一桌素食佳肴犒赏五营军将，而草料卷也被放入代表兵马的五色马口中。



◀ Vegetarian food for the Five Camps.

为犒赏五营军将准备的斋菜。

Hosting other Nine Emperor Gods Temples

During the festival, Xuan Wu Shan will receive visits from different temples. These visits reflect the strong bonds and friendship between temples.

► The arrival of the main visiting delegation from Jiu Huang Dian.

九皇殿参拜代表团抵达玄武山九皇胜会场地。



► Incense and gift exchanges, inclusive of fruit baskets, between temple leaders.

来访领导交换香火和礼物，例如果篮。



友庙来访

胜会期间，会有友庙前来拜访玄武山。这些参访反映了庙宇之间的深厚情谊。



Incense exchanges within the Inner Chamber.

信徒进入内殿进香。



Kim San Tze delegation paying respects at Xuan Wu Shan.

金山寺代表在九皇佛祖坛前参拜。



Group photo of Xuan Wu Shan with a visiting delegation from Leong Nam Temple.

玄武山与来访龙南殿团队合照。

Charity Dinner for Senior Citizens

A vegetarian feast is held on the fifth day of the ninth lunar month for senior citizens.



▲ Xuan Wu Shan's assistants guiding arriving senior citizens to their tables for the vegetarian feast.

玄武山助理帮忙引导乐龄贵宾到斋宴座位。

乐龄斋宴

每逢九月初五，玄武山会为裕廊东区乐龄人士举行斋宴。



▲
A vegetarian feast for the senior citizens.

乐龄斋宴。

The Nine Emperor Gods Divination Blocks and Divination Lots

From the sixth to the ninth day of the ninth lunar month, devotees can consult the Nine Emperor Gods about their fortune and fate for the upcoming year. Before the ritual starts, the Nine Emperor Gods divination blocks are consecrated. On the late night of the fifth day, and effectively the early hours of the sixth day, the blocks are opened and the incense from the censers in the Inner Chamber are placed in the blocks and the blocks turned over three times. The blocks are then brought into the inner chamber to conduct a small ritual. After their consecration, these blocks can then be used by devotees to confirm the divination sticks obtained when they consult the Nine Emperor Gods. Mr. Ng will be on hand to help interpret the poem associated with the divination stick.



▲
Consecration of the divination blocks of the Nine
Emperor Gods.

开杯仪式。

开杯与九皇签

农历九月初六至初九，善信可以向九皇佛祖求签询问来年运势。九月初五晚上，也就是九月初六子时，玄武山会举行开杯仪式。当晚，理事们会打开九皇杯，把从内殿香炉中取出来的香灰放进圣杯，然后把圣杯翻转三次，再把圣杯拿到内殿进行一个简单仪式。这一系列的开光仪式后，善信便可用圣杯来向九皇佛祖确定问事求签。黄先生会为善信解释签诗的寓意。



▲ Drawing of the first divination post-consecration.

开杯后第一签。

Crossing the Bridge of Blessing

Every year, a crossing of the Bridge of Blessing ritual is conducted for the devotees. The bridge is first set up on the evening of the ritual, with the weapons, offerings, and ritual paraphernalia placed at different points on the bridge and around it. In 2016, the ritual was conducted by the Great Sage Equal to Heaven and Guanyin Niang Niang, while in 2017, it was conducted by Marshal of the Central Altar, Great Sage Equal to Heaven, and Guanyin Niang Niang.

In 2016, it was Great Sage Equal to Heaven who led the consecration of the bridge, while in 2017, it was the Marshal of the Central Altar who played a leading role. In each case, the deity responsible prepares the talismans for the ritual upon his arrival. After which, he begins the ritual for the consecration of the bridge. He would begin the cleansing of the bridge by throwing rice and spraying water at the entrance to the bridge. After which, at the start, middle and end of the bridge, as he makes his way across, he would wield the ritual whip and strike it three times, and thereafter hit his back with the weapons prepared around the bridge, be it the ball of nails or the swords. Before each strike, he spits talisman water on a ball of nails. The assistant will stop the medium after a few strikes with a flag, and the wounds are covered with a talisman. In 2017, the Marshal of the Central Altar fixed the flags for the five directions on the bridge before crossing it, first by waving the flag and cracking the ritual whip three times each time. He then crossed the bridge and used his golden lance to remove a bun at the entrance, middle and exit of the bridge respectively, and undergoes the rituals with the weapons mentioned above, followed by the Great Sage Equal to Heaven who went the same self-mortification rituals to demonstrate their prowess and to drive away evil spirits. On both occasions, Guanyin Niang Niang crossed the bridge once these rituals are completed.

After fixing the flags for the five directions on the bridge, the Marshal of the Central Altar crossed the bridge whilst waving the flag and cracking the ritual whip thrice. Having crossed the bridge, the Marshal of the Central Altar had used his golden lance to remove a bun at the bridge's entrance, middle and exit, respectively, before undergoing the aforementioned weapon-related ritual. The entire ritual was further re-enacted by The Great Sage Equal to Heaven. The basis for these self-mortification rituals lies in the demonstration of the prowess of the said deities and the aim of casting evil spirits away. Witnessed in both years was Guanyin's traversing of the bridge only after the completion of the rituals by the leading deities.

▶ Setting up the ritual space and offerings for the Bridge of Blessing

安置平安桥的供品与道具。



过平安桥

玄武山每年都会替善信主持过平安桥仪式。这座桥是在仪式当晚设置好的，桥上及其周围放置了各种法器、祭品和仪式用品。2016年的仪式由齐天大圣与观音娘娘主持，2017年的仪式则由中坛元帅、齐天大圣与观音娘娘主持。

2016年和2017年分别是齐天大圣和中坛元帅为平安桥开光。过平安桥当晚，负责开光的神明降乩，为过平安桥仪式准备灵符。画好灵符之后，平安桥开光仪式就开始了。神明先在桥的入口处撒米和洒圣水，以净化平安桥。然后，神明在过桥的时候，分别在桥头、中央和桥尾挥舞法索三次以驱邪，并用法器驱煞展神威，用钉球或剑击打背部。每次击打前，他都会将符水喷洒在法器上面。击打几次后，助手就会用令旗阻止，并用灵符盖上伤口。2017年的开光仪式由中坛元帅主持。仪式开始时，中坛元帅首先在平安桥上插五行令旗，然后挥动令旗再用法索鞭打三次做法。这些法器在使用前都得用点燃的灵符净化。中坛元帅过桥时也会用金色长矛挑走安置在桥头、中央与桥尾的包子。接着，齐天大圣过桥时也重复上述仪式，以施展神威、驱邪除恶。在两次仪式中，先锋神明主持的仪式一结束，观音娘娘就会过桥。

平安桥开光后，善信手持清香、一叠金纸和一张灵符，排队准备过平安桥。2017年，当轮到自己的时候，善信便站到中坛元帅面前。中坛元帅会用朝他们喷洒符水，然后挥动法索，在善信的头上和背后挥舞清香和金纸为善信改运。仪式完毕，善信就会过平安桥。



◀ The Marshal of the Central Altar prepares to consecrate the Bridge of Blessing.

中坛元帅作法替平安桥开光。

► The Great Sage Equal to Heaven consecrates the bridge.

齐天大圣替平安桥开光。



For the second part of the ritual, the devotees lined up with joss sticks, a stack of joss paper and talisman paper. In 2016, after being blessed by Great Sage Equal to Heaven and paying respects to Tian Gong, devotees crossed the bridge. At the other side, Guanyin stamped the back of the devotee's t-shirts. If the person was not there, the shirt was laid out on the back of the spirit medium's chair to be stamped. In 2017, each of the devotees stood in front of Marshal of the Central Altar when their turn comes. He blew talisman water at them, cracked the whip, and then waved the joss stick and joss paper over their heads and back. After that the devotees crossed the bridge.

2017年，善信在桥中央向天公致敬后，齐天大圣会用印玺在他们背后盖个印，完成过桥仪式。一旦过了桥，观音娘娘便在桥的尾端替他们在背上盖印。过了平安桥，善信都会在旁边的桶里丢钱币。大家一一改运过平安桥后，会再次一起过平安桥。若家人没办法来九皇胜会场地过平安桥，善信会带他们的衣服，帮他们改运，也将衣服带过平安桥，给神明盖印。



Devotees crossed the bridge as a group at the end of the ceremony.

善信在仪式的尾端一起过平安桥。



Stamping of the back of a devotees' shirt by the Great Sage Equal to Heaven.

齐天大圣在不能出席过平安桥仪式的善信家属衣服上盖印。

Sending off the Nine Emperor Gods

The day of the sending-off ceremony begins early. The lorries are decorated with bright yellow banners. The bamboo from the festive lamp pole is removed. Dragon Ship pasted with strips of paper carrying the wishes of devotees and the bamboo are loaded unto the lorries for the send-off. The gift baskets are prepared as well since Xuan Wu Shan are also planning to visit the other temples on their way to the beach for the sending-off of the Nine Emperor Gods.

► Preparations of talismans for the sending-off ceremony.

为恭送圣驾回銮准备灵符。



The Great Sage Equal to Heaven arrives through his medium for the sending off ceremony. He begins by preparing the talismans for the ladies that are carrying the palanquin. One of the talismans is burnt and the ashes mixed water for them to drink. The others are kept folded and kept individually by the ladies carrying the chair.

► Talismans burnt in the water for the ladies from the palanquin team to drink.

灵符化在水中给抬宝轿的妇女队喝。



恭送九皇佛祖

恭送九皇佛祖的那一天，准备工作一早就开始了。罗厘都挂上了黄色横幅。九皇灯的竹篙被取下，与贴满善信祝愿纸条的龙船一起搬到罗厘上，准备运往樟宜海边用于恭送仪式。由于玄武山恭送队会在前往海滩的途中拜访其它九皇庙，所以庙宇也备好了礼篮。



◀ The lorries are decorated for the sending-off ceremony.

给送圣驾的罗厘挂上黄彩横幅。

恭送仪式中，齐天大圣也降乩参与。齐天大圣为抬宝轿的妇女队伍准备灵符。其中一张化在水中给队伍成员喝，其它的灵符则由成员随身携带。



◀ Palanquin bearers drinking talisman water..

抬轿妇女队伍喝符水。

The palanquin, incense censers for Dou Mu Niang Niang and Nine Emperor Gods, and a basket of sandalwood are brought out of the inner chamber. They pay their respects at the different altars.

▶ Palanquin carriers pay respect at various altars.

九皇斗母宝轿在各坛位敬礼。



The sound of the cracking whip signifies that it is time for the contingent to move off for the *yew keng* to other temples. En route to sending off the Nine Emperor Gods at Changi Beach, they will be visiting six other temples in the following order: Yu Feng Jiu Huang Dian, Jia Zhui Kang Dou Mu Gong, Leong Nam Temple, Hougang Tou Mu Kung, Hong San Temple, and Kim San Tze.

▶ Cracking the whip before the palanquin enters the tentage.

先锋在恭送团队出发时挥舞法索为宝轿开路。



九皇斗母宝轿、香炉和一个装满檀香的篮子由内殿请出，然后到各坛位敬礼。

挥舞法索的响声意味着恭送与绕境团队已整装出发。在前往樟宜海边恭送九皇的路途中，玄武山会拜访玉封九皇殿、泮水港斗母、龙南殿、后港斗母宫、凤山宫与金山寺斗山宫。



◀ A helper was carrying the Black Command Flag leading the way.

一名善信手持黑令旗为宝轿开路。



◀ Xuan Wu Shan's contingent met by the palanquins of the host temples.

友庙的宝轿前来恭迎玄武山拜访团队。

▶ Xuan Wu Shan's palanquin pays its respects before the entrance of Hougang Dou Mu Gong as part of their visit.

玄武山宝轿在后港斗母宫坛前向友庙敬礼。



After Xuan Wu Shan visit all the temples, it heads out to Changi Beach for the send-off. Once they arrive at the beach, the palanquin is placed on a mat, with offerings laid out in front of the palanquin. Meanwhile, the dragon ship is loaded with offerings and red lanterns and placed at the edge of the water.

▶ Burning offerings at the beach.

理事助手在海边焚烧金纸与其它纸质供品。



Once all of this is prepared, the committee member begins to read the petition for the sending-off. Everyone kneels with their hands together or holding joss sticks, attentively praying for the success of the send-off. Once the reading is done, the divination blocks are used to seek approval for the success of the ritual. A propitious response symbolizes divine approval and the success of the sending-off.



Jia Zhui Kang Dou Mu Gong committee members and helpers bid farewell to Xuan Wu Shan's contingent.

