

**ABOUT THE 70TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BATTLE FOR SINGAPORE
1941 – 1942**

2012 marks the 70th anniversary of the beginning of World War II in Southeast Asia and the Battle for Singapore. This was the darkest chapter in Singapore's story. This fateful event cuts across all Singaporeans regardless of race, language or religion, and speaks of how together as one, we survived extreme hardship and emerged stronger as an independent nation and people. To commemorate this important period in our history, the National Heritage Board (NHB) and partners have organised a series of events to remember the many people who fought for Singapore's freedom. For details, please visit www.nhb.gov.sg/battleforsg

Key Trails, Exhibitions, Tours and Talks

• **AIR RAID SHELTERS IN WAR-TIME SINGAPORE EXHIBITION AND GUIDED TOURS**

Exhibition date: 4 February 2012 – 30 June 2012

Venue: Tiong Bahru Market

Public Tour Timings: Saturdays, 4, 11, 18 & 25 February 2012 (10am – 11am, 11am – noon)



Synopsis

Sign up for a free guided tour and grab the rare chance to walk through a pre-war air raid shelter that still exists today in Tiong Bahru. Also, pop by the exhibition to learn more about the history of air raid shelters during pre-war and war-time Singapore. Limited spaces for the public tours are available on a first come, first served basis. To register for the tours, email lee_bee_cheng@nhb.gov.sg.

• **FOUR DAYS IN FEBRUARY: ADAM PARK THE LAST BATTLE & IMAGES OF INTERNMENT: THE EYE & ART OF WILLIAM HAXWORTH**

Date: 8 February 2012 – 24 June 2012

Venue: National Library Singapore, Level 10, National Library Gallery

Synopsis

The exhibition *Four Days in February: Adam Park The Last Battle* showcases Adam Park and its role as one of Britain's defence positions in Singapore during the World War II. The exhibition features a physical recreation of the typology of Adam Park and showcases the research findings and artefacts uncovered by the Singapore Heritage Society during its archaeological excavation of Adam Park.

As an extension of the Adam Park story, the public can also visit the complementary exhibition, *Images of Internment: The Eye & Art of William Haxworth*. Ex-Prisoner-of-War and accomplished artist William Haxworth provides his perspective on World War II in Singapore through over one hundred pieces of his artworks depicting life in the Prisoner-of-War camps. The artworks are on loan from the National Archives of Singapore's Haxworth Collection, together with selected sketches by Mr Chia Chew Soo also from the National Archives Collection, and drawings by internationally renowned Singaporean artist Liu Kang on the Japanese Occupation in Singapore.

About William Haxworth

Born in Britain in 1906, William Haxworth joined the Singapore Police Force in 1929 as an Inspector. With the onset of World War II in 1941, he was re-designated Chief Investigator of the War Risks Insurance Department of the Singapore Treasury. During World War II, Haxworth became a Prisoner-of-War and was held in the Changi Prison and Sime Road Camp for the entire duration of the Japanese Occupation from 1942 to 1945.

During those 44 months of internment, Haxworth produced over 300 hundred pieces of pencil sketches, watercolours and ink drawings; despite facing a severe shortage of paper and drawing materials. The pieces depict the harsh, crowded and unhygienic conditions of the internment camps, capturing the essence of his surroundings with sensitivity often coupled with a light comic touch.

After the war, Haxworth returned to the Police Force, rising to Chief Superintendent of Traffic. He is also famed for his outstanding work with youths during his post World War II stay in Singapore. Haxworth retired in 1954 and passed away in 1985 at the age of 79. The collection was donated to the National Archives of Singapore by his wife in 1986.

Media Invite

Members of the media are invited to attend and cover the launches of the two exhibitions. Do mark this down in your diary - details will be provided nearer to date.

Date: Thursday, 8 February 2012

Time: 5.00pm

Venue: National Library Singapore, Level 10, National Library Gallery

• **WORLD WAR II TRAIL AND RESILIENCE TRAILS**

Date: From 18 February 2012

Synopsis

Launched to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the Fall of Singapore, the *World War II Trail* features World War II historical markers presenting information and archival images related to the war, while the *Resilience Trails* (incorporating elements from the main *World War II Trail*) consist of different modules revealing Singapore's history and showcasing how our forefathers together built this nation we call Singapore despite the odds.

Media Invite

Official launch of World War II Trail and Resilience Trails by Dr Yaacob Ibrahim, Minister for Information, Communications and the Arts. Do mark this down in your diary, an invite will be sent nearer to date.

Date: Tuesday, 14 February 2012

Time: 9.30am

Venue: MICA Building

Note: Photo opportunities and interviews with war veterans available

About World War II Trail

There are currently 14 World War II markers in Singapore that mark locations that were significant in the war years. They were unveiled in 1995 to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the end of the war.

Six additional markers will be launched on 14 February 2012, bringing the total to 20 markers in all. The six new markers will commemorate additional sites that have been

identified as significant to the war, and together with the existing markers, make up the *World War II Trail*.

