

# Annual Report 2017

for year ended 31 august



GIVING A FUTURE TO OUR PAST

SINGAPORE  
HERITAGE  
SOCIETY

30

# About The Singapore Heritage Society

The Singapore Heritage Society was established in 1986 as a Society. It was registered under the Charities Act on 12 March 1987 and was granted Institution of Public Character status on 14 January 2009.

## Giving a Future to the Past

SHS is an independent voice for heritage conservation in Singapore. Our work is guided by our definition of heritage as ‘the living presence of the past’. Singapore’s history is a vital part of our identity and growth. Social bonds are strengthened when we understand and cherish the social memories of past and present generations in the spaces we protect. These beliefs drive our key efforts in **research**, public **education** and **advocacy**.

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# Executive Committee and Advisors

Executive Committee	<p>The Executive Committee elected at the Annual General Meeting held on 13 September 2015 is as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Dr Chua Ai Lin (President)</li> <li>2. Mr Khir Johari (Vice-President)</li> <li>3. Mr Siva S Krishnasamy (Honorary Treasurer)</li> <li>4. Mr Alex Tan Tiong Hee (Honorary Secretary)</li> <li>5. Ms Catherine Lim</li> <li>6. Mr Timothy Pwee</li> <li>7. Mr Tony Tan Say Kiong</li> <li>8. Mr Tan Wee Cheng</li> <li>9. Dr Yeo Kang Shua</li> <li>10. Mr Victor Yue</li> </ol>
Trustees	NIL
Banker	OCBC Bank
Auditor	<p>Louise Neo &amp; Co  1 Fifth Avenue  #03-08 Guthrie House  Singapore 268802</p>
Investment Advisor	NIL
Other Advisor(s)	NIL

# Message from the President

This is a landmark year for the Singapore Heritage Society (SHS) as we celebrate 30 years since the Society’s official registration in 1987. Sustaining an organisation over a long span of time requires tenacity and vision, backed up organisational skills and teamwork. This is all the more challenging for a small, entirely volunteer-run group championing the legacy of the past, in a country whose national ethos is based on modernity and development. At this point, it is worthwhile for us to reflect on where we have come, as a society and as the Singapore Heritage Society.

In the spirit of reflection and celebration, our 30th Anniversary events centre around a series of ‘Public Conversations’ with the four past presidents of SHS – Dr William SW Lim (1987-1997), Dr Kwok Kian-Woon (1999-2001), Dr Kevin Tan (2001-2011) and Ms Dahlia Shamsuddin (2011-2013) – to talk about their involvement in the society and why heritage lies close to their hearts. We situate these threads in the broader Singapore context of their times, including the development of civil society.

Other non-governmental organisations founded at around the same time as SHS include AWARE (1985 in Singapore), and the Penang Heritage Trust (1986 in Penang). Both of these started with a similar organisational structure to SHS, a volunteer Executive Committee who also carry out all the functions of the society, and both AWARE and the Penang Heritage Trust have both gone on to bolster their organisation with paid staff, with AWARE having a professional Executive Director plus 18 more employees. This is also the way forward for SHS. As this report for

2016-2017 illustrates, the scope and volume of work the Society does has increased greatly over the years, as the opportunities for citizen engagement in Singapore grow, and as the increasing pace of change prompts Singaporeans to value continuity with the past.

Whilst much public attention is focused on physical changes in the landscape, in SHS we layer our concern for the built environment with that of *living heritage*. For example, in Pulau Ubin, we have been working hard to find solutions to assist and revitalise the kampong community, because what is the kampong spirit without a kampong, and what is a kampong without its people? The interaction between man and the environment, and the cultural heritage that results is what guides the hard work that SHS has been putting in, as community partners in The Ubin Project led by the Ministry of National Development and NParks. An allied concept to living heritage is that of *intangible cultural heritage* and moving forward, we want to think more deeply about the transmission and sustainability of such practices.

As a fully volunteer-run organisation with a miniscule budget, we owe deep gratitude to many individuals and organisations who have devoted time, energy, money and support which have allowed us to make an impact on heritage conservation in Singapore. In particular, this year our thanks go to the one dozen young people who have joined us as committed and resourceful interns, injecting new energy into our work – they give us hope for the Society’s next 30 years.



Best wishes,  
  
Chua Ai Lin  
President, Singapore Heritage Society



# Year at a Glance

10,900

Facebook Likes

13

Public Events

190

Participants in first  
Public Conversation  
with Dr William Lim

53

Media Mentions

260

Members and  
Volunteers

30

Years of Research,  
Education and  
Advocacy



# Highlights



“What stood out most to me (at Bukit Brown) was the sheer architectural and structural diversity of the tombs. I especially enjoyed learning about the background of each highlighted tomb because it **emphasized how they were instrumental figures to Singapore’s formation.** I hope that the Bukit Brown Wayfinder is kept and maintained well so that **this piece of Singapore’s history and heritage could also be enjoyed by current and future generations**”

Angelica Habulan, Graduate Student, 24



## RESEARCH AND ADVOCACY

Advocacy is in its broadest sense the key work of the Singapore Heritage Society. We advocate a deeper understanding of Singapore's past, amongst a broader spectrum of society, and also advocate for best practices in heritage management. The research and public education work we do are the building blocks for heritage advocacy. While we do take up advocacy for the preservation of specific historical sites which are under threat, our larger objective is to emphasise the **underlying principles** behind the meaning or management of such sites. We believe that greater stakeholder engagement in the planning process will result in more robust solutions that fulfil the social, environmental and economic dimensions of sustainable development.

We conduct this advocacy at several different levels:

- Tours for SHS members and the public;
- Talks, forums and seminars open to SHS members and the public;
- Scholarly articles and conference papers;
- Publications for the general public;
- Disseminating information on social media;
- Interviews with the media (see section, 'Media Coverage');
- Representation on governmental advisory committees;
- Participation at government feedback sessions;

For a more in-depth exposition on SHS's advocacy work, please read the article in the National University of Singapore Society (NUSS)'s journal by SHS president, Dr Chua Ai Lin, '**Giving a Future to our Past**' - **Reflections on Developing the Heritage Conservation Cause**', in *Commentary: Singapore - A Democracy of Deeds and Problem-Solving, Volume 25 (2016)*, pp. 38-49, which can be downloaded at [http://www.nuss.org.sg/publication/1464683902\\_commentary2016\\_final.pdf](http://www.nuss.org.sg/publication/1464683902_commentary2016_final.pdf).