洪水港斗母宫理事助手跟玄武山告别。

玄武山拜访友庙后，团队便前往樟宜海边恭送九皇大帝与斗母娘娘。到了海边，宝轿被安放在草席上，供品摆在宝轿前面。与此同时，载着供品和红灯笼的龙船也被安置在水边。

一切准备就绪，理事开始念读疏文恭送九皇佛祖与斗母娘娘。这时，理事善信或手持清香或双手合十跪送圣驾。疏文读毕，理事掷圣杯确定神明是否满意恭送仪式。胜杯就表示已经获得九皇佛祖的认可，恭送仪式圆满成功。



Reading of a petition during the sending-off ceremony.

理事念读疏文。

The dragon boat is then set alight and pushed out into the sea on the bamboo raft.

▶ The dragon boat is then set alight and pushed out into the sea on the bamboo raft.

龙船被推入海水焚烧。



The incense censers containing the incense ashes are then carried into the sea. This marks the end of the festival.

随后，理事点燃龙船并用竹筏将其推入海水中。

装满焚香的九皇佛祖香炉和斗母娘娘香炉也被带到海中。这标志着节日的落幕。



◀
Incense censers enter the sea.

插满焚香的香炉被带到到海中。



◀
Performing the rituals to recall the armies by the
vanguard in front of the Black Command Flag.

先锋在黑令旗旁边主持仪式，召集护送圣驾的五
方军将。

Conclusion

A family temple situated in a HDB complex; Xuan Wu Shan comes alive with activity during the Nine Emperor Gods Festival. It draws on its local community networks and extended family to organize the Nine Emperor Gods Festival each year. The festival area also becomes a neighbourhood hub where the local women will gather and churn out delicious vegetarian dishes from the festival kitchen. Every day, the deities and armies in the festival area, together with the devotees and helpers enjoy a vegetarian culinary feast. The festival at Xuan Wu Shan is also unique in terms of the important ritual role of the women alongside the men, especially in the construction of their Nine Emperor Gods-Dou Mu Niang Niang palanquin and the women palanquin team.

The temple also highlights the older connections between Chinese opera and the Nine Emperor Gods Festival that we have seen in China. The reading of the petition, the propitiation of the Nine Emperor Gods and Dou Mu Niang Niang, and conducting of the rituals by members of the community bear interesting parallels to these older practices in the Liyuan's Nine Emperor Gods Festival and those observed by the Dipper Societies. The connections between Xuan Wu Shan and its Nine Emperor Gods Festival to the Lau Chit Kee Hiang and the Qing Nang Lao Yu Lou Chun opera troupes and their members also emphasizes Xuan Wu Shan's connections to Teochew opera, in as much as the temple's name also highlights their connection with the highest deity in the Teochew pantheon, Xuan Tian Shang Di. Here in Singapore, these traditions have become intertwined with the medium traditions on the island and Southeast Asia, which are very much associated with the Hokkien communities.

Xuan Wu Shan and its Nine Emperor Gods Festival reflect the localization of the traditions of the Liyuan communities, and the Teochew opera networks from Shantou to Thailand (as seen in the use of the title, Nine Emperor Buddhas Jiu Huang Fo Zu within the cultures and communities in Singapore and Malaya. It also reflects the ways in which Xuan Wu Shan has become an important part of the Jurong East landscape and communities. It shall continue to play an important role in the transmission and preservation of the traditions of the Nine Emperor Gods Festival and its connections to the diasporic Chinese religious and cultural traditions that shape Singapore Chinese intangible cultural heritage today.

结语

每年临近九皇胜会时，坐落在裕廊东组屋区的玄武山翰林院青囊老玉楼春就会热闹起来。为了在社区举办九皇胜会，玄武山翰林院会发动当地社区网络和家庭成员。附近的妇女居民聚集在节日区域的厨房中，共同制作美味的素食佳肴，节日区域变成了社区中心。每天，在场的神明和灵军会与善信和义工一起享受这些美味佳肴。玄武山的九皇胜会具有非常独特的传统：在仪式中，女性和男性扮演着同样重要的角色，这一点尤其体现在玄武山的九皇大帝-斗母娘娘圣轿上，因为圣轿需要由女性轿脚抬起。

在玄武山，我们也可以见到在中国看到的戏曲和九皇胜会之间的历史联系。宣读请疏文、供奉九皇大帝和斗母娘娘，以及社区成员举行的仪式，这些都与过去梨园的九皇胜会和斗社遵循的习俗有着相似之处。玄武山的九皇胜会与老一支香和青囊老玉楼春两个戏班的关系，反映了玄武山与潮州戏曲之间的联系，而从庙宇的名称中也可看到玄武山与潮州社区供奉的最高神明——玄天上帝之间的紧密联系。在新加坡，这些传统与新加坡以及东南亚各地的乩童传统交织在一起，而当地乩童传统通常与福建社区有着密切的联系。

从汕头到泰国（正如“九皇佛祖”的名号所展示）的梨园社区的傳統和潮剧网络，最终落脚于新加坡和马来亚的文化和社区中，玄武山的九皇胜会正是这一本土化过程的缩影，同时也展示了玄武山如何成为裕廊东景观和社区的重要组成部分。玄武山将继续传承和保存九皇胜会的传统。玄武山的九皇胜会与其所展现的海外华人宗教和文化传统，共同反应了新加坡华人的非物质文化遗产。



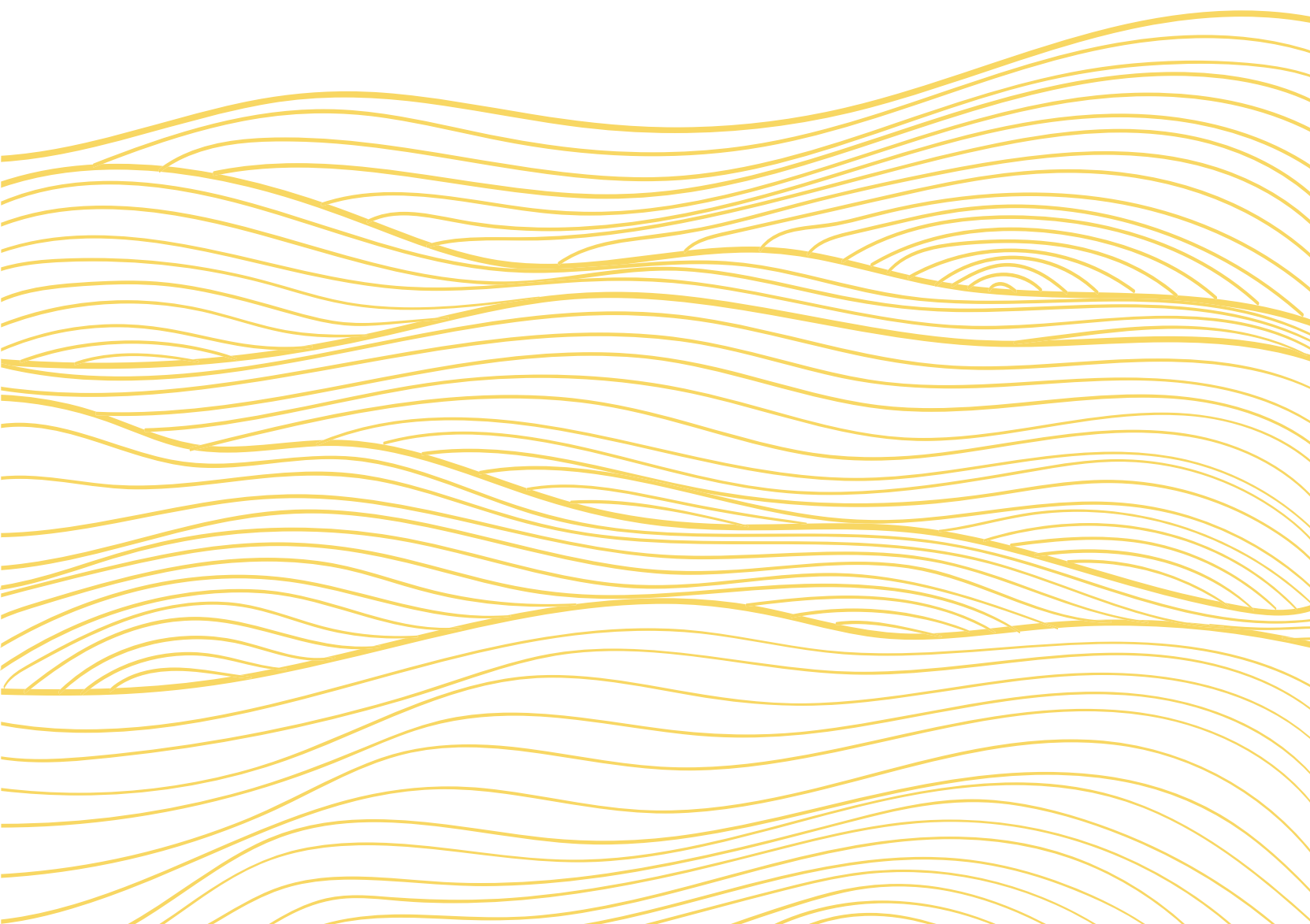
Nine Emperors Hall (Inner Chamber)

九皇殿(内殿)

第
15
章

Yu Huang Dian Yu Hai Tang
Guan Yin Tang

玉皇殿玉海棠观音堂



Introduction

The main deity of Yu Huang Dian Yu Hai Tang Guan Yin Tang temple is Guan Yin Da Shi. Starting out in a kampong on a small hill at Bukit Timah Road, near Rifle Range Road, in the late 1970s, it moved to Yio Chu Kang seven years later, before moving to Bedok Reservoir Road in the early 1990s, where it has been since. By 2017, it has been in this location for 25 years. It shares the premises with Chong Teck Siang Tng. Yu Huang Dian Yu Hai Tang Guan Yin Tang was established by Master Chen Yi Biao. Master Chen also leads the Nine Emperor Bodhisattvas Festival there. The temple has been celebrating the festival for 40 years, since its establishment, when Master Chen was instructed by Guan Yin Da Shi to worship the Nine Emperor Bodhisattvas. Thus began the tradition in the temple. It was also Guan Yin Da Shi who instructed Master Chen on the rules and protocols for celebrating the Nine Emperor Bodhisattvas Festival. Yu Huang Dian Yu Hai Tang Guan Yin Tang has been following these traditions diligently and strictly observing the precepts as instructed by the deities ever since.

Preparations

Yu Huang Dian Yu Hai Tang Guan Yin Tang has nine images representing the Nine Emperor Bodhisattvas. During the festival, the temple will erect a special chamber for the Nine Bodhisattvas in the courtyard using a tentage as the foundation. It is named the Nine Emperors Hall. Its construction usually begins one to two weeks before the start of the festival. The images of the Nine Emperor Bodhisattvas will then be moved to the special chamber from the second floor after its completion. To ensure the sanctity, equanimity, and purity of the special chamber, it is only open to the public to pay respects on the ninth day of the ninth lunar month, before the temple sends off the Nine Emperor Bodhisattvas. During the festival, the temple committee members will take turns to guard the special chamber each night.

On the final day of setting up this chamber, the images are cleaned and invited into the chamber. The preparation of the chamber and installation of the images is only completed between 1 and 2 am, in the morning.

▶ Transportation of deity images into the special chamber.

庙宇助手把神像请入内殿。



A large image of Maitreya will then be brought to the centre of the courtyard and placed in front of the Nine Emperors' chamber. An incense censer for sandalwood is placed on a table in front of Maitreya. The large censer for the incense is then placed in front of this table. A special kind of lime plant and a pomegranate plant were planted into the large censer based on the instructions of Master Chen.

引言

玉皇殿玉海棠观音堂的主神是观音大士。起初，庙宇建在武吉知马的一个山丘上。大约七年后，庙宇搬迁到杨厝港，再搬迁至勿洛蓄水池路的现址到了2017年。玉皇殿玉海棠观音堂在勿洛蓄水池路已有二十五年的历史，并与崇德善堂组成联合宫庙。玉皇殿玉海棠观音堂由陈奕崙师父创办。建庙之初，观音大士指示陈师父要祭拜九皇菩萨，且将九皇菩萨诞辰的规矩与程序传给他，由陈师父主持法会。从那以后，玉皇殿玉海棠观音堂严格遵循传统和戒律，依照神明的指示庆祝九皇菩萨圣诞。如今，玉皇殿玉海棠观音堂庆祝九皇菩萨圣诞已有四十年之久。

筹备

玉皇殿玉海棠观音堂拥有九尊九皇菩萨神像。九皇菩萨诞生时，庙宇会在院子里搭建帐篷作为九皇殿，通常在九皇菩萨诞生前一至两个星期开始搭建九皇殿，完成之后便把九皇菩萨神像从二楼请入宝殿。为了确保九皇殿的静穆与圣洁，只有在送水当天，九皇殿才会开放给公众参拜。节日期间，庙宇理事会轮流守夜，看守九皇殿。

在设立九皇殿的最后一天，庙宇理事清理神像之后将之安放于殿内。宝殿的布置和神像的安放要到凌晨一、两点才能完成。

接着，弥勒佛被请到院子中央，安奉在九皇殿前。庙宇理事将檀香炉放置在弥勒佛前的桌子上，并在桌子前设立香炉，然后在陈师父指示下，将一种特殊的酸柑树枝和石榴树枝插在香炉里。

Hoisting of the Dou Mu Heavenly Lamps

Yu Huang Dian Yu Hai Tang Guan Yin Tang is the only temple in Singapore that uses the dragon staff and phoenix staff during the Nine Emperor Bodhisattva festival. Serving as beacons to lead the deities, the dragon staff and phoenix staff are held by the heads of the dragon team and phoenix team — Mr. Alfred Tan and Ms. Jenny Ho — respectively.