	Existing World War II Historic Markers	Location
1.	Sarimbun Beach Battle Site	Beach at Jln Bahtera
2.	Kranji Beach Battle Site	Kranji Reservoir Park
3.	Jurong-Kranji Defence Site	Jurong West Neighbourhood Park
4.	Bukit Timah Battle Site	Bukit Timah Nature Reserve
5.	Pasir Panjang Battle Site	Kent Ridge Park
6.	Labrador Battery Site	Labrador Park
7.	Bukit Batok Memorial Site	Bukit Batok Nature Park
8.	Indian National Army Monument Site	Esplanade Park
9.	Sook Ching Centre Site	Outside Hong Lim Complex
10.	Kempeitai East District Branch Site	Outside YMCA Building (Orchard Road)
11.	Japanese Propaganda Department Headquarters	Outside Cathay Building
12.	Changi Beach Massacre Site	Changi Beach Park
13.	Punggol Beach Massacre Site	Punggol Point (end of Punggol Road)
14.	Sentosa Beach Massacre Site	Serapong Golf Course (Sentosa Island)

About Resilience Trails

A new series of walking trails called *Resilience Trails* will be launched as well. These are thematic walking trails designed to increase Singaporeans' understanding and appreciation of our history and heritage as well as to allow participants to come away inspired with the positive can-do spirit evident through stories of Singapore's experiences in World War II and other major events that have shaped our nation.

- **REMEMBRANCE CEREMONY AT KRANJI WAR MEMORIAL**

Organised by the National Archives of Singapore and The Changi Museum

Date: 15 February 2012, 5pm

Venue: Kranji War Memorial

Synopsis

Join us in this commemorative ceremony that honours the memory of the war dead who lost their lives defending Singapore, and reflect on the contributions of those still safeguarding our security.

The ceremony will be attended by war veterans, their friends and relatives, representatives from Singapore Government departments, local associations and schools, Heads of Diplomatic Missions in Singapore and their Defence staffs and contingents of Service personnel from Commonwealth nations.

The ceremony is open to anyone wishing to attend. It will be an opportunity for all to honour the memory of the war dead who lost their lives for the defence of Singapore, as well as to reflect on the sacrifices of the servicemen and women who are still serving our country. Shuttle bus service to and from Kranji War Memorial will be provided every 30 minutes. Please email janelle_chua@nhb.gov.sg for details.

Media Invite

Members of the media are invited to attend the ceremony. Do mark this down in your diary, an invite will be sent nearer to date.

Date: Wednesday, 15 February 2012

Time: 5.00pm

Venue: Kranji War Memorial

Note: Photo opportunities and interviews with war veterans available

- **VOICES OF OUR DARKEST HOUR: 70TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FALL OF SINGAPORE COMMEMORATIVE TALKS**

Organised by the National Archives of Singapore

Dates: Saturdays, 4, 11, 18 & 25 February 2012

Session Timings: 10.30am – noon, 2pm – 3.30pm

Venue: Memories at Old Ford Factory

Synopsis

Interact with local World War II survivors as they recount their harrowing ordeal during the Japanese Occupation, and listen to a historian explain the military significance of the Fall of Singapore during World War II to attain greater understanding of life during the 44 months of the Japanese Occupation and appreciate the peace and harmony we enjoy today.

Light refreshments will be provided. Limited spaces available on a first come, first served basis. To register, email your name, NRIC, contact number and preferred dates to nhb_nasreg@nhb.gov.sg with the subject heading "WW2 Talks".

Schedule of Talks

- 4 February 2012 – Maj (Retired) Foong Fook Kay (AM) Ms Soh Peck Ann (PM)
- 11 February 2012 – Mr Wong Hiong Boon
- 18 February 2012 – Maj (Retired) Foong Fook Kay (AM) Ms Soh Peck Ann (PM)

About the Speakers*Mdm Soh Peck Ann*

When war came to Singapore, Mdm Soh Peck Ann was a child of seven. Her family narrowly cheated death during a Japanese bombing raid, although their Covent Garden house was completely destroyed. Later, during the Japanese Occupation, the males of her family were told to report to Tanjong Pagar police station but were spared from massacre at the last moment. After the war, Mdm Soh resumed her studies and became an art teacher at Crescent Girls' School, Baharuddin Vocational Institute, Toh Tuck Secondary School, Ghim Moh Secondary School, and Bukit Ho Swee Secondary School until her retirement in 1988. Since then, she has been teaching porcelain painting privately to art enthusiasts.

Mr Wong Hiong Boon

During the Japanese Occupation, Mr Wong Hiong Boon went to a local school set up by the Japanese to teach the local population, an experience he compares to attending military training. After the war, his first job was to be a teacher, first at Tampines Primary and then at his alma mater, Serangoon English. From there, he was first seconded to the People's Association as an instructor at the National Youth Leadership Training Institute (today's National Community Leadership Institute) and later to the Ministry of Home

Affairs where he became Assistant Commandant (Training) of the National Service Vigilante Corps.

Since his retirement, Mr Wong has been combining his love of art and history by teaching art part-time to students, and using his drawings of scenes of Singapore history to inculcate in the young a sense of love for Singapore.