Our core issues at a glance:



**Bukit Brown**



**Pulau Ubin**



**Kreta Ayer**

## 1. Heritage Impact Assessment

SHS continues to emphasise the fundamental need for HIA as a key policymaking tool, particularly given rapid pace of changes to the landscape. Besides making the case with relevant government agencies, greater awareness and professional knowledge of the HIA process is needed in the private and community sectors.

a. *Policy Analysis Exercise on '**Striking the balance between heritage conservation and urban renewal in Singapore: Advocating for a mandatory Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) regime**', with Trent Ng, as part of his Masters of Public Policy at NUS Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy (LKYSPP).*

This report completed in December 2015 has been selected as one of the top reports in the cohort and now made available for open access download by the LKYSPP on their 'Featured Research Topics' web page: <https://lkyspp.nus.edu.sg/admissions/graduate-programmes/master-in-public-policy-mpp/policy-analysis-exercise/pae-research-topics/>

b. *Capacity-building workshops on Heritage Impact Assessment methodology.*

In 2015, SHS introduced established UNESCO HIA training experts, Professors Richard Engelhardt and Pamela Rogers, to the relevant authorities with the intention that capacity-building workshops be held in Singapore. On 30 July and 5 August 2017, the National Heritage Board (NHB) organised a introductory two-day workshop by Professors Engelhardt and Rogers on the methodology of evaluating heritage significance and developing a heritage management plan. Invited to attend the workshop were community partners and government agencies (MND, NParks, URA, and workshop organisers, NHB) involved in the Friends of Ubin Network which is convened by the Ministry of National Development (MND). The workshop created the opportunity for civil servants and civil society volunteers to work together in groups, building up rapport and experience in cross-sector cooperation. A total of 9 Executive Committee members, volunteers and interns from SHS attended the workshop.



The SHS team with Minister Desmond Lee at NHB's training workshop on heritage guidelines for Pulau Ubin, conducted by UNESCO experts, Prof Richard Engelhardt and Prof Pamela Rogers, 5 Aug 2017. (Photo: Chua Ai Lin)

## 2. Protecting Intangible Cultural Heritage

ICH is another branch of heritage recognised by UNESCO which SHS believes is crucial to as part of a holistic approach to conservation, both in its own right and as a layer to the tangible, built heritage. In our various site-specific advocacy interests, SHS actively places emphasis on the intangible aspects of cultural heritage.

a. *21 Sites of Worship Research with Ethnographica Pte Ltd.*

SHS has commissioned Ethnographica Pte Ltd, an anthropological research consultancy to conduct a two-year study of 21 historic sites of worship of different faiths, and we have been awarded a \$120,000 Heritage Research Grant from the National Heritage Board for this project. These places of worship provide social anchors for historically continuous communities who transmit collective knowledge and shared memories from generation to generation. The process of continuity and transmission of living heritage by the communities who belong to each place of worship is the focus of this research. The project is expected to be completed in 2018.

b. *Lunar New Year site visit to Chinese Temples (27 January 2017).*

Shortly after midnight, in the early hours of the First Day of the Lunar New Year, SHS Executive Committee member, Victor Yue, led 15 enthusiasts on a five-hour trip to visit six temples connected to different Chinese dialect groups to observe the festivities and practices associated with the tradition of making offerings as early as possible in the new year. The temples visited were Thian Hock Keng, Yu Huang Gong (Former Keng Teck Whay), Yue Hai Ching (Wak Hai Cheng Bio), Foo Tet Soo (Wang Hai Da Bo Gong), Kheng Chiu Tin Hou Kong and the Kwan Im Thong Hood Cho Temple.

c. *Heritage Languages.*

To promote greater awareness of heritage languages of local communities, many of which are endangered in the Singapore context, as well as issues of language revitalisation, SHS Executive Committee members, Chua Ai Lin and Victor Yue, founded the Heritage Languages of Singapore Facebook Group in October 2011, and continue to actively moderate the group, which has 1,120 members as of 24 August 2017.

SHS President, Dr Chua Ai Lin, was invited to be a speaker at the panel discussion, 'Minority Languages in Singapore: Challenges and New Horizons', as part of the inaugural Festa di Papia Kristang (Kristang Language Festival) organised by Kodrah Kristang, held at the Asian Civilisations Museum on 20 May 2017.

## 3. Built Heritage

SHS promotes awareness and advocates for the conservation of worthy structures that have not been gazetted for protection and the application of international best practices in conservation.

a. *Ellison Building.*

In August 2016, it was announced that the Land Transport Authority (LTA) and the Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA) would demolish numbers 235, 237, and 239 Selegie Road, part of the gazetted conservation building, Ellison Building (1924), for the construction of the North South Highway. The units would be reconstructed when the Highway is completed. Subsequent to releasing a media statement on 18 August 2016, SHS attended meetings with MND, URA, LTA and NHB to recommend that a conservation expert's report should be commissioned before the authorities decide that demolition is the best solution. The expert assessment was duly commissioned and completed. SHS is continuing to follow up with the agencies on this issue.

b. *Heritage of Our Modern Past Exhibition at URA Gallery (9 May to 30 June 2017).*

SHS supported the Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA)'s exhibition, Heritage of Our Modern Past, by allowing the extensive use of photographs from SHS's 2015 publication, Our Modern Past, by the late Jeremy San. The exhibition was held at URA Gallery from 9 May to 30 June this year, as part of the National Heritage Board's Singapore Heritage Festival. SHS and the Estate of Jeremy San were invited to a closing reception at the URA Gallery on 23 June, attended by Ng Lang, Chief Executive Officer of the Urban Redevelopment Authority and members from the URA Senior Management. SHS is honoured to continue the partnership with URA on this project, which began with a research grant in the early stages of this fifteen-year long endeavour, and discussions are in progress for future public outreach opportunities.