On the day for raising the Dou Mu Heavenly Lamps, the temple committee members will decorate the dragon staff and phoenix staff by attaching it with some ornaments and a lantern with the characters “千百子孙 (An Abundance of Descendants)” and “添丁进财 (Many Sons and Ushering in Fortune)” painted on it.

To prepare for the raising of the Dou Mu Lamps later, members of the temple committee first test the raising of the yellow lanterns and other ritual paraphernalia attached to the lamps. They hold on to a long rope attached with yellow lanterns and released it accordingly as the pulley system, which was needed to raise the lanterns and lamps, was being set up. Accessories such as a black ritual flag, an abacus, an image of a heavenly stork, a calabash, a Chinese almanac, a straw hat, a string of antique Chinese coins and a sword are hung at the end of the rope.

▶ Preparations for the raising of the Dou Mu Heavenly Lamps.

准备升斗姆天灯



升斗姆天灯

玉皇殿玉海棠观音堂是新加坡唯一一间在九皇宝诞时使用龙杖和凤杖的庙宇。龙杖由龙杖长老陈纪錕先生持有，而凤杖由凤杖长老何梅瑛女士持有。龙杖和凤杖的作用类似灯塔，为神明指明方向。

在升斗姆天灯之日，庙宇理事以一些饰物和一盏写有“千百子孙”与“添丁进财”字样的灯笼来装饰龙杖和凤杖。

在为升灯仪式做准备的阶段，庙宇理事首先测试了黄色灯笼及其他祭祀用具的升降是否正常。在升起斗姆天灯所需的滑轮装置被安装妥当之后，他们缓缓松开系有黄色灯笼的长绳，绳子的尾端挂着黑令旗、算盘、仙鹤、葫芦、黄历、一串铜钱、草帽和剑。



While awaiting the arrival of the Guan Yin Da Shi to oversee the ceremony, the temple committee members change into clothing modelled after the colour of traditional Chinese mourning garments. They also wear a white headcloth and tie a strip of yellow cloth around their waists. Alfred and Jenny, being the guardians of the dragon staff and phoenix staff respectively, are the only ones who wear straw hats and straw slippers in addition to mourning clothes.

After the arrival of Guan Yin Da Shi, the temple committee members assist him in donning his headgear and ceremonial dress. The guardians of the dragon and phoenix staff then lead the members of the temple committee into the special chamber.

▶ The arrival of Guan Yin Da Shi.

观音大士法驾



They then proceed to the Dou Mu altar on an elevated platform to conduct the ritual for the raising of the Dou Mu Heavenly Lamps. The committee members all kneel down as instructed, throw incense paper at the lamps as they were being raised. The lamps were gradually raised to the upper reaches of the metal pole. The yellow lanterns and accompanying items were raised at the same time. Thereafter, the committee members and devotees rubbed the incense paper on their bodies to pray for good fortune. The role of the lamps was similar to that of a beacon, to signal to the deities that the temple was celebrating the Festival of the Nine Emperor Bodhisattvas.

▶ Raising the Dou Mu Heavenly Lamps.

升斗姆天灯



在等待观音大士法驾时，庙宇理事换上传统丧服颜色的服装，并佩戴黄腰带和白头巾。手持龙杖的陈纪鋹先生与手持凤杖的何梅瑛女士除了穿着丧服之外，还需要穿戴草帽和草鞋。

观音大士法驾后，理事们为其戴上头冠，并穿上观音大士仪式袍。龙凤杖两位长老带领众理事进入九皇殿。



随后，他们在斗姆坛前进行升斗姆天灯仪式。众理事依据指示跪下，并向正在升起的斗姆天灯撒金纸祈福。斗姆天灯缓缓升到铁杆上端，黄色灯笼与其他祭祀用品也随之升起。理事与信众们纷纷手抓金纸往身上擦拭，祈求好运。斗姆天灯的功能类似于灯塔，向神明禀告庙宇正在庆祝九皇菩萨圣诞。



Receiving the Nine Emperor Bodhisattvas

▶ Dou Mu Heavenly Lamps.

斗姆天灯



On the day of receiving (the last day of the eighth lunar month), the temple committee members arrive at the temple early to do the necessary preparations for the receiving of the Nine Emperor Bodhisattvas. In 2016 and 2017, the temple also hired Xin Xin Rong He Chaozhou Opera Singing Troupe to perform during the celebrations of the Nine Emperor Bodhisattvas Festival. The opera troupe sang daily from 12 noon to 2 pm and from 7 pm to 10.30 pm for a period of 10 days, until the ninth day of the ninth lunar month, the day when the Nine Emperor Bodhisattvas depart.

恭迎九皇菩萨圣驾回宫



在请水当天（农历八月的最后一天），庙宇理事们会提早到庙宇进行准备。2016年和2017年的九皇菩萨圣诞期间，庙宇还聘请了新新荣和潮州戏曲班唱戏。戏曲班在中午十二点至两点，以及傍晚七点半到十点半演出，为期十天，直到初月初九恭送圣驾当天才结束。

► Teochew Singing Troupe

新新荣和潮州戏曲班



As evening comes, devotees start streaming into the temple. They proceed to the Dou Mu altar and the front of the Nine Emperors' chamber to pray and seek blessings.

Soon after, the lion and dragon dance teams will arrive at the temple. The teams this year are from Shi Cheng Jin Yong Dragon and Lion Dance Centre. A temple committee member uses a ritual whip to clear the way for the entrance of the lions. They will proceed to the different altars to pay respects to the deities in the temple. The performance ends with the lion dancers doing a *Cai Qing* performance in front of the Nine Emperors' chamber.

傍晚时分，信众开始涌入庙宇。许多人来到斗姆神坛和九皇殿前祷告，祈求神明赐福。

不久，狮城劲勇龙狮院的龙狮团抵达庙宇。庙宇理事用龙鞭为其驱邪开路，龙狮团成员来到各个神坛前向神明敬礼。最后，舞狮团在九皇殿前进行一场精彩绝伦的采青表演。



▲
Dragon and lion dance performances at the temple before the departure of the receiving contingent.

在玉海棠出发前往海岸恭迎圣驾之前，还组织了舞龙和舞狮表演。

► Mr. Tan holds the dragon staff over the large censer and prays before the contingent leaves for East Coast Park.

在队伍前往东海岸公园出发之前，陈先生在香炉旁举起龙杖进行祷告。



After the lion and dragon dance performances, several helpers from the temple carry the large palanquin out into the main compound and rest it on stacks of incense papers placed on the floor of the courtyard in front of the Nine Emperors chamber. The palanquin used by Yu Huang Dian Yu Hai Tang Guan Yin Tang is exceptionally large and heavy, requiring eight people to carry it. It is based on the original palanquin, without too many modifications. It is said that it can fit a person if the interior is cleared.

龙狮表演过后，庙宇理事将壮观华丽的八人大轿抬到九皇殿前，放置在金纸上。庙宇所使用的轿子较重，因为轿子是根据最初的原型而打造，没经过太多修改。据称，轿子的内部清空后可容纳一人。



Departure of the palanquin from the temple to East Coast Park.

玉海棠圣轿准备出发。



The palanquin is carried by eight committee members to pay respects at the different altars and other resident temples before leaving the temple grounds. An assistant cracks a ritual whip at the gate of the temple to clear the way for the palanquin. The lion dancers are lined up facing the palanquin and did a short dance to pay respects to it before it left the temple. The temple committee members throw incense paper into the air as the palanquin left the temple premises.

The devotees are dressed in white shirts and trousers, while the temple committee members are dressed in sackcloth clothing with a yellow cloth tied around their waists and a white headscarf worn on their heads. Devotees either board the buses chartered by the temple or drive in their cars to East Coast Park. The temple committee, the palanquin and other religious paraphernalia are transported to East Coast Park by lorry.

Upon reaching East Coast Park, the contingent formed a procession led by the lion dance and dragon dance troupes, followed by Alfred and Jenny holding the dragon staff and phoenix staff, two of the temple committee members hitting the gong, and the palanquin.

A ritual table is already set up on the beach before the arrival of the receiving contingent, with all the necessary religious paraphernalia for the receiving ceremony and rituals. This includes offerings of fruit, prosperity cakes [*Huat Kueh*], and flowers, along with two long yellow candles, six small red tea cups, and a bottle of tea and rice wine respectively.

► Preparation of altars and offerings at the beach for receiving the Nine Emperor Bodhisattvas.

海岸边为迎接九皇菩萨而设立的祭坛与供品。



The appointed censer master kneels in front of the palanquin, invites the censer out and places it on his head before bringing it to the table by moving on his knees across the sand. The same is done for the large tablet bearing the name and title of the Nine Emperor Bodhisattvas. Facing the ritual table, the censer bearer prays and pours three cups of tea and three cups of wine onto the sand while kneeling on two stacks of incense papers. This served as a mark of respect to the Nine Emperor Bodhisattvas.

八名理事抬着轿子，向各个坛位与其他宫殿敬礼后才前往出口。离开庙宇前，理事用龙鞭开路。舞狮成员站成一排，向宝轿敬礼。宝轿离开时，庙宇理事往空中撒金纸。

信众身穿白衣白裤，而庙宇理事身穿麻衣，腰系黄带，头戴白巾。善信乘搭庙宇提供的巴士，或自行开车到东海岸公园。庙宇理事、宝轿与其他仪式用品则由罗厘载往目的地。

抵达东海岸公园之后，迎驾队伍由舞狮团和舞龙团开路，持有龙凤杖的两位长老、负责敲锣的两名庙宇理事以及宝轿紧随其后。

在队伍到达之前，恭迎仪式所需祭祀用品已在海滩上设置好，包括水果、发糕与鲜花等供品，还有一对黄色蜡烛、六个小茶杯、一瓶茶和一瓶米酒等仪式道具。



炉主跪在宝轿前，请出香炉放在自己的头上，慢慢在沙滩上跪行，将香炉安放到供桌上。九皇菩萨牌位随后也以同样的方式从轿内被请出安放。炉主面对供桌，跪在两叠香纸上，一边祷告，一边把三杯茶和三杯酒倒在沙滩上，向九皇菩萨致敬。



▲ Inviting the Nine Emperor Bodhisattvas censer from its palanquin.

After the completion of the offering and prayers by the temple committee members and select old devotees, the whole contingent is instructed by Master Chen and the temple committee members to kneel down and pray to the Nine Emperor Bodhisattvas for their blessings.

从轿子里请出九皇菩萨的香炉。



◀ The committee members of the temple and their families followed by devout devotees of the temple, are then called forward to pay respects to the Nine Emperor Bodhisattvas.

庙宇理事、他们的家属和虔诚信众相继上前向九皇菩萨致敬。



待庙宇理事和指定信徒完成敬拜仪式后，众人在陈师父与理事们的指示下跪拜九皇菩萨宝，祈求平安。

▶ The continuous waving of a black flag towards the sea during the receiving ceremony.

仪式进行的过程中，一名庙宇成员在海边挥舞一面黑旗，以迎接九皇菩萨。



The receiving ritual requires a young boy, who symbolises purity, to walk into the sea carrying a large round ceramic censer. The boy, along with two other supporting adults, goes into the sea and submerged themselves completely to fill the basin with seawater, before returning to the shore. The censer is placed on top of the boy's head, and as they were coming back, Jenny leads the shouting of “Jiu Huang Jiu Pu Sa” in welcoming the Nine Emperor Bodhisattvas. After the basin of water is brought to the table, oranges are dropped into the basin and it is covered with plastic wrap and placed in a special carrier, to be ferried to the temple by one of the committee members.

▶ Helped by two older temple committee members, a young boy walks into the sea with a censer on his head and brings the censer filled with water back to shore to the altar.

在两位庙宇理事的陪同下，一个小男孩双手提着一个陶器香炉高举头上走入海中请水，然后返回岸上的神桌。





◀ Burning a large pile of incense papers near the seaside with the receiving of the Nine Emperor Bodhisattvas.