Maj (Retired) Foong Fook Kay

Maj (Retired) Foong Fook Kay suffered deep personal loss as a young boy when his father, a sergeant in the Straits Settlements Volunteer Force, was taken away by the Japanese, never to be seen again. After the war and completion of his studies, he decided to follow in his father's military footsteps, enlisting as a professional soldier in 1957 with the newly formed Singapore Armed Forces. This is where he would stay for the next 27 years until his retirement as Major in 1984, undergoing such milestones as Konfrontasi and the setting up of the SAF Training Institute (SAFTI).

- **CONFERENCE ON THE CAUSES AND IMPACT OF THE FALL OF SINGAPORE**

Organised by the National Archives of Singapore and The Changi Museum, in collaboration with the Singapore History Consultants

Date: 16 February 2012, 9am – 5pm

Venue: Supreme Court Auditorium

Cost: \$5 for members of the public, free for students

Synopsis

Explore in vivid detail the causes of the Fall of Singapore, and assess its multifaceted impact on various Singapore communities and long term consequences on decolonisation, nationhood and regional security. This conference hopes to bring together historians, students, veterans and history enthusiasts to understand, reflect on and remember the Fall of Singapore.

Limited spaces available on a first come, first served basis. To register, email your name, NRIC and contact number to nhb_nasreg@nhb.gov.sg with the subject heading "WW2 Conference".

Other Programmes & Promotions

- **FREE ADMISSION 13 – 19 FEBRUARY 2012**

In commemoration of the 70th Anniversary of the Battle for Singapore, the National Museum of Singapore's History Gallery, Memories at Old Ford Factory and Reflections at Bukit Chandu will offer free admission from 13 to 19 February 2012.

Terms and conditions apply. Visit www.nhb.gov.sg/battleforsg for details.

- **WORLD WAR II MODEL-MAKING COMPETITION**

Competition ends 31 January 2012

Unleash your creativity and stand to win attractive prizes as you re-create scenes from this era in Singapore's history! The top five winners of this contest will also have their models showcased at Memories at Old Ford Factory and Reflections at Bukit Chandu. Terms and conditions apply. Please see the contest form for more details. Contest form

can be downloaded at www.nhb.gov.sg/nas. Email nhb_nasreg@nhb.gov.sg for more details.

- **BATTLE FOR SINGAPORE MOBILE APPLICATION**

Download the free “Battle for Singapore” mobile application and embark on exciting self-guided trails to learn more about Singapore’s World War II history. The “Battle for Singapore” mobile application will offer four different trails and provide a companion guide to 40 different historical World War II sites in Singapore.

The mobile application leverages on GPS location technology to “push” information about these hotspots to users, as well as image-recognition technology to allow users to accumulate “weapons” as they successfully complete each trail. The application is available for free download on iPhone and iPad platforms, and offers additional services such as route recommendations.

- **MUSEUM ROUNDTABLE COMMEMORATIVE COLLAR PINS PROMOTION**

Date: 10 – 26 February 2012 (While stocks last)

Make a trip to the Museum Roundtable’s war museums and collect all seven commemorative collar pins while learning about different aspects of Singapore’s war history. The collar pins are distributed at the Airforce Museum, Army Museum, Changi Museum, Fort Siloso, Memories at Old Ford Factory, Reflections at Bukit Chandu and The Battlebox.

- **PARTNER PROJECTS WITH SCHOOLS**

National Cadet Corps of Singapore

Date: 10 February 2012

Time: 2.30pm

Venue: Labrador Park Carpark B

NHB will be launching its *Battle for Singapore* mobile application which offers four self-directed World War II trails. To promote the adoption of the mobile application, NHB has partnered and trained the National Cadet Corps (NCC) of Singapore to conduct guided tours for students in 134 schools across Singapore. For the launch event, the NCC cadets will be bringing members of the media along one of the trails and showcasing the use of the mobile application.

Media Invite

Members of the media are invited to join us for the guided tour. Do mark this down in your diary, more details will be provided nearer to date.

Date: Friday, 10 February 2012

Time: 2.30pm

Venue: Labrador Park Carpark B

Elias Park Primary

Elias Park Primary will be leveraging on its learning centre “The Syonan Years” and organising a trail for its students leading them to a mock-up Prisoner-Of-War (PoW) cell so that they could “experience” life as a PoW. In addition, the school will have a special observance ceremony for all its students and staff as they commemorate the event on 15 February 2012.

As part of its community outreach efforts, Elias Park Primary School will also organise learning journeys for students from other schools and residents within its cluster to educate them on life as a PoW and to instil in students the importance of national resilience during the month of February. For this "Total Defence Day" edition of the learning journey, there will be quizzes and games for students to participate in as they learn further about this part of Singapore's history and the lessons they can derive from it.

Other Schools

CHIJ Toa Payoh and National Junior College will also be collaborating with NHB to conduct free World War II city tours available in English, Malay, Tamil and Mandarin.

National Archives of Singapore