c. *Under Wraps: Traversing Downtown Singapore walking tours by Toh Hun Ping (26 February, 26 March and 30 April 2017).*

The tours were organised in tandem with URA's Car Free Sunday initiative which was held on the last Sunday of each month. SHS partnered with film history researcher, Toh Hun Ping, also known as 'SGFilmHunter' to host two tours in English and the final one in Mandarin. Strong response prompted SHS to hold multiple iterations and the tour was also covered a large feature spread by Lianhe Zaobao. Toh Hun Ping brought participants to key sites such as the Fullerton Hotel, Singapore River and the Ascott Raffles Places, where they watched film clips depicting little-seen streetscapes and commercial activities that took place in the buildings' former self. This unique tour made participants aware of our built heritage, as well as the social memories around them, conveyed through films and memories shared during the tour by SHS Executive Committee member, Alex Tan Tiong Hee, as well as participants.

d. *URA Architectural Heritage Awards Committee*

SHS Executive Committee Member Dr Yeo Kang Shua continues to represent the Society on this committee.





SHS Executive Committee member, Victor Yue, explaining traditional Chinese New Year customs to SHS interns outside Thian Hock Keng temple, 27 Jan 2017. (Photo: Chua Ai Lin)

The Heritage of Our Modern Past Exhibition organised by URA, with Singapore Heritage Society as one of the partners, 9 May to 30 June 2017. (Photo: URA)



Toh Hun Ping and SHS tour participants in front of the gazetted conservation building, the former Asia Insurance Building (1955) designed by local architect, Ng Keng Siang, 26 Feb 2017. (Photo: Chua Ai Lin)

## 4. Pulau Ubin

As Pulau Ubin continues to face redevelopment in the future, SHS has been working closely with other community groups through the Friends of Ubin Network (FUN), chaired by Second Minister for National Development Desmond Lee, and includes public-sector representatives from the Ministry of National Development, National Parks Board, Urban Redevelopment Authority and National Heritage Board. Civil society organisations, educational institutes and expert individuals are also invited. SHS representatives regularly attend and lead FUN meetings to help provide cultural and ethnographic perspectives to the discussions.

a. *NHB Heritage Workshop on Pulau Ubin (30 Jul & 5 Aug 2017).*

As part of on-going work by the Friends of Ubin Network (FUN) which is convened by the Ministry of National Development (MND), the National Heritage Board (NHB) organised a workshop on the methodology of developing heritage guidelines for Pulau Ubin. This was conducted by Professors Richard Engelhardt and Pamela Rogers, trainers from UNESCO who were recommended by SHS. SHS was among the Friends of Ubin Network community partners invited to attend the workshop, and total of 9 Executive Committee members, volunteers and interns from SHS participated. Minister Desmond Lee of MND, who leads The Ubin Project, was in attendance to hear presentations by the participants of the workshop.

b. *'Kawan Ubin' Initiative.*

Since February 2017, SHS has been spearheading this initiative under the Friends of Ubin Network (FUN) which focuses on direct personal relationship-building with the stakeholder community of Ubin residents and their families. This is to address the critical need for Ubin residents to be included in FUN discussions about the island, which SHS has identified. SHS plays an important intermediary role between policymakers and elderly, non-English speaking Ubin residents. We have identified key needs of Ubin residents which include land tenancy issues and urgent repairs for their wooden kampong houses, and are currently developing a proposal for the restoration of occupied kampong houses with educational and industry partners. The Kawan Ubin initiative relies on the assistance of anthropologist, Dr Vivienne Wee, who completed an extensive ethnographic study of the Ubin community in 2016, as well as growing pool of committed volunteers, who make regular visits to Ubin to interact with the residents. NParks supports SHS Kawan Ubin volunteers under the NParks Ubin Volunteers scheme.

c. *Tua Pek Kong Festival (10 May 2017).*

Held annually on Vesak Day, the Tua Pek Kong Festival also marks the start of the Pesta Ubin festival. With the help anthropologist Dr Vivienne Wee, SHS volunteers and interns have produced coloured information booklets that describe the history of the Pulau Ubin Fo Shan Ting Da Bo Gong Temple (乌敏岛佛山亭大伯公庙), its deities and the key elements of the festival. After receiving feedback from the temple on the English booklet produced by SHS last year, in 2017 we translated the booklet into Chinese. SHS interns were present at the festival to hand out the booklets and give verbal explanations to Ubin visitors. The English and Chinese booklets are available for free download from the SHS website.



d. *Pesta Ubin 2017 (10 May to 16 July 2017).*

With increasing success each year, Pesta Ubin led by Ria Tan from Wild Singapore extended the annual event to a total of 10 weeks this year. The festival brought together community-organised events to promote public awareness and appreciation of Pulau Ubin. SHS supported Pesta Ubin by participating in the activities on the opening day, which was marked by the Tua Pek Kong Festival, and helped promote regular events on our Facebook page over the few weeks.

e. *Ubin Day 2017 (16 July 2017).*

Organised by the National Parks Board, Ubin Day offered a full-day selection of free events, tours and activities across the island and at Assembly Area 1 – the center for Ubin Day's community groups to showcase their projects and initiatives. Second Minister for National Development Desmond Lee and Minister for Education (Schools) Ng Chee Meng were the Guests of Honour, for the event, with Second Minister Desmond announcing a new initiative to restore the island's wooden kampong houses. SHS interns and volunteers were present for the opening ceremony, and introduced SHS's Ubin projects to Minister Lee and Minister Ng when they visited SHS's booth at the Assembly Area. SHS's activities for Ubin Day comprised a photo exhibition, 'Photos of My Backyard' curated by Clarice Lee and a

f. *'Photos of My Backyard' curated by Clarice Lee (16 July 2017).*

After her successful photo project 'The Island of Everlasting Utility' with SHS and Invisible Photographer Asia (APA) last year, Clarice Lee launched her second photo project, titled 'Photos of My Backyard' with SHS at Ubin Day this year. Working with Auntie Lee Hua, a five-decade Ubin resident, who captured her everyday life on the island with a digital camera given by her daughter, Clarice presented a selection of photos that gave a voice to the often-forgotten villagers that lived on Pulau Ubin. Her curation of photos was limited to animals and insects which served as symbols of the diverse nature and culture that is in dire need of preservation.