当理事们准备下海恭迎九皇菩萨时，沙滩上的一大叠金纸也被焚化以祭祀神明。

迎驾仪式要求象征纯洁的小男孩扛着一个大的圆形陶瓷香炉下海请水。男童与另外两名理事一起走进大海，直到全身完全浸入水中，将香炉灌满海水，然后返回岸边。香炉放在男孩的头顶上，当他们回到岸上时，何梅瑛女士带领众人呼喊“九皇九菩萨”迎接神明。当灌满海水的香炉被带到神桌上时，理事在其中投入橘子，再用塑料袋将其包装好，带回庙中。



The censer master then puts the plaque and the censer on his head and back into the palanquin by moving on his knees across the sand. The palanquin is carried to the lorry. The items at the beach are packed and everyone heads back to the temple with the Nine Emperor Bodhisattvas.

► Invitation of the tablet and censer of the Nine Emperor Bodhisattvas to board the awaiting palanquin.

九皇菩薩的神主牌和香炉登轿。



Back at Bedok Reservoir Road, Master Chen enters the temple with a group of committee members to prepare for the arrival of the First Emperor God. They are preceded by the palanquin.

The sound of the gong intensifies as the First Emperor God arrives through Master Chen. The temple members put on an elaborate head gear and robe for him and handed him two swords. After the First Emperor God arrives, the temple's members kneel down and proclaimed "Huang Ye Qiang Shui Qian Shui Qian Qian Sui." The First Emperor God holds on to nine incense sticks with his mouth and carried swords and incense sticks on both hands. Together with the temple members, the First Emperor God proceeds to the Dou Mu altar to pay his respects, before entering the Nine Emperor Bodhisattvas' chamber to perform some rituals.

► Return of the entourage to the temple.

九皇菩薩回宮。



如之前一般，炉主将九皇菩萨牌位与香炉高举于头顶，在沙滩上跪行，将其移送回宝轿内。接着，庙宇理事将宝轿抬回罗厘。沙滩上的物品收拾完毕后，所有人便返回庙宇，迎接九皇菩萨回宫。



回庙宇时，轿子先入庙，陈师父与一班理事紧随其后，为大皇爷法驾做好准备。

大皇爷法驾到陈师父身上后，锣声渐渐变得急促。庙宇理事为大皇爷穿上皇袍与佩戴头饰，并递给他两把宝剑。理事与信众齐齐下跪，呼喝“皇爷千岁千岁千千岁！”接着，大皇爷抿嘴含九支灵香，手握灵香与宝剑。在庙宇理事的陪同下，大皇爷先到斗姆神坛前敬礼，随后才进入九皇殿进行其他仪式。

► The First Emperor arrives.

大皇爷法驾。



After that, the committee members follow the First Emperor God back to the main hall of the temple. The temple committee members and the devotees then take turns to kneel before the First Emperor God to receive blessings and advice from him. The guardians of the dragon and the phoenix staffs stand on each side of the First Emperor God, translating his instructions and advice to the devotees.



之后，众理事随着大皇爷返回主殿。庙宇理事及信众轮流在大皇爷面前下跪，接受大皇爷赐福指点。龙凤杖长老站在大皇爷两侧，为信众翻译神明的旨意与建议。

The Arrival of Different Deities

Master Chen is the leader of Yu Huang Dian Yu Hai Tang Guan Yin Tang. He is also the medium between the deities, committee members, and devotees. During the festival, besides the arrival of the First Emperor God after the receiving, Dou Lao Tian Zun, Guan Yin Da Shi and Dou Mu Tian Jun will also arrive through Master Chen on the night of the second and sixth days of the ninth lunar month. Each deity is said to have a unique divine rhyme and ritual weapon. The temple committee will have to prepare the deity's ritual equipment beforehand and hand them to the deity channelling through Master Chen. Each deity will have his or her own way of blessing the devotees. Devotees will also consult different deities on different matters.

Visit by Dou Lao Tian Zun on the Second Day

On the second day of the ninth lunar month, Dou Lao Tian Zun visits the temple. His tools included a dragon staff and a phoenix brush. After his arrival, he proceeded first to the altar of Dou Mu to pay his respects before returning to the main hall, alias the Guan Yin Hall. Dou Lao Tian Zun then goes on to bless the devotees and committee members kneeling in front of him and offers them advice on various matters.

▶ Dou Mu Tian Jun arrives.

斗姆天君法驾。



Visits by Bodhisattva Guanyin and Dou Mu Tian Jun on the Sixth Day

On the sixth day, Guan Yin Da Shi visits the temple to consecrate the Dragon Ship and to invite Dou Mu Tian Jun. After Guan Yin's arrival, the committee members move the Dragon Ship to the courtyard, and a talisman with a seal is pasted on the ship. The Guan Yin Da Shi will then proceed to the courtyard to inspect the Dragon Ship. He will use a willow branch to sprinkle holy water on the Dragon Ship. After completing the consecration, he departs from the temple, and Dou Mu Tian Jun arrives.

After the arrival of the Dou Mu Tian Jun, the committee members help her to put on the Dou Mu robe, and placed her weapons, namely a golden bow and arrow, in her hands. She then proceeds to the different altars to offer incense. Thereafter, she returns to the main hall to bless devotees, who can also consult her on various matters.

众神法驾

陈奕嶠师父是玉皇殿玉海棠观音堂的主持，同时也是神明与理事和善信之间的媒介。九皇宝诞期间，除了大皇爷在迎驾当晚法驾以外，斗姥天尊、观音大士与斗姆天君也会在初二和初六晚上法驾胜会。据说，每尊神明都拥有其独特神韵和专属法器，庙宇理事必须在神明法驾之前为其准备相应的法器。每位神明赐福信众的方式各不相同，信徒也会就不同事项向不同的神明问事。

初二斗姥天尊法驾

农历九月初二，斗姥天尊法驾，法器包括龙杖和鸾笔。斗姥天尊法驾后会先到斗姆神坛敬礼，再进入主殿，又称观音堂。然后，斗姥天尊便开始赐福予在他面前下跪的信众，也为他们指点迷津。

初六观音大士与斗姆天君法驾

初六，观音大士法驾庙宇，为龙船开光并邀请斗姆天君。观音大士法驾后，庙宇理事将龙船抬到庭院中，将一张盖有印章的灵符贴在龙船上。观音大士到庭院中检视龙船，用杨柳枝沾圣水，挥洒在龙船上。为龙船开光后，观音大士便离去，斗姆天君法驾庙宇。

斗姆天君法驾后，众理事为其换上斗姆袍并献上法器，斗姆天君接过金色弓箭，到各个神坛前敬香。敬香后，斗姆天君返回观音堂为信众赐福。善信和理事也可向斗姆天君寻求指点。



Descent of Dou Mu Tian Jun on his spirit medium.

斗姆天君降驾。

Temples Visiting

During the festival, other Nine Emperor Gods temples will visit Yu Huang Dian Yu Hai Tang Guan Yin Tang during their processions [yew keng] or as part of smaller visiting contingents to pay their respects and to exchange incense, gifts and greetings with one another.

Each temple varies in terms of the size of its troupes and style of pay respects. Some visiting temples have a larger number of devotees following, with dragon and lion dance troupes, numerous elaborate floats and palanquins, while others were smaller in scale.

Temples with lion and dragon dance troupes accompanying will have these troupes enter the temple first to perform and pay respects, followed by the committee members of the visiting temple who will follow the troupes to each of the altars to pay respects. The vanguard plays an important leading role in receiving the visiting temples. He uses a ritual whip to clear the place of evil spirits before the entry of the lion and dragon dance troupes, the committee of the visiting temple, their devotees, and their palanquins. He will hold five coloured flags in his hand, with each colour representing the generals of the five cardinal directions.

Led by Mr. Tan and Jenny, the guardians of the dragon and phoenix staff respectively, the representatives from the visiting temple will head to the Dou Mu altar first to pay their respects before praying at the Nine Emperors chamber. Before leaving, a representative from the visiting temple will lead the whole contingent in paying respects outside the Nine Emperor Bodhisattvas' chamber. Fruit hampers and sandalwood powder are exchanged as part of these visits to strengthen the friendship between the temples.

▶ Volunteers were awaiting the arrival of visitors.

善信们等待友庙前来进香。



友庙来访

九皇圣诞期间，其他九皇庙宇会在游境或参拜时到玉皇殿玉海棠观音堂进香，交换香火、礼品并互相问候。

前来上香的庙宇，队伍规模与参拜形式不一。一些庙宇携带大批信众、龙狮团、装饰精巧的花车以及轿子，而一些庙宇的队伍规模则较小。

有龙狮团的到访友庙会让龙先狮团进入庙宇表演并敬礼，随后友庙的理事跟随龙狮团到各个神坛前给神明上香。先锋在接待来访友庙的活动中扮演重要的角色，他在舞龙舞狮团、拜访庙宇理事、信众以及轿子进场前，以龙鞭挥打地面驱邪。他手持五色令旗，代表五方军将为友庙开路。

龙凤杖长老带领来访友庙的代表，首先前往斗姆神坛祭拜，后到九皇菩萨宝殿参拜。离开之前，友庙代表会带领队伍在九皇菩萨殿外集体祭拜。



Exchanges of smiles and greetings amongst the members of the host temple and visiting contingent.

玉海棠和友庙亲切问候，互相交流。

▶ Visiting contingent from Leong Nam Temple.

龙南殿来玉海棠进香参拜。



▶ Visiting Hougang Tou Mu Kung contingent scattering rice to clear the way for the procession.

前来拜访的后港斗母宫会撒米开路。





◀ Delegation from Hougang Tou Mu Kung.

后港斗母宫来进香参拜。



◀ Contingent from Jia Zhui Kang Dou Mu Gong.

洪水港斗母宫来进香参拜。



◀ Visit by Leng San Giam Dou Mu Gong.

龙山岩斗母宫来进香参拜。

Sending-off the Nine Emperor Bodhisattvas

On the ninth day of the ninth lunar month, the day of the sending-off ceremony for the Nine Emperor Bodhisattvas, the temple is visibly more crowded than the day of receiving. The dining tables are all packed with people having their dinner. There are many elderly devotees who came down specially to participate in the sending off procession. A festive atmosphere prevails at the temple as people sit around and chat with one another.

▶ Devotees are awaiting the opening of the Inner Chamber of the Nine Emperor Gods.

善信们正在等待九皇殿开放。



At about 7 pm, the temple committee will open the Nine Emperors Chamber to the devotees for them to pay their respects and to see the images of the Nine Emperor Bodhisattvas. Devotees queue up to enter the chamber and are given an incense stick each by the temple's committee members. They will first pray at the front of the chamber, before walking through the Inner Chamber and paying their respects inside.

At 7.30 pm., the lion dance troupe from Shi Cheng Jin Yong Dragon And Lion Dance Centre arrives and goes around the temple compound to pay respect to the different deities and altars. The dragon dance troupe arrives 15 minutes later. The vanguard paves the way for the troupe's arrival by cracking the ritual whip to chase away any evil spirits, similar to what he had done for the lion dance troupe before. The dragon dance troupe will also proceed to each of the altars to pay their respects. While this is going on, Master Chen and the temple committee will prepare for the arrival of Guan Yin Da Shi.

恭送九皇菩萨回銮

送驾当天，庙宇人山人海。庙宇的餐桌坐满了用餐的人。许多年长的信众也特地前来参与送仪式。人们在庙宇中闲坐交谈，现场充满热闹的节日气氛。

在七点左右，庙宇理事开放九皇殿供信众参拜九皇菩萨。信众排队进入九皇殿时，庙宇理事将线香交给他们。这些信众会先在九皇殿前祭拜，然后走入内殿敬拜神明。



Devotees queuing to enter the Inner Chamber of the Nine Emperor Gods.

排队进入九皇殿的善信。

在七点半左右，狮城劲勇龙狮院的成员抵达庙宇。舞狮团开始到庙宇各个神坛前敬礼。



The arrival of the lion dance troupe.

舞狮团的到来。

15分钟后，舞龙团抵达庙宇，先锋向地面挥打龙鞭，为其开路驱邪，就像他之前为舞狮团做的那样。



▲
The arrival of the dragon dance troupe.

舞龙团的到来。

After the arrival of the Guan Yin Da Shi, he goes to the Dou Mu altar to oversee the lowering of the lamps. All the committee members in the temple follow his instructions and kneel down. As the Dou Mu Heavenly Lamps were lowered, the committee members throw incense paper into the air at them. The devotees will rush to pick up the incense papers and rubbed them over their faces and bodies to be blessed with safety and good luck. Guan Yin Da Shi and the temple's committee members then return to the main hall of the temple, to begin the ceremony to send off the Nine Emperor Bodhisattvas.

At around 8.30 pm, the temple committee and the palanquin proceed to the different altars to pay their respects to begin their journey to East Coast Park.

The devotees board the buses chartered by the temple, while the committee members boarded the lorry or the floats, and make their way together to East Coast Park.



Lowering of the Dou Mu Lamps performed by Guan Yin Da Shi.

观音大士法驾进行降斗姆灯仪式。

舞龙团也到各个神坛前敬礼。与此同时，陈师父与庙宇理事则准备迎接观音大士法驾。

观音大士法驾后，他来到斗姆神坛前进行降灯仪式。庙宇所有理事按照指示，双膝下跪。降下斗姆天灯时，庙宇理事向空中挥撒金纸，信众纷纷捡起金纸擦拭脸庞与身体，祈求平安和好运。

随后，观音大士与庙宇理事返回观音堂，进行恭送九皇菩萨回銮仪式。

晚上八点半左右，庙宇理事将宝轿抬到各个神坛前敬礼，然后出发前往东海岸公园。

信众乘搭庙宇准备的接驳巴士，庙宇理事则乘搭花车或罗厘，一同前往目的地。

► Preparations by the palanquin bearers to ferry the censer of the Nine Emperor Bodhisattvas to the beach.

轿队成员准备护送九皇菩萨香炉前往海边。



To facilitate the sending-off ceremony, Yu Hai Tang generally dispatches a team of temple committee members to East Coast Park in advance. As they prepare the ceremonial table, the talisman-covered Dragon Ship has also transported to the beach ahead of the main contingent's arrival.

► Preparing the altar on the beach for the sending-off ceremony.

在九皇菩萨回銮之前，玉海棠在沙滩上设立起供桌。





一些庙宇理事会提早到达，设立好供桌，然后将龙船移到沙滩上。龙船船身贴满灵符。



◀ Transporting the Dragon Ship to the beach.

把龙船运到海边。

► Devotees awaiting the arrival of the Nine Emperor Bodhisattvas at the beach.

善信们在海滩上等待九皇菩萨的到来。



After the arrival of the main contingent and palanquin, and when everything is ready, the sending-off ritual and ceremony begins. Similar to the day of receiving, the censer master will have to kneel down, take out the incense censer and plaque of the Nine Emperor Bodhisattvas, carry them on his head, and to move towards the ceremonial table. The elders holding the dragon and phoenix staff would stand on the two sides of the censer master, and accompany him to the altar.

恭送圣驾团队与宝轿抵达现场后，恭送仪式也正式开始了。与迎驾当天相似，炉主双膝下跪，并从轿子中请出九皇菩萨的香炉和牌为拿出，高举于头顶上，跪行到供桌前。龙凤杖长老跟随在炉主两侧，一起前往供桌。



◀ Censer master carrying the censer and the tablet of the Nine Emperor Bodhisattvas from the palanquin to the altar for the sending-off ceremony.

炉主把九皇香炉和神主牌移到桌上，准备进行恭送九皇菩萨回銮仪式。

Following subsequent payments of respects by selected representatives of the temple committee members and their family members and devotees with long-standing ties to the temple, the contingent was led in prayer by Master Chen. The final phase of the sending-off ceremony was initiated with the successful collection and installation of the harnessed incense sticks in the incense censer on the ceremonial table.

▶ The Nine Emperor Bodhisattvas' censer, filled with joss sticks.

插满长香的九皇香炉。



▶ Devotees stand or kneel in the sand in prayer with joss sticks in their hands as the Nine Emperor Bodhisattvas depart.

当九皇菩萨回銮时，信徒们跪在沙地上，手里拿着线香。



The temple committee members will carry the incense censer filled with burning incense into the sea. The other committee members and devotees will place their white headscarves, yellow belts, and for the committee members their hemp-coloured dress as well as the dragon and phoenix staffs, into the Dragon Ship. The Dragon Ship will be set alight and gradually pushed into the sea. Both the ship and the incense censer will be escorted further and further into the sea. This embodies the sending off of the Nine Emperor Bodhisattvas.

庙宇理事与他们的家人相继被请到坛前祭拜，随后是和玉皇殿有长期联系的善信上前祭拜。接着，陈师父带领信众与整个迎驾团队进行祭拜仪式。仪式完毕后，理事们收集信众手中的灵香插入大炉中，恭送仪式进入最后阶段。



◀ Master Chen, his disciples, and committee members praying during the sending-off of the Nine Emperor Bodhisattvas.

在恭送九皇菩萨回銮的时候，玉海棠的领导理事紧握双手祈祷。

指定理事把插满线香的香炉送入海中。其它理事和信众将白头巾与黄腰带、理事的麻衣、龙杖与凤杖都放在龙船里，然后点燃龙船，缓缓将其推入大海。把香炉和龙船送入海中象征恭送九皇菩萨回銮。

► The Nine Emperor Bodhisattvas were escorted out to the sea by representatives for the sending-off.

玉海棠的代表护送九皇菩萨入海。



► Lighting the Dragon Ship.

点燃龙船。



After returning to the temple, the committee members and devotees would drink longan and red dates soup, to mark the end of the dietary restrictions during the festival. The committee members also start to move the deities back into the temple.



◀ Scattering the contents of a cup of tea into a pile of burning incense paper.

将一杯茶撒入一堆燃烧的香纸中。



◀ Return to the temple following the conclusion of the sending-off ceremony.

恭送仪式过后，玉海棠的领袖和善信回到庙宇中。



回到庙宇后，众人饮用龙眼红枣汤，表示斋戒结束。庙宇理事把神明神像都请回庙里。

Conclusion

The Nine Emperor Bodhisattvas Festival at Yu Huang Dian Yu Hai Tang Guan Yin Tang is an extremely interesting festival loaded with much cultural and religious significance. It is a captivating composite of culture with Chinese traditions and historical elements being incorporated, from Guan Yin Da Shi , the Jade Emperor to the Nine Emperor Bodhisattvas, Dou Mu Tian Jun and Dou Lao Tian Zun. There is also a strong fusing of both Buddhist and Daoist elements, alongside a unique medium tradition (especially with the very poetic and literary songs recited by the deities as they arrive), and a rich and elaborate material culture as seen in the deity robes and the statuary in the temple. Beginning in Bukit Timah, the temple has also come a long way, to Yio Chu Kang and finally to Bedok Reservoir. With each relocation, the temple has also incorporated new networks and built new communities, moving from the strong Hainanese community and family connections of the Bukit Timah days to a more diverse community base in its later locations. The history of the Nine Emperor Bodhisattvas Festival has also brought the temple members on journeys to Hatyai to connect with Nine Emperor Bodhisattvas temples and festivals there. Such transnational and trans-island interconnections provide much richness and diversity to the festival at Yu Huang Dian Yu Hai Tang Guan Yin Tang. There is a strong collective spirit in the temple, with everyone helping each other out, and with a strong sense of community, almost like a family. Most of the temple committee members have been with the temple since its time in Bukit Timah and brought their children to the temple since they were young. As such, the younger generation is also very active in the Nine Emperor Bodhisattvas festival and is extremely knowledgeable about the various practices involved. In light of an increasingly secular society, it was especially heartening to observe how there are still communities who seek to preserve and defend their religious traditions. Yu Huang Dian Yu Hai Tang Guan Yin Tang will certainly play an important role in the preservation and transmission of the traditions and values of the Nine Emperor Gods Festival in Singapore.

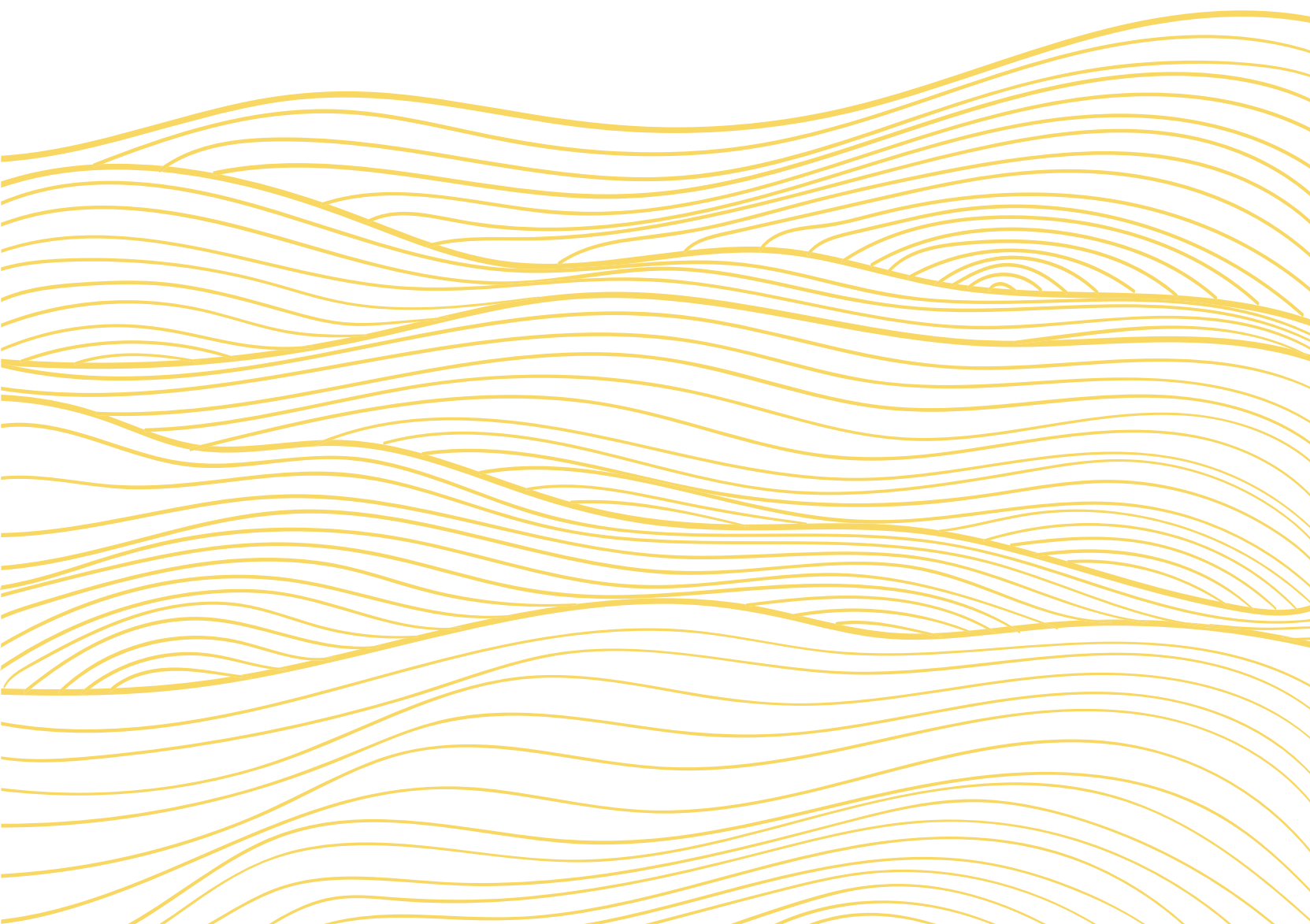
结语

玉皇殿玉海棠观音堂的九皇菩萨诞一个极具文化和宗教意义的节日。玉皇殿玉海棠观音堂融合了丰富的华人传统和历史背景，供奉着从观音大士、玉皇大帝到九皇菩萨、斗母元军和斗姥天尊等众多神明。在庙宇中可以看到多种宗教传统的融合，佛教传统、道教传统以及独特的乩童文化（特别是神仙法驾时，乩童诵唱的极具诗意和文学性的歌曲），共同组成了多元而精彩的物质文化，例如庙宇中的神袍和神像。庙宇最初位于武吉知马，后来搬迁至杨厝港，最后坐落在勿洛水库。每次迁到新址，庙宇便建立了新的社区联系并融入了新的网络，位于武吉知马时，庙宇依靠紧密的海南社区和家庭联系，后来历次搬迁建立了更为多元化的社区基础。玉皇殿玉海棠观音堂的成员也到访合艾，与那里的九皇菩萨庙宇和节日建立起联系。这种跨岛和跨国的联系，为玉皇殿玉海棠观音堂的九皇信仰与节日提供了丰富性和多样性。玉皇殿玉海棠观音堂的成员有着强烈的集体精神和社区意识，大家互相帮助，如同像一个大家庭。当庙宇还位于武吉知马时，许多理事就已经投身参与庙宇事务。这些理事的孩子们自幼就接触庙宇文化，在众理事与父母亲的熏陶之下，也渐渐熟悉了庙里的仪式。如今，年轻一代也积极筹备九皇菩萨诞并参与其中。在一个日益世俗化的社会中，一些社区仍积极维护和传承其宗教传统，实在令人欣慰。我们相信，玉皇殿玉海棠观音堂会一直在新加坡九皇文化传统和价值观的保存和传播中发挥重要作用。



第 16 章

Zhun Ti Tang
准提堂



Introduction

The Nine Emperor Gods Festival has been an annual highlight for the volunteers and devotees of Zhun Ti Tang since 2010. Preparations for the invitation and hosting of the Nine Emperor Gods begin with the consecrations of the various Buddhas, Bodhisattvas and ritual paraphernalia at an open field adjacent to Rivervale Shopping Plaza in the middle of the eighth lunar month. 2017 was a historically significant year for Zhun Ti Tang as it marked the temple's visit to its ancestral temple in Bangkok during the festival for the renewal of its incense lineage for the worship of the Nine Emperor Gods.