g. *Jalan-Jalan di Ubin tour by Dr Vivienne Wee (16 July 2017).*

After nearly three years of intensive research and regular interactions with Pulau Ubin's residents, anthropologist Dr Vivienne Wee designed for SHS a unique 3-hour tour that focused on residents' experiences with the opportunity for tour participants to meet and interact with them. SHS interns worked with Dr Wee to produce a booklet introducing the tour stops, which is available for free download at <https://goo.gl/q3GYUS>. The tour provided a fresh view of Pulau Ubin's hidden social and cultural networks, giving attendees an opportunity to hear first-hand accounts of an island livelihood that is far detached for many Singaporeans. The event was fully subscribed in only 12 hours after the public announcement. SHS is now reviewing the tour for future iterations, after receiving overwhelming requests from members and supporters.

h. *Community Building through Pulau Ubin Facebook Group*

Set up in 2014 by SHS Executive Committee members Chua Ai Lin and Victor Yue and jointly managed with Ria Tan from Wild Singapore, the public Facebook Group for Pulau Ubin provides a common platform for the public to share and discuss Pulau Ubin related news and information. Moderators actively post interesting content several times a week. There are 2406 members this year, an 11% increase from last year and 53% increase from 2015.



Kawan Ubin volunteers hear from kampong residents how they depend on water from underground wells, 26 March 2017. (Photo: Chua Ai Lin)



Devotees, visitors and SHS interns braved heavy rain to attend the Tua Pek Kong Festival, where Teochew opera is performed at one of the last three permanent wayang stages in Singapore, 10 May 2017. (Photo: Om Ee Joo)



Photographer Clarice Lee explains her 'Photos of My Backyard' exhibition to Ubin Day Guest of Honour, Minister for Education Ng Chee Meng, 16 July 2017. (Photo: Clarice Lee)



Ubin resident, Mr Chu Yok Choon, shows Jalan-Jalan di Ubin tour participants and tour leader, Dr Vivienne Wee, the graves of his family members at the Sungei Tiga Chinese cemetery, 16 July 2017. (Photo: Chua Ai Lin)



## 5. Bukit Brown

### a. *Bukit Brown Working Committee.*

SHS has been a member of this working committee led by the Strategic Planning division at the Ministry of National Development since 2014. Working with public officers from the Heritage Research and Assessment unit of the National Heritage Board, representatives from the Land Transport Authority, National Parks Board and Urban Redevelopment Authority, and community partner, All Things Bukit Brown. The remit of the Working Committee is to improve the visitor experience to Bukit Brown and oversee artefacts saved from graves exhumed for road construction works.

### b. *Wayfinder at Bukit Brown Self-Guided Trail.*

Developed by SHS, with assistance from All Things Bukit Brown, Wayfinder is a pilot project to find new ways for greater numbers of the public to learn about history, heritage and nature at Bukit Brown. The project comprises on-site signs as well as free downloadable guidebook to selected tombs. The project is funded by the MND, as well as a Participation Grant of \$15,500 from the National Heritage Board. On 26 June 2017, a user pilot test of the trail was conducted with about 40 participants from different age groups, professional backgrounds and heritage experience. Wayfinder at Bukit Brown is scheduled to launch in November 2017.



Members of the Bukit Brown Working Committee testing out the Wayfinder self-guided trail, 26 June 2017. (Photo: Foo Hee Keng)

## 6. Kreta Ayer / Chinatown

Since the proposals in the late 1990s and subsequent redevelopment of Chinatown by the Singapore Tourism Board, SHS has made the case for a more authentic and community-centred approach to its development, as laid out in our publication, *Rethinking Chinatown and Heritage Conservation in Singapore* (available for free on our website). Today, we are committed to documenting the constant changes in the area, and bringing back greater public awareness of the cultural and community assets, so that stakeholders on the ground can have a stronger voice in shaping development of Kreta Ayer/Chinatown.

### a. *Policy Analysis Exercise with Master of Public Policy (MPP) students from the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy.*

SHS is the client organisation for a group of 5 Master of Public Policy students from the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy working on their Policy Analysis Exercise capstone project, mentored by Professor Kenneth Paul Tan, to be completed by December 2017. The project focus on the challenges to cultural and community vibrancy in the Kreta Ayer/Chinatown area.

### b. *Collaboration with Drama Box on 'Chinatown Chronicles' production.*

SHS is a research partner for Drama Box's Chinatown Chronicles production. This continues our on-going relationship with this socially-engaged theatre company which has been located in Chinatown for the last 14 years. SHS shares our knowledge and networks in the area, as well as co-organising a chat session with elderly residents in Cantonese to draw out their memories and experiences of living in Kreta Ayer/Chinatown over decades.

### c. *Community Visits with LKYSPP students and Drama Box in Chinatown-Kreta Ayer (25 Feb & 4 Mar 2017).*

SHS Executive Committee members Victor Yue and Chua Ai Lin, with the assistance of SHS volunteers, organised two community visits for the Drama Box production team, and the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy student group working on their Policy Analysis Exercise for SHS. Held in February and March, the tours helped link up the students and theatre producers with local community leaders, business owners and heritage experts.

### d. *'17a Keong Saik' Book Tour with author, Charmaine Leung (20 Aug 2017).*

Together with publisher, Ethos Books, SHS organised this event for author Charmaine Leung, to walk tour participants through the sights of the former red light district of Keong Saik Road, whilst sharing her personal memories of daily life and traditional practices of Chinatown in the past, as detailed in her recent publication, *17a Keong Saik*.



e. *Community Building through Facebook Group.*

SHS Executive Committee member Victor Yue is a lifelong resident of the Chinatown and is frequently recognised for his blog and Facebook Group titled 'Bullockcartwater' (a reference to Kreta Ayer and its Chinese transliteration 牛车水). Through Victor Yue, SHS continues to reach out to organisations, businesses, clan associations, arts groups, residents and even workers to stay abreast of local happenings and build relationships to strengthen the social fabric. There are 1049 members this year.