Preparations

Foremost in the general series of preparations for the festival is the raising of the tentage two weeks prior to the final week of the eighth lunar month. Yellow, a homonym of “Emperor”, largely forms the basis of the background of the festival site, including the utilised cloth trimmings. Other necessary groundwork includes the invitation of deity images onto altars, including the Skanda Bodhisattva and Maitreya in an emperor's garb.

► The vessel is lined with two standing dragons, which will be placed in the new Tampines premises of Zhun Ti Tang.

这个左右装饰着站立龙像的大型香炉将在准提堂位于淡滨尼的新址继续使用。



引言

九皇胜会庆祝活动自2010年以来都是准提堂义工与信徒的年度盛典。当农历八月中旬来临时，各种佛陀、菩萨的神像还有祭祀用具会被请到鲤河大厦毗邻的空地上，为为期九天的九皇胜会做好准备。本摄影论文将详细介绍这一系列的活动。2017年对于准提堂来说是具有历史意义的一年。这一年的节日期间，准提堂的成员回到位于泰国曼谷的祖庙，更新九皇佛祖的香火。

准备

在农历八月最后一周之前的两周，准提堂搭起帐篷，标志着一系列庆祝活动的开始。由于“黄”与“皇”同音，因此整个道场空间背景与布料装饰会以黄色为主要色调。不同的神台也为神像的最终到来及安置做好准备。这些神像包括韦陀天菩萨和穿着皇帝服装的独特弥勒佛像，还有其他神明。



◀ The first batch of the deities is transferred into the festival tentage—a gilded image of the four-faced Dipper Matriarch on a lotus throne flanked by the Sovereign of the Southern Dipper and the Sovereign of the Northern Dipper (viewer's right and left, respectively).

坐在莲花宝座的镀金斗母神像是第一尊抵达道场的神像。摆放在四面斗母像两旁的则是南斗星君（图右）以及北斗星君（图左）。

▶ As the invitation ceremony drew closer, devotees and volunteers of Zhun Ti Tang work to ensure that everything was ready. Here, an image of Master Pu'An had just arrived at the tentage.

请神仪式临近，准提堂的信徒与义工都忙着确保道场的每个细节都安排妥当、万无一失。图为普安法师的神像抵达道场。



The main altar in the festival area was devoted to the Nine Emperor Buddhas and their mother, Dou Mu Niang Niang, who was flanked by the Sovereign of the southern and Northern Dippers on her left and right respectively. Indeed, no effort was spared by the temple in ensuring that the premises were clean and that everything was ready for the arrival of the Nine Emperor Buddhas' from the sea on the 26th day of the eighth lunar month.

Receiving the Nine Emperor Gods

The 26th day of the eighth lunar month could not have not come any earlier amidst the hustle and bustle at the tentage as the participants and devotees, in the white attire they were required to wear throughout the festival, prepare for the invitation ceremony which begins by mid-afternoon. In the festival area, it was led by a contingent of monks, who recited from the Mahayana canon while awaiting the arrival of the Nine Emperor Gods from Zhun Ti Tang.

▶ These Dipper Lamps were filled with rice and the lamps in them were lit before the altar to the Medicine Buddha throughout the Festival of the Nine Emperor Buddhas.

这些斗灯都填满了米粒，其中的灯烛则在药师佛神台前点燃，直到九皇胜会结束为止。





◀ Positioning of the Maitreya Buddha to ensure centrality from viewers' perspectives in the tentage.

在一名助手的协助下，弥勒菩萨神像才能摆正定位。这名助手能从远处观望神像，也因此能从访客和信徒的角度为神像的摆放提供反馈意见。

道场内的主要神台是为了摆放九皇佛祖与他们的母神，斗母娘娘；而斗母神像的左右两旁分别摆放了南斗星君与北斗星君。为了在农历八月廿六这一天从海上迎接九皇佛祖，庙宇不遗余力地确保一切都在有条不紊、一尘不染的情况下进行。

恭迎圣驾

农历八月廿六日可说是道场最忙碌的一天。在帐篷里的喧嚣和喧闹中，身穿白色素服的参与者与信徒们在庆典会场熙熙攘攘。请神仪式从中午时分开始，在庆典会场，一班僧人带领信众诵读大藏经，一边耐心等待准提堂九皇佛祖神像的到来。



◀ The smaller standing image wielding a sword and a bowl of sacred water in this photograph collectively represented the presence of all Nine Emperor Buddhas.

照片中一尊手持宝剑和捧着一碗圣水的神像代表着所有九皇佛祖神灵。

As the monks began their chanting, a small group of Zhun Ti Tang's volunteers were dispatched to the temple's premises to invite the first set of images of the Nine Emperor Buddhas consecrated in the first half of 2010 to the tentage to witness and participate in the festivities in their honour. After the deities' images were brought to the site, the Hall-Master led the raising of the nine lamps supported by a bamboo pole that jutted into the sky. An indispensable ritual that signified the temple's invitation to the various divinities to partake in the upcoming events held in the honour of the Nine Emperor Buddhas, the raising of the nine lamps marked the beginning of the proceedings, the nine lamps were to be kept perpetually lit throughout the festival, where they would be changed daily. This was followed by a quick positioning and alignment of the images of the Nine Emperor Buddhas on the altar, where they were accompanied by another larger set of images that were carved in their likeness.

▶ A sea of devotees dressed in white, led by the monks, prepare to pay obeisance to the Nine Emperor Buddhas in the late afternoon while a small group of individuals accompanied the Hall-Master to Zhun Ti Tang.

在临近傍晚时分，一众身着素服的信徒在僧人的率领下，准备向九皇佛祖致敬以示敬仰。另一小群人则陪伴堂主到准提堂去。



▶ Recital of an incantation upon the Nine Heavenly Lamps by the Hall Master.

堂主正全神贯注地对灯烛轻声念咒语，接着就把它镶入存放九盏天灯的三角形框架。这些由框架支撑的天灯喻示庆典已然掀开序幕。



一系列接引与诵经仪式开始之后，一群准提堂的义工便兵分多路，到各地点迎接第一组于2010年上半年开光的九皇佛祖神像，这些神像将在这期间见证并参与庄严的庆典。神像被带到道场后，堂主接着就把由竹竿支撑的九盏灯升上天。这个不可或缺的仪式象征着庙宇恭请神明参与接下来的九皇大帝诞庆祝活动。九盏明灯的升空意味着庆典的开始，而这九盏明灯会在节庆期间持续点亮，并在每天更换灯烛。紧接着就是将九皇佛祖神像快速定位和摆放于神台，其上还有另一组更大的神像。



◀ Happiness amidst the arrival of the first set of images of the Nine Emperor at the festival tentage outside of Rivervale Plaza from Zhun Ti Tang.

从准提堂运送第一组九皇佛祖的神像到鲤河大厦外的道场时，所有人的脸上都洋溢着喜悦。接下来的十二天，神像将由庙宇及其信众供奉。



◀ Final adjustments to the attires of the Nine Emperor Gods by the Hall Master before the invitation ceremony at the beach.

堂主为九皇佛祖调整神袍以作最后的准备，一众信徒与义工在海边请神仪式进行前休息片刻，共进晚餐。

Night had soon descended over Singapore. After a quick accounting for the various volunteers tasked with wielding various ritual paraphernalia such as horsetail whisks and banners inscribed with the sacred names of the Nine Emperor Buddhas, the Hall-Master prepared to enter the inner altar to invite the sacred basin that would eventually become the symbolic seat of the Nine Emperor Buddhas. It would be ferried from one point to another in a pair of majestic black palanquins covered with gold trimmings.

► Preparations of the final cleansing rites and installation of the Nine Emperor Gods' spiritual seat in yellow-veiled awaiting palanquins.

堂主与炉主们在四名义工的协助下，在黄布的遮掩下进行最后的净化仪式，并将九皇佛祖圣椅安放于等候一旁的轿子中。



Accompanied by much excitement, the entire contingent prepares to make its way to Changi Beach, where an altar facing the sea was already set up. The ceremony began with a recitation of scriptures devoted to Guanyin Bodhisattva led by the invited monks, namely the Heart Sutra and the Great Compassion Mantra before the Hall-Master, acting as the representative and spiritual leader of the present contingent, tosses a pair of divination blocks in the hope of receiving an affirmation of the divinities' arrival from the sea.

► The Hall-Master (centre), the censer master (extreme right) and assistant-censer master of Zhun Ti Tang (behind the censer master) inviting the Nine Emperor Buddhas.

准提堂堂主（中）、炉主（最右）及副炉主（炉主的后方）正向九皇佛祖祈求保佑出席仪式的信众。准提堂与九皇佛祖之间的沟通都是以掷筊的方式进行的。



夜幕降临，义工被分配好各自须承担的工作，如手持拂尘和刻有九皇佛祖圣名的横彩等各类祭祀用品，随后堂主进入内殿请出圣盆。这个圣盆最终将成为九皇佛祖的圣椅，九尊佛像则由一对带有金色饰边的巨型轿子运载。



在充满欢愉的气氛中，大队准备前往樟宜海边，那里已经搭起面向大海的临时道场。仪式开始，受邀僧人带领众人诵读《心经》与《大悲咒》。作为大队代表和精神领袖的堂主这时掷起一对筊子，希望得到神明已从海上降临的消息。

◀ At Changi Beach, the arrival of Zhun Ti Tang's contingent with musical instruments, ritual paraphernalia, and decorations, including banners welcoming the Nine Emperor Buddhas.

夜幕降临，义工与信徒在排成整齐的队伍，拿着各式各样的乐器和祭祀用具，还有刻有九皇佛祖圣名的横彩，浩浩荡荡地前往海边，为庄严但喜庆的海上迎接九皇佛祖仪式增添了许多色彩和气氛。

It was not long before the Nine Emperor Buddhas had made their presence known with a 'smiling' result after the divination blocks were thrown. Boarding a small boat that was eventually sailed into the middle of the sea, the Hall-Master and a small group of volunteers invited the Nine Emperor Buddhas into the waiting censer of sandalwood incense under the cloak of darkness while devotees waited on the beach in anticipation.

As the boat approached the beach, the entire congregation cheered with joy and enthusiasm at the arrival of the Nine Emperor Buddhas. After having secured the censer in one of the waiting palanquins, scriptures devoted to Guanyin Bodhisattva and exaltations of the Medicine Buddha were recited while waiting devotees knelt before the palanquins that housed the Nine Emperor Buddhas. Now that the invitation ceremony was complete, the entire congregation made its way back to Zhun Ti Tang, all the while keeping an eye on the path that was now lit by the countless fairy lines that dotted the outside of the now-swaying palanquins.

▶ The Hall-Master leads his contingent of devotees and volunteers back to Zhun Ti Tang after having successfully invited the Nine Emperor Buddhas to take their seats in the swaying palanquins.

在成功接引九皇佛祖陆续就位后，堂主率领一众信徒义工返回准提堂。



A short detour was made to the Hall-Master's home, to report to the deities about the successful invitation, and subsequent hosting of the Nine Emperor Buddhas at the tentage for the rest of the Festival was underway. Led by the rocking and lit palanquins and the Hall-Master, the snaking procession had eventually culminated at the tentage after a short journey on foot. The event climaxed with the Hall-Master's invitation of the seated Nine Emperor Buddhas to rest in the inner altar of the altar before consecrating the various images that were honoured in the tentage, all the while thanking everyone for their hard work at ensuring the event's success.

▶ The enclosed palanquins that hosted the Nine Emperor Buddhas continued to sway as they waited for the Hall-Master and the invited monks to complete the required rites in Zhun Ti Tang.

在等待堂主与受邀僧人完成仪式的同时，善信们继续摇晃着载有九皇佛祖的密封圣轿。



没过多久，堂主掷出“笑杯”，这意味着九皇佛祖已降临。堂主和义工们登上一艘小船，小船缓缓地驶进海中央。接着，他们在昏暗天色的笼罩下将九皇佛祖神灵引入檀香香炉，信众则在海边屏息期待。

当船只引擎的熟悉声响逼近海边时，在场的信众都报以热烈欢呼来迎接九皇佛祖的到来。将香炉安请到其中一乘轿子后，现场诵起观音菩萨还有药师佛升天的经文，一旁的信徒则跪在安置九皇佛祖的轿子前静静地膜拜。至此，请神仪式终于大功告成，大队准备返回准提堂。之前在大队所到之处，现在都被左右摇晃的轿子外部上的灯饰点亮。

大队顺道经过堂主的住家，他在那里向神明禀告请神仪式成功举行，以及帐篷中正在展开的九皇佛祖庆典活动。在摇摇晃晃亮灯的轿子和堂主的引领下，大队在徒步行走一小段路后终于抵达帐篷下的道场。压轴的节目就是堂主邀请九皇佛祖入座内殿歇息，然后才为道场内的各尊神像开光，同时感谢大家为活动的成功付出的辛勤努力。



◀ The Hall-Master prepares to consecrate the incense burner with the command flags of Zhun Ti Tang and the command flag bestowed upon Zhun Ti Tang by their ancestral temple in Bangkok while waiting for the Nine Emperor Buddhas to complete their inspection of the tentage in their swaying palanquins.

在等待九皇佛祖完成对道场检阅的同时，堂主正准备以准提堂的令旗为香炉开光，这幅令旗是曼谷的祖庙赠予准提堂的。



◀ Nine images of the Nine Emperor Gods.

九皇佛祖九尊金身。



◀ Reflecting their Buddhist origins, the Festival of the Nine Emperor Buddhas was officiated and largely led by Buddhist monks.

由于他们的佛教渊源，准提堂的九皇胜会由佛教僧侣主持。

Inviting of the Sacred Incense Ashes from Thailand

After the Nine Emperor Buddhas had been invited to take their seats on the main altar, a team of Buddhist monks began the last round of scriptural recitations and propitiation rites. There was also no rest for the Hall-Master and his aides, however. As a variety of vegetarian delicacies had to be prepared in the deities' honour, coupled with the Hall-Master's preparation for his trip to Bangkok, there was never a moment at Zhun Ti Tang without activity. The trip to Bangkok involved visits to three Mahayana Buddhist temples which also worshipped the Nine Emperor Buddhas, and thus were also observant of the practices that one observes among devotees and hosts of the Nine Emperor Gods in Singapore, such as the observance of a vegetarian diet and the wearing of white clothing.

In 2016, Zhun Ti Tang had consecrated a larger replica of the Nine Emperor Buddhas by using the initial (and smaller) set as a base. Since a third set was also consecrated during the invitation ceremony, one would be forgiven for wondering where the second set was honoured. Long Lian Si in Bangkok's Chinatown provided the answer, where the second set of the Nine Emperor Gods sits, alongside an intricately decorated image of the Dipper Matriarch had been gifted to the temple by Zhun Ti Tang.

▶ The original set of Nine Emperor Buddhas as they are honoured in Long Lian Si, Bangkok.

原来的九皇佛祖神像如今供奉于曼谷龙莲寺。



▶ The second set of Nine Emperor Buddhas consecrated by Zhun Ti Tang in 2016 were gifted to Long Lian Si, a Mahayana Buddhist temple in Bangkok. Accompanying them is an image of Dou Mu Niang.

第二组在2016年被准提堂开光的九皇佛祖神像已经赠送给一座名叫龙莲寺的大乘佛教寺庙。伴随在旁的是斗母娘娘，居于照片中间靠左的地方。



从泰国新兴坛请香火

九皇佛祖被顺利地请到神台的位置后，一众僧人接着便开始进行最后一轮的祭祀和诵经仪式。九皇胜会的活动由僧人主持及掀开序幕，这与其佛教渊源不无关系。

然而，堂主与他的助手并没有片刻的休息。由于要为神明准备各种素食菜肴，并为堂主前往曼谷进行筹备工作，在这段期间准提堂尚不能停歇。曼谷之行将拜访三座同样供奉九皇佛祖的大乘佛教寺庙。这些寺庙也遵守新加坡信众向来的习俗，像茹素以及身着全白。

2016年，准提堂以最初（但较小）的一组神像作为基础，塑造了一组较大尺寸的九皇佛祖神像。既然第三组神像已经在请神仪式里开光，人们会不禁好奇第二组神像到底是供奉于何处。这个问题的答案就在曼谷唐人街的龙莲寺，准提堂将第二组九皇佛祖神像连同精细雕琢的斗母神一并赠送给该寺庙。



◀ Gift exchanges between Zhun Ti Tang and the Thai Buddhist masters at Long Lian Si during the 2017 Nine Emperor Gods Festival.

2017年九皇胜会中，准提堂代表与泰国龙莲寺师傅欢愉地交换礼品并向他们表达感激。

The highlight of the 2017 trip to Bangkok was Zhun Ti Tang's visit to Xin Xing Tan, its ancestral temple in relation to the incense lineage. The Hall-Master requested for a bag of sandalwood ashes from the temple that was to be brought back to Singapore in order to strengthen the spiritual ties that both temples share with each other through their honouring of the Nine Emperor Buddhas. The ceremony, performed on the first day of ninth lunar month, was a simple, yet solemn one that began in the wee hours of the morning, where the Hall-Master and his aides made the trek to the temple on foot with a myriad of offerings that included joss paper and a selection of fruits. Led by the resident Master of Xin Xing Tan, nine spoonfuls of sandalwood ashes were scooped and sealed within a yellow bag for Zhun Ti Tang to bring back to Singapore. The visit ended with an enhancing of the ritual flags that Zhun Ti Tang had first brought back to Singapore from Xin Xing Tan in 2010.

► Honouring of the Nine Emperor Gods at Xin Xing Tan with Dou Mu Niang Niang positioned above the other deity images.

新兴坛供奉的九皇佛祖，神坛光彩照人。斗母娘娘坐在龙椅上，两旁各有一名童子，位置略高于九皇佛祖。九皇佛祖则坐在莲花宝座上。



► The Resident Master of Xin Xing Tan obliges Zhun Ti Tang's request with the scooping of nine measures of sacred ash from the incense censer devoted to worshipping the Nine Emperor Gods.

新兴坛住持师傅在准提堂的请求下从庙里供奉九皇佛祖的香炉中舀起九勺圣洁香灰。



Twelve hours later, back in Singapore, much fanfare greeted the returning contingent as the Hall-Master passed the incense ashes of Xin Xing Tan across the many incense urns at the tentage. The entire event was one witnessed by all present at Zhun Ti Tang and accompanied by gongs and countless drumbeats, all of which contributed to the celebratory atmosphere of the event. A sprinkling of the sacred ashes into Zhun Ti Tang's main censer and the incense censer of the Nine Emperor Buddhas in the inner altar signalled the end of the ceremony, but it also marked the beginning of Zhun Ti Tang's preparation for one of the temple's highlights on the second day of the ninth lunar month: the annual visiting (henceforth, *yew keng* viz. tour of the temple's surrounding) different temples devoted to the Nine Emperor Gods around the island.

曼谷的新兴坛是准提堂的祖庙，也即香火的源头。在此次行程中，新兴坛是重头戏。堂主向寺庙请求一包檀香灰准备带回新加坡，以强化双方共同供奉九皇佛祖形成的特殊精神联系。在农历九月初一进行的仪式简单但庄严。自清晨时分开始，堂主和助手们徒步前往寺庙，手里捧着金银纸和各式水果等供品。在新兴坛住持师傅的带领下，大伙们舀起九勺檀香灰并将之密封在一个黄色袋子中，让准提堂带回新加坡。行程最后，准提堂准备带回去的旗子也受到加持，这个旗子在2010年首次被带回新加坡并在作法时使用。



◀ A photograph with the master and staff of Xin Xing before Zhun Ti Tang returns to Singapore with the sacred ashes retrieved from her ancestral temple.

准提堂代表在带着所请的圣灰返回新加坡之前，与新兴坛的师父合影留念。

十二个小时后，大伙们回到了新加坡。信众们热情高涨地迎接归来的队伍，堂主把从新兴坛请来的香灰撒在道场里的各个香炉中。在场的所有人都见证了整个活动，在锣鼓喧天的烘托下，全场充满了欢愉喜庆的气氛。在准提堂的主香炉与内殿九皇佛祖的香炉里撒上圣洁香灰即喻示着仪式的结束，但这也意味着准提堂另一项大型庆祝活动筹备的开始，那就是农历九月初二拜访全岛九皇庙宇的游境活动。



◀ Presentation of the sacred sandalwood ashes invited from Xin Xing Tan by Zhun Ti Tang's Hall Master at the festival tentage.

堂主向神明献上队伍从新兴坛带回来的檀香灰。

Yew Keng Processions

Perhaps the most tiring, but equally rewarding, part of the Festival of the Nine Emperor Buddhas is to follow a contingent of volunteers, palanquin bearers and devotees across the island's many temples that worshipped of the Nine Emperor Gods. Beginning in the early afternoon, the proceedings began with a round of chanting led by the invited monks, before the Nine Emperor Buddhas were invited from their place of rest in the inner altar into the waiting palanquins. As the palanquins began to sway, and subsequently loaded upon lorries devoted to ferrying the deities from one temple to another, final preparations were made for the contingent's departure from the tentage.

▶ Praying to the Nine Emperor Buddhas for a successful *yew keng*.

参与游境者正向九皇佛祖祈愿绕境活动能圆满成功。



▶ Invitation of the Nine Emperor Buddhas into the palanquins for the *yew keng*.

九皇佛祖被请到轿子里后准备离开道场，轿队组长则在一旁快速检查。



游境

九皇胜会最辛苦但却获益良多的仪式，要数带领一众志愿者、轿队成员和信众参拜岛上九皇庙宇的游境活动。中午时分之后，游行仪式由受邀僧人带领诵经揭开序幕，接着内殿中的九皇佛祖被请到一旁恭候的轿子中。当轿子开始摇晃，并被抬上负责运送轿子到各庙宇的罗厘时，大队已经做好了离开道场的最后筹备工作。



◀ Offering fragrant sandalwood into the incense censer of Hoon Sian Keng by Zhun Ti Tang's Hall Master.

堂主代表准提堂，把檀香倒入第一间巡访的庙宇——位于樟宜路的云仙宫——的香炉中。



▶ Performances of scriptural recitations by monks at Zhun Ti Tang's second stop, Kim San Tze, in honour of the Nine Emperor Gods and Bodhisattva Guanyin.

如这两张摄于金山寺（游境巡访的第二间庙宇）的照片所示，诵经供奉九皇佛祖和观世音菩萨的是僧人，而非乩童或道士。





◀ Nan Bei Dou Mu Gong's presentation of a token of appreciation to the Chairman of Zhun Ti Tang.

准提堂巡访的第三间庙宇，南北斗母宫，在友诺士地铁站旁搭起临时帐篷。在第二张照片里，该庙向准提堂主席赠送礼物以表达谢意。

▶ Zhun Ti Tang's Hall Master is leading the selected members in honouring the Nine Emperor Gods in the main hall of Kew Huang Keng, the fourth stop in Zhun Ti Tang's 2017 *yew keng* schedule.

准提堂巡访的第四间庙宇，九皇宫，则由一众抬轿大队率领。堂主紧随在后，带领着准提堂炉主与筹委会成员进入庙宇内殿向九皇大帝致敬。





◀ A Hong San Temple elder prepares to transfer some of the sacred sandalwood shavings from Hong San Temple's censer into Zhun Ti Tang's own.

凤山宫长老正准备把本庙香炉里的部分檀香木屑转入准提堂的香炉里。

► The Hall-Master prepares to confer the blessing of the Nine Emperor Buddhas upon the residence of the censer master.

堂主准备向所有居住在炉主的住所送上九皇佛祖的祝福。



► Fifth on Zhun Ti Tang's visitation list was Hougang Dou Mu Gong

准提堂绕境活动第五个拜访的地点是后港斗母宫。





◀ Reinforcement of friendships during Zhun Ti Tang's *yew keng* visit to Leng San Giam Dou Mu Gong.

从准提堂到访位于宏茂桥的龙山岩斗母宫的照片中可见，九皇千秋庆典的绕境活动旨在深化不同庙宇之间的友好关系，并为准提堂成员和信徒提供了与其他庙宇交流的平台。

► Exchange gifts at Leong Nam Temple, the final destination of Zhun Ti Tang's *yew keng* in 2017.

准提堂绕境活动的最后一站是龙南殿。在短暂的祭祀仪式及向龙南殿供奉的九皇大帝禀告之后，双方互相交换礼物。





▲ Shared smiles amongst committee members after the completion of the full-day *yew keng*.

准提堂筹委会成员在完成绕境盛典后的集体合照。

Sixth Day of the Ninth Lunar Month and Visits from Other Temples

Throughout the festival, Zhun Ti Tang had also hosted various temples that had visited them. These exchanges were more than a reciprocal transaction; rather, they embodied a sense of community amongst different believers of the Nine Emperor Gods. While each temple worships the Nine Emperor Gods in a manner befitting of their respective history and belief system, these visits serve to underscore the sentiment of mutuality and respect that one had for the other and vice versa.

▶ Cakes adorned with birthday wishes are prepared alongside vegetarian delicacies to honour the Nine Emperor Gods.

为了供奉九皇佛祖，准提堂除了准备了各种丰盛素食菜肴，也准备了附上满满祝福的生日蛋糕向神明祝寿。



▶ Nan Bei Dou Mu Gong's visit to Zhun Ti Tang.