Pouring over maps during a visit to one of SHS's Chinatown community partners, Nature's Intelligence, 25 Feb 2017. (Photo: Chua Ai Lin)

Author, Charmaine Leung, introduces tour participants to the sites described in her memoirs, 17a Keong Saik, 20 Aug 2017. (Photo: Chua Ai Lin)



## 7. Tanjong Malang

The Land Transport Authority has announced in 2015 that the Circle Line Stage 6 will include 3 new stations. One of them, tentatively named Prince Edward Station, is sited on Tanjong Malang. Of the six historic structures in the station's vicinity – Mount Palmer, Foo Tet Soo Khek Temple (1844), Keramat Habib Noh (1866), Masjid Muhammad Haji Salleh (1903), Palmer House (1956), Bestway Building (1958, former Singapore Polytechnic), Mount Palmer and Palmer House as well as the rear blocks of Bestway Building have been, or are slated for, demolition. The remaining three historic sites of worship have yet to be gazetted for conservation. For the last 2 years, SHS has publicly emphasised the great historical importance of this site and been actively engaged in putting our views forth to various government organisations.

a. *Representation during LTA engagement sessions on MRT Circle Line construction.*

Continuing from a series of meetings in the previous year, LTA invited SHS to a session on 27 October 2016, which was also attended by NHB and URA. The agencies had taken into consideration the suggestions from SHS and others to design the Prince Edward MRT station exit A in a manner more sensitive to the historic Foo Tet Soo Khek adjacent to it, and to redesign the flow of traffic into the bus terminus at the site to allow for a landscaped space for community use by the Foo Tet Soo Khek Temple, Keramat Habib Noh and Masjid Muhammad Haji Salleh (1903).

b. *Responded to LTA Open Call for Nominations for Circle Line Station Names.*

From 15 May to 18 June this year, the Land Transport Authority held an open nomination for naming the 3 new Circle Line 6 stations. SHS sent in our proposed names as Radin Mas and Temenggong for CC30 (Keppel); Old Malayan Railway and Keppel for CC31 (Cantonment); and Tanjong Malang and Habib Nor for CC32 (Prince Edward). In our submission, we paid close attention to each site's geographical history, and emphasised the need to respect both structural and cultural heritage for all the stations. We particularly highlighted the religious diversity of Tanjong Malang as a site of cultural heritage, and advocated for the station name to be more culturally-relevant instead of retaining the colonial label.

c. *Site Visit to Fook Tet Soo Khek Temple (27 January 2017).*

Shortly after midnight, in the early hours of the First Day of the Lunar New Year, SHS Executive Committee member, Victor Yue, led a group of about 15 enthusiasts to visit this temple experienced the festivities and practices associated with the tradition of making offerings at the temple as early as possible in the new year. This temple represented the Hakka community, and the group also visited another five temples of other regional traditions.

d. *SHS 21 Sites of Worship Research Project.*

Fook Tet Soo Khek Temple, Keramat Habib Noh and Masjid Muhammad Haji Salleh at Tanjong Malang were included in the two-year study commissioned to Ethnographica Pte Ltd.



## 8. Other Issues

Apart from our key advocacy topics, we also support heritage issues that are spearheaded by other grassroots communities and civil society organisations.

a. *Panel Discussion on 'Sungei Road Market: A Future for Street Culture Heritage' (18 Jun 2017).*

In February 2017, the National Environmental Agency released an inter-governmental declaration to officially close the Sungei Road Flea Market in July, spurring a community campaign that supported the relocation or retention of the century-old free hawking zone. The issue gathered 15,000 supporters in less than 4 months, based on people who 'Liked' the Save Sungei Road Market Facebook Page (run by an independent collective of individuals) or joined the People's Voice on Sungei Road Facebook Group (run by Post-Museum). Other individuals had also come up with proposals for to preserve the market in-situ or for potential relocation sites.

Noting that there had been no public forum in English, SHS organised a panel discussion to provide a platform for different perspectives to be presented by experts as well as the public. The speakers were prominent architect and urban thinker, Prof Tay Kheng Soon, sociologist, Dr Laavanya Kathiravelu, and landscape architect, Faiz bin Zohri, with SHS President, Dr Chua Ai Lin, as moderator. The event was co-organised with venue sponsor, The Substation, and attracted a full-house audience of approximately 130 people. SHS also uploaded live videos of the event on Facebook, which greatly expanded the reach and impact of this event.

## 9. Government Sector Engagement

a. *Focus Group Discussion for National Heritage Plan with National Heritage Board (21 Jan 2017)*

The National Heritage Board invited SHS to attend a Focus Group Discussion at the Indian Heritage Centre on the upcoming national Heritage Plan, to be released in 2018. SHS pulled together 30 Society members, as well other heritage professionals and enthusiasts, ranging from undergraduates to retirees to attend the session. Facilitated by Ministry of Trade and Industry's Director (Industry), Aaron Maniam, and senior management of NHB, with NHB Chief Executive, Rosa Daniels, in attendance, the discussion provided an avenue for SHS members and supporters to share their aspirations and considerations for Singapore's future heritage sector.



A view of the Tanjong Malang site from Keramat Habib Nor, showing the Foo Tet Soo Khek Temple in the top left, and in the top right, the new Shenton Way Bus Terminal built on the site of the flattened Mt Palmer, 29 July 2017. (Photo: Chua Ai Lin)



An audience member reads through one of the proposals to save Sungei Road Market displayed during the SHS panel discussion at The Substation, 18 June 2017. (Photo: JJ Wong)



SHS members at NHB's Focus Group Discussion for National Heritage Strategic Plan, 21 Jan 2017. (Photo: Chua Ai Lin)

## PARTNERSHIPS

SHS has been steadily broadening our range of partnerships to broaden the reach of our public education efforts, as well as to play a greater role in government initiatives relating to our strategic objectives.

Our partnerships at a glance:

**7**

Government  
Sector Entities

**1**

Educational  
Institution

**4**

Community  
Movements

**6**

Arts and  
Placemaking  
Organisations

**3**

Book Publishers  
and Distributors

## 1. Government Sector Entities

### 1. *National Heritage Board (NHB).*

SHS works closely with NHB, primarily the Heritage Research and Assessment division. These collaborations are described in more detail in the 'Research & Advocacy' section of this report. In summary, our key engagements have been:

- a. NHB Focus Group Discussion for National Heritage Plan (21 Jan 2017)
- b. Bukit Brown Working Committee
- c. Friends of Ubin Network
- d. Capacity-building for heritage impact assessment and management in Singapore
- e. NHB Heritage Research Grant of \$120,000 for the SHS project, 'Integrating heritage in Singapore's urban development: research on historic places of worship in Telok Ayer, Tanjong Pagar, and Tanjong Malang'
- f. NHB Participation Grant of \$15,5000 for the SHS Wayfinder @ Bukit Brown self-guided trail.

### 2. *Ministry of National Development (MND).*

SHS is represented on two bodies convened by MND, the Bukit Brown Working Committee and the Friends of Ubin Network (please see above section on 'Research and Advocacy' for further details). MND is a sponsor of SHS's Wayfinder @ Bukit Brown self-guided trail, to be launched in November 2018. SHS also holds discussions and attends meetings with MND on other heritage sites affected by urban planning such as Ellison Building. Our SHS President, Dr Chua Ai Lin, represented the Society at the annual MND Huddle on 10 November 2016, and was featured in a profile interview in the MND Happy Hands newsletter (Oct-Dec 2016, see 'Media Coverage' section of this Report).

### 3. *Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA).*

SHS shares many areas of common interest with URA and is represented on several URA committees: the Architectural Heritage Awards panel and the Rail Corridor Partnership, as well as working together on MND's Bukit Brown Working Committee and the Friends of Ubin Network. Continuing a successful partnership in organising public outreach events over the last three years, URA is a regular events partner and venue sponsor. Most notably in 2017, URA partnered SHS for the URA exhibition, Heritage of Our Modern Past, (9 May to 30 June 2017 at URA Gallery), and the SHS 30th Anniversary series of 'Public Conversations' with past presidents of SHS, of which the inaugural event held at URA featured pioneering Singapore architect and founder of SHS, Dr William SW Lim.

### 4. *National Library Board (NLB).*

This year, SHS completed two book projects, Song Ong Siang's One Hundred Years of the Chinese in Singapore – a revised and annotated version, commissioned by the National Library and a revised edition of SHS's 1992 publication, Syonan: Singapore under the Japanese, 1942-1945, with support of the National Library and the National Archives of Singapore. The National Library also invited members of SHS to two private events, the inaugural Researchers' Networking Session on 21 July 2017 and the Legal Deposit Networking Session on 31 July 2017.



5. *National Archives of Singapore (NAS).*

NAS kindly offered SHS members a private tour of their newly-opened exhibition on the Japanese Occupation at the Former Ford Factory, led by curator and NAS archivist, Fiona Tan. NAS also assisted with SHS's revised version of Syonan: Singapore under the Japanese, 1942-1945, offering the use of their photograph archives and inputs from their committee advising the revamped Former Ford Factory exhibition.

6. *National Parks Board (NParks).*

Through SHS's activities on Pulau Ubin, we have come to partner the NParks, who are the central coordinating agency for the island, and a key agency in the Friends of Ubin Network (FUN). NParks supports SHS volunteers in our Kawan Ubin initiative under the NParks Ubin Volunteers scheme. In 2017, SHS was invited by NParks to be a partner for Ubin Day for the second year running, and provided sponsorship-in-kind for SHS's Jalan-Jalan di Ubin tour held as part of Ubin Day.

7. *Singapore Tourism Board (STB).*

SHS's interest in Chinatown/Kreta Ayer provides many opportunities to work closely with the place managing agency for the area, STB's Cultural Precincts Development division. In the last one year, collaboration has largely been through informal assistance and discussions.



SHS President, Dr Chua Ai Lin, on the cover of MND's Happy Hands newsletter, Oct 2016.



**NHB Chief Executive**, Rosa Daniel, with SHS members at focus group discussion on the national Heritage Plan, 21 Jan 2017. (Photo: National Heritage Board)

SHS ExCo members and authors of 'Our Modern Past', with **URA Chief Executive**, Ng Lang, URA senior management, and the family of the late Jeremy San, at 'Heritage of Our Modern Past' exhibition URA Centre, 23 Jun 2017. (Photo: Chua Ai Lin)



SHS team member in discussion with NHB and URA partners at Friends of Ubin meeting, hosted by NParks at the Ubin Living Lab, 19 May 2017. (Photo: Chua Ai Lin)



## 2. Educational Institution

### 1. *NUS Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy (LKYSPP).*

SHS is currently the client organisation for a group of 5 Master of Public Policy students from the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy working on their Policy Analysis Exercise capstone project, mentored by Professor Kenneth Paul Tan, to be completed by December 2017. The project focus on the challenges to cultural and community vibrancy in the Kreta Ayer/Chinatown area. This is SHS's second time as a client organisation for LKYSPP's Policy Analysis Exercise capstone project. Master's student, Trent Ng's project with SHS, was one of the top papers in his 2015 cohort and is available for download on the LKYSPP website 'Featured Research' section.



SHS leading students from NUS Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy on a Chinatown site visit to meet local community partners and businesses, 4 March 2017. (Photo: Chua Ai Lin)

## 3. Community Movements

### 1. *All Things Bukit Brown (atBB).*

A key partner in the Bukit Brown cause, SHS has been working closely with atBB since its inception. Both SHS and atBB are part of the Bukit Brown Working Committee convened by MND and worked together the Wayfinder @ Bukit Brown self-guided trail.

### 2. *Ria Tan / Pesta Ubin.*

Besides being fellow members in the Friends of Ubin Network (FUN), SHS has been a participating organisation in Pesta Ubin, organised by Ria Tan, for the last three years. SHS Executive Committee members, Victor Yue and Chua Ai Lin, also jointly moderate the Pulau Ubin Facebook Group with Ria Tan.