南北斗母宫到访准提堂。



农历九月初六和宫庙间的参拜

在整个节庆期间，准提堂也接待了许多来访的友庙。这些拜访不仅仅是表面的打招呼，也体现了九皇大帝信徒之间的共同体意识。虽然各庙宇依据各自的传统和信仰系统祭祀九皇大帝，但这些互访有助于增进庙宇间的情感互通以及相互尊重。



▲ Choa Chu Kang Tao Bu Keng's visit to Zhun Ti Tang.

蔡厝港斗母宫到访准提堂。

► Leng San Giam Dou Mu Gong's visit to Zhun Ti Tang.

龙岩岩斗母宫到访准提堂。





Among Kew Huang Keng's offerings presented to Zhun Ti Tang during the inter-temple visits were two large candles placed in the incense censer.

九皇宫到访准提堂。照片中两支燃烧着的黄色大蜡烛就是九皇宫献给准提堂的礼物。

The many happy faces witnessed during the various visits and exchanges made by representatives of other temples which observed the Festival of the Nine Emperor Gods to Zhun Ti Tang throughout the nine days are testaments to the strong ties built through socialisation. The few photos as displayed here cannot serve to do justice to the extensive friendships and sentiments of hospitality built and maintained through the worship of the Nine Emperor Gods.

► Feeding the wandering souls at the festival site to secure their salvation during Zhun Ti Tang's *yan kou* rituals.

准提堂在焰口仪式中向道场周围的孤魂野鬼喂食，希望他们早日得到救赎。



在九天的时间里，各九皇庙代表到达准提堂进行访问与交流时所展露的笑颜都证明了庙宇之间通过社交互动建立起的紧密关系。本文所展示的区区几张照片并不足以反映出由于共同供奉九皇大帝而建立起来的深厚友谊和情感互通关系。



Eighth Day of the Ninth Lunar Month

The twelve days seem to have passed in a blur. The eighth day of the ninth lunar month was marked by a grand celebratory dinner which took place concurrently with an auction of various antiques and prayer paraphernalia. After a quick tidying up of the ritual space, it was time to worship the Jade Emperor. This ritual, which officially begins during the first hour of the ninth day of the ninth lunar month, involves countless man hours and preparation beforehand, a process that begins from the eighth day.



▲ Offering of the prize incense sticks into the incense censer of the Nine Emperor Gods by the winner of the bid with the aid of the Hall Master.

在成功竞拍一套香烛之后，一位欣喜若狂的信众在堂主的帮助下，准备将其进献到九皇佛祖的香炉。

九月初八斋席

十二天一眨眼就过去了。农历九月初八这天，准提堂举行了一场盛大的庆祝晚宴，同时拍卖各种古董和祈祷用品。快速清理道场空间后，就到了祭祀玉皇大帝的时候。这场仪式于九月初九子时正式开始，自初八当天已事先动用了许多人力物力进行筹备工作。



▲ Guests for the banquet held on the eighth day of the Nine Emperor Gods Festival included members of the Community Club.

准提堂九皇胜会的庆祝活动提升了其在社区邻里的可见度。在这张照片里，社区俱乐部成员也受邀出席农历九月初八的晚宴。

► Preparations for the Heaven Worshipping Ceremony span across the eighth night and the early hours of the ninth day of the festival.

准提堂正在为斋天法会做准备，斋天法会将持续到农历九月初九的早晨，也就是九皇胜会最后一天。





▲ Offerings passed amongst the attending monks and devotees during the Heaven Worshipping Ceremony.

在斋天法会中僧人和在场的信徒之间相互传递供品。这场仪式持续到农历九月初九清晨时分，这也喻示着庆典的结束。

Sending-off Ceremony

The remainder of the ninth day of the ninth lunar month was spent getting ready for the sending-off of the Nine Emperor Buddhas, a ritual similar to the invitation ceremony. By twilight, as the final scriptures were recited by the invited monks, the Hall-Master and his contingent of volunteers ready themselves for the lowering of the nine heavenly lamps. It was not long before an excited crowd began to gather within the tentage in anticipation for the sending off ceremony to begin.

► Inclusion of a new table in light of the increased offerings at the altar devoted to the Nine Heavenly Lamps on the final day.

在庆典最后一天，九盏天灯的祭坛上出现了更多供品，因此需要摆出另一张桌子，以容纳更多献上的素食。



► Inspection of volunteers bearing the necessary ritual items for the sending-off ceremony.

义工在出发前往海滩之前进行最后的人数点算，在送神仪式上，义工们手捧各种与九皇胜会相关的仪式道具。



恭送九皇回銮

九月初九余下的时间都是为九皇佛祖的送神仪式做准备，这场送驾仪式与之前的请神仪式极为相似。到了黄昏时分，受邀僧人在诵读最后的经文的同时，堂主和信众为九盏天灯降落仪式做好准备。不久，兴奋的人群逐渐聚集在帐篷下，等待送神仪式的开始。



Member of Parliament, MP Charles Chong, was in attendance on the ninth day of Zhun Ti Tang's 2017 Nine Emperor Gods Festival celebrations.

2017年，国会议员张有福先生在农历九月初九恭送九皇佛祖回銮之前，参加了准提堂的庆典活动。



As the Nine Emperor Buddhas led the way to Zhun Ti Tang in their palanquins, a long procession of devotees and volunteers garbed in white followed the Hall-Master from behind at a slow but steady pace. After reaching Zhun Ti Tang, the lit palanquins arrive to a simple table laid with incense and offerings in the honour of the Nine Emperor Buddhas. A sudden intensification of the palanquins' rocking aroused the attention of onlookers and the surprise of the palanquin bearers, who began to move towards the lorries that had awaited them.

▶ The Hall Master performed a final cleansing ritual of the palanquins before installing the Nine Emperor Buddhas.

在邀请九皇佛祖就坐前，堂主对轿子进行最后的清淨仪式。



▶ Greeting them is a makeshift altar of incense and food offerings prepared for the benefit of the deities while the Hall-Master and the committee of Zhun Ti Tang performs another round of thanks and reporting to the divinities in Zhun Ti Tang's premises.

迎接众人的是一张摆着香烛和供品的临时神台，堂主与准提堂成员在堂内进行另一轮答谢与禀告。



当九皇佛祖坐着轿子前往准提堂时，由一群白衣信徒与义工组成的大队缓缓地跟随在堂主的后面。抵达准提堂后，点亮的轿子接着来到一张摆着香烛供品的桌子。轿子忽然猛烈地摇晃起来，引来旁观者好奇的目光，也震惊了抬轿成员。抬轿成员于是开始移向等候在旁的罗厘。



◀ Palanquins led the contingent's return to Zhun Ti Tang.

大伙们跟随轿子回到准提堂。

The entire congregation performed another round of obeisance at Zhun Ti Tang, and began making their way back to Changi beach. As per the invitation ritual, the sacred titles of the Nine Emperor Buddhas were recited by the attending monks. A simple ritual of thanksgiving to the Nine Emperor Buddhas for their presence throughout the festival at Zhun Ti Tang was then performed with cups of tea before the makeshift altar by key personalities involved in the event, such as the Hall-Master, the censer-masters and the leader of the palanquin bearers.

► Preparations and rituals necessary for the sending-off ceremony began as soon as members of the congregation had arrived at the beach.

大队成员在抵达海边后随即展开送神仪式的筹备工作。

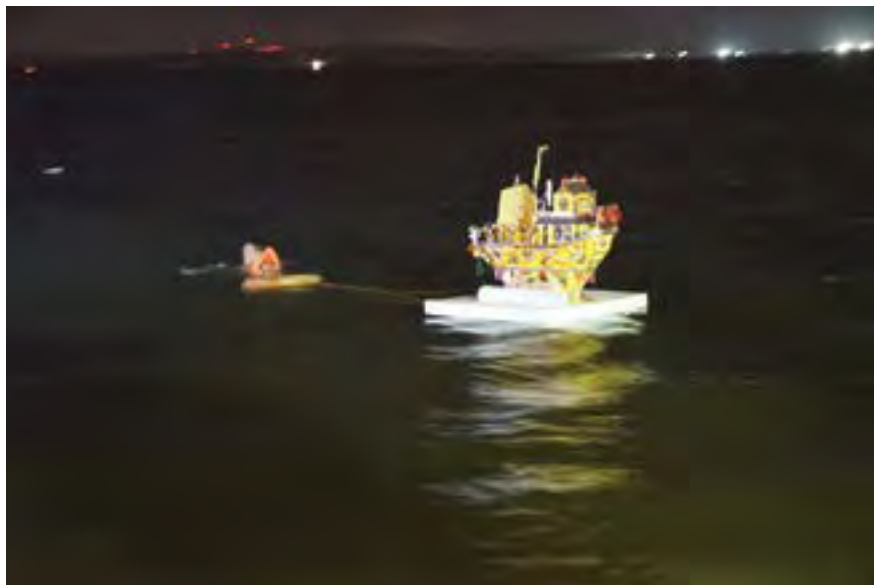


不久后，全体信众在准提堂进行另一轮敬仰仪式，并开始往樟宜海边进发。如同请神仪式那样，在场僧人逐一念出九皇佛祖的圣名。一场简单的九皇佛祖答谢仪式随后展开，感谢神明在整个节日期间降临赐福，堂主、炉主、抬轿大队队长等盛典的关键人物在临时神台前向神明敬茶。



◀ The sending-off ceremony's climax involves boarding with the censer of the Nine Emperor Buddhas accompanied by the Hall Master and close aides.

送神仪式在堂主和他最亲近的几位助手登船时达到高潮，炉主捧着代表九皇佛祖的一炉檀香灰跟随其后。



◀ Release of the Dragon Ship into the open sea behind the boat carrying the censer of the Nine Emperor Bodhisattvas.

片刻之后，船只驶进公海，准提堂为仪式准备的龙舟尾随而至。

Accompanied by dozens of devotees who waited at the beach while clutching onto their respective command flags that were issued to them under the authority of the Nine Emperor Buddhas at Zhun Ti Tang, the Hall-Master and the censer masters of the event performed the sending off ritual far out at sea. A final flicker from the coast marked the concurrent immolation of the still-bobbing dragon boat, a sight that was soon followed by the return of the motorboat to the beach. The Festival of the Nine Emperor Buddhas, as observed celebrated by Zhun Ti Tang, had thus ended. Volunteers and devotees began making their way back to the lit carpark that flanked Changi Beach, ready to return home after a long and tiring period of honouring the Nine Emperor Buddhas.



▲ Devotees, including those selected to wield the ritual flag, observe the last few moments of the coastal departure of the Nine Emperor Gods in solemn silence.

在送神仪式的最后几分钟，人群中弥漫着庄严的气氛，这既意味着盛典的结束，也标志着信仰得到重建。静谧中，有幸手持九皇佛祖令旗的信徒们静候岸上，一起目送小船驶入黑暗的大海。

信徒们手持由准提堂内九皇佛祖授予的令旗，在海滩上守候着，堂主与炉主们在黑暗的掩护下进行了送神仪式。摩托船只回到海滩不久后，岸边出现的最后一道火光标榜龙舟的自焚。准提堂庆祝的九皇胜会也落下了帷幕。义工与信徒们开始步行返回明亮的停车场，完成了一段漫长又艰辛的九皇佛祖供奉仪式的他们准备回家。



▲ Sighted flames and smoke signalling the successful return of the Nine Emperor Buddhas to their abode.

远处的火光象征九皇佛祖已经回銮。

Conclusion

The Festival of the Nine Emperor Buddhas at Zhun Ti Tang is rather unique as one of several Nine Emperor Gods temples in Singapore adopting Buddhist set-ups and scriptural traditions. Its incense lineage to a Chinese temple in Bangkok and a Mahayana Buddhist tradition has shaped its rather unique traditions. The temple has also tapped into wider Mahayana Buddhist networks extending to Taiwan. Drawing on these Buddhist scriptural and ritual traditions, Buddhist aesthetics and material culture, and transnational Mahayana Buddhist networks, Zhun Ti Tang has built a new Mahayana Buddhist Nine Emperor Gods Festival community in northeastern and eastern Singapore, emphasizing the important overlaps between the values, practices, and traditions between Mahayana Buddhist traditions and the Nine Emperor Gods Festival. It will continue to be one of the important centres for the Buddhist communities observing the Nine Emperor Gods Festival.

结语

新加坡有几座九皇庙宇遵循佛教教义和经文传统组织九皇胜会，准提堂是其中之一。准提堂的香火源于曼谷一座遵循大乘佛教传统的华人庙宇，同时也融入延伸至台湾的更广泛的大乘佛教网络中。透过这些佛教经典、仪式传统和佛教组织网络，以及具有佛教美学价值的物质文化，准体堂成功地在新加坡东北部和东部建立了一个大乘佛教九皇胜会社区，这反映了大乘佛教与九皇胜会的价值观、实践和传统之间存在的共通之处。准提堂将会一直是佛教社区庆祝九皇胜会的重要中心之一。