### 3. *Kodrah Kristang.*

An extremely successful new initiative, Kodrah Kristang aims to revitalise the linguistic heritage of the Portuguese Eurasian community in Singapore through free language classes, reading groups and other public outreach activities including the inaugural Festa di Papia Kristang (Kristang Language Festival) was held at the Asian Civilisations Museum on 20-21 May 2017. In addition to many informal discussions with Kodrah Kristang, SHS was represented by Hon Treasurer, Siva Krishnasamy at the Festa di Papia Kristang Gala Dinner, and President, Dr Chua Ai Lin, as a speaker at the Festa di Papia Kristang panel on 'Minority Languages in Singapore: Challenges and New Horizons'.

### 4. *Jane's Walk (Singapore).*

Inspired by Jane Jacobs (1916-2006), a celebrated urbanist and activist whose writings championed a fresh, community-based approach to city building, Janes's Walk is an international movement where free, locally-organised walks are held around the world on the anniversary of Jane Jacobs' birthday to encourage placemaking and community-building. For the last few years, SHS has helped Jane's Walk connect with potential walk leaders and run walks. In 2017, SHS member Andrew Lin led a walk through Sungei Road Flea Market and Rochor Centre, two places which have been or will soon be removed for new developments.



## 4. Arts and Placemaking Organisations

### 1. *Drama Box.*

SHS continues our on-going partnership with socially-engaged theatre company, Drama Box this year as a research partner for their forthcoming Chinatown Chronicles production, building on our relationship through SHS's roving installation, the 'Chinatown Bullockcart' for Singapore HeritageFest in 2015, their Bukit Brown triple bill production, 'It Won't Be Too Long' for the Singapore International Festival of the Arts (2015), and their forum theatre production on land use trade-offs, 'The Lesson'.

### 2. *Exactly Foundation.*

The Exactly Foundation offers residencies for photography art projects on social issues. For the projects by Lau Eng Seng on soon-to-be demolished Rochor Centre, 'What to Keep?' and by Chia Aik Beng on the 'invisible' history of the Japanese karayuki-san in the Bugis area, 'Mute', which related directly to heritage and history, SHS Executive Committee members and interns were among members of the public invited to submit written responses. These were subsequently included in the publications for each residency. SHS President, Dr Chua Ai Lin, was invited as Guest of Honour for the joint exhibition opening of these two projects on 17 Aug 2017.

### 3. *Shophouse & Co.*

SHS participated in the Singapore Design Trails programme of the National Design Centre's Singapore Design Week, as a partner of the programme organiser, Shophouse & Co., a placemaking studio. On 11 March 2017, at the Chong We Ge stop on the Singapore Design Trails, SHS interns introduced heritage issues and Singapore Heritage Society projects to visitors, while SHS President, Dr Chua Ai Lin, gave a public talk on 'Built Heritage: Sign Posts to the Past'.

### 4. *The Substation.*

In line with their current programming theme, 'Discipline the City', The Substation co-organised with SHS the panel discussion on 'Sungei Road Market: A Future for Street Culture Heritage' held on 18 Jun 2017. SHS is very happy to renew this partnership with The Substation, which was a venue for major SHS events in the 1990s, such as the 'Our Place in Time' conference in 1994.

### 5. *Siong Leng Musical Association* 湘灵音乐社.

Founded in 1941, the Siong Leng Musical Association carries on the living heritage of Nanyin music, a Hokkien genre which is inscribed on UNESCO's list of Intangible Cultural Heritage. The Association performs at traditional temple festivals, the Esplanade and public outreach workshops. Siong Leng is one of our Bukit Pasoh placemaking partners where their premises with a small museum are located. They also invite SHS to join private events such as their annual Kusu Island pilgrimage and yearly gala dinner.

### 6. *Aster by Kyra Pte Ltd.*

Located at the restored Chong Wen Ge within the grounds of the Thian Hock Keng national monument in Telok Ayer, Aster by Kyra comprises a historic decorative tiles gallery and a Peranakan-themed café. They have kindly provided a venue for many SHS meetings and activities.



Koh Hui Ling, Associate Artistic Director of Drama Box, explains the cultural mapping research process behind each of their site-specific IgnorLAND productions, 4 March 2017. (Photo: Chua Ai Lin)

At Chong Wen Ge, SHS interns introduce heritage conservation issues and SHS projects to members of the public for Singapore Design Trails organised by Shophouse & Co., 11 March 2017. (Photo: Chua Ai Lin)





## 5. Book Publishers and Distributors

### 1. *Landmark Books.*

SHS's major publication for 2017 is revised version of *Syonan: Singapore under the Japanese, 1942-1945*, which was first produced in 1992 by SHS with author Lee Geok Boi and Landmark Books. We are very pleased to co-publish the new edition with Landmark Books. (See 'Publications' section.)

### 2. *Ethos Books.*

Having co-published *World War II at Bukit Brown* with Ethos Books in April 2016, we have extended our partnership to co-organising walks with Ethos authors who have published books on heritage areas, beginning with Charmaine Leung, author of *17a Keong Saik*, on 20 Aug 2017.

### 3. *APD Singapore.*

A leading independent book distributor for trade and academic titles, APD have distributed many past SHS publications. They regularly offer discounted rates on new heritage titles to SHS members. Once a year, APD opens its warehouse for an exclusive SHS members-only sale.



SHS talk by president, Dr Chua Ai Lin, in the Chong Wen Ge pagoda, which is part of the café space run by our partner, Aster by Kyra Pte Ltd, 11 March 2017. (Photo: Claire Leown)



SHS volunteers and Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy students engaging the owner of Pak Seng Choon Tea Company, 4 March 2017. (Photo: Chua Ai Lin)

SHS President, Dr Chua Ai Lin, as one of the panel speakers at Festa di Papia Kristang (Kristang Language Festival), 21 May 2017. (Photo: Marvin Tang, Kodrah Kristang)





## MEDIA COVERAGE

Mainstream and online media exposure is the one of the most effective forms of advocacy and public education, reaching the general public as well as policy makers. Through daily media summaries produced in-house by various government agencies, the views of SHS are highlighted to staff and management of agencies dealing with heritage-related issues.

SHS received significant coverage in the media in the past twelve months, with a total of 3 commentaries and forum page letters, 53 mentions in the English and Chinese media, as well as in 2 ministerial speeches. As compared to previous years, in 2016-2017, SHS was mentioned more often in online news media sites, reflecting the Society's growing reach amongst a younger, popular readership.

Our media coverage at a glance:

3

published  
commentaries and  
forum letters

2

mentions in  
Ministerial  
Speeches

53

media mentions

## 1. Commentaries and Forum Letters

1. 'An approach to naming and dark histories', The Straits Times, Chua Ai Lin, 18 February 2017.  
<http://www.straitstimes.com/opinion/an-approach-to-naming-and-dark-histories>
2. 'History of land reclamation worth documenting', The Straits Times, Alex Tan Tiong Hee, 8 April 2017.  
<http://www.straitstimes.com/forum/letters-in-print/history-of-land-reclamation-worth-documenting>
3. 《宋旺相《新加坡华人百年史》百年大厝再探》，联合早报，杨芷善，18 June 2017.  
<http://www.zaobao.com.sg/news/fukan/others/story20170618-772101>

## 2. Ministerial Reports

1. 'Speech by SMS Desmond Lee at 'Celebrating Ubin's Heritage''  
Singapore Government News, 3 December 2016.  
<https://app.mnd.gov.sg/Newsroom/News-Page/ID/2405?category=Speech>
2. 'Speech by 2M Desmond Lee at Ubin Day 2017'  
Singapore Government News, 16 July 2017.  
<https://app.mnd.gov.sg/Newsroom/News-Page/ID/2893/year/2017/RA1/RA2/RA3?category=Speech>

## 3. Media Mentions

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<http://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/council-of-heritage-practitioners-slams-decision-to-demolish-and-reconstruct-historic>
2. 'Demolishing and reconstructing Ellison Building is wrong: Professional heritage practitioners in S'pore explain', Mothership, Joshua Lee, 3 September 2016.  
<http://mothership.sg/2016/09/demolishing-reconstructing-ellison-building-is-wrong-professional-heritage-practitioners-in-spore-explain/>
3. 'Conserved buildings: Consult public before slicing and dicing', The Straits Times, Melody Zaccheus, 8 September 2016.  
<http://www.straitstimes.com/opinion/conserved-buildings-consult-public-before-slicing-and-dicing>
4. 'Volunteer Spotlight - Heritage, Alive!', Happy Hands Issue 13, October - December 2016  
<http://www.mnd.gov.sg/happyhands/Sep2016/Happy-Hands-Building-An-Endearing-Home-Issue-13-An-e-newsletter-for-Friends-of-the-MND-Family.pdf?fref=gc>
5. 'NTU team to study popular Taoist festival of the Nine Emperor Gods', The Straits Times, Melody Zaccheus, 1 October 2016.  
<http://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/team-to-study-popular-taoist-festival>
6. 《文物局资助研究本地九皇信仰文化》，联合早报，谢燕燕，1 October 2016.  
<http://www.zaobao.com.sg/znews/singapore/story20161001-672599>
7. 'Sultan Mosque among winners of architectural awards', The Straits Times, Natasha Ann Zachariah, 7 October 2016.  
<http://www.straitstimes.com/lifestyle/home-design/sultan-mosque-among-winners-of-architectural-awards>
8. 'ICOMOS Singapore issues statement objecting to the demolish and reconstruction of Ellison Building', The Online Citizen, 10 October 2016.  
<https://www.theonlinecitizen.com/2016/10/10/icomos-singapore-issues-statement-objecting-to-the-demolish-and-reconstruction-of-ellison-building/>
9. 'LTA, URA to work with heritage groups to protect historic Ellison Building'  
Today, 19 October 2016.  
<http://www.todayonline.com/singapore/lta-ura-work-heritage-groups-protect-historic-ellison-building>
10. 'Tunnel works: LTA to get conservation specialist' report on Ellison Building'  
The Straits Times, Melody Zaccheus, 20 October 2016.  
<http://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/tunnel-works-lta-to-get-conservation-specialists-report-on-ellison-building>



11. 'LTA-URA trying to manage criticism from heritage conservation groups while pushing through plans to demolish parts of Ellison Building', The Online Citizen, Martha Soezean, 21 October 2016.  
<https://www.theonlinecitizen.com/2016/10/21/ita-ura-trying-to-manage-criticism-from-heritage-conservation-groups-while-pushing-through-plans-to-demolish-parts-of-ellison-building/>

12. 'Building a sustainable city requires art, conservation and even urban farming, says architect William Lim', Today, Reena Devi, 26 October 2016.  
<http://www.todayonline.com/entertainment/arts/breaking-new-ground>

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<http://themiddleground.sg/2016/11/08/conserved-ellison-building-saved/>

14. 'Desmond Lee: North-South Expressway cannot avoid Ellison Building completely' The Online Citizen, Martha Soezean, 11 November 2016.  
<https://www.theonlinecitizen.com/2016/11/19/desmond-lee-north-south-expressway-can-not-avoid-ellison-building-entirely/>

15. 'This book on S'pore cemeteries took 10 years to publish, some of them disappeared during that time', Mothership, Hendrick Chng, 24 November 2016.  
<http://mothership.sg/2016/11/this-book-on-spores-cemeteries-took-10-years-to-publish-some-of-them-disappeared-during-that-time/>

16. 'Little India isn't messy - it's authentic' The Straits Times, Jalelah Abu Baker, 19 December  
<http://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/building-momentum-in-efforts-to-protect-local-history>

17. 《小印度 ‘乱’ 出特色 成吸引外国客因素》联合晚报, 19 December 2016  
<http://www.wanbao.com.sg/local/story20161219-97212>

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<http://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/building-momentum-in-efforts-to-protect-local-history>

19. 'Don't change Little India to make it tourist friendly', The Straits Times, Ankita Varma, 8 January 2017.  
<http://www.straitstimes.com/lifestyle/keep-little-india-as-it-is>

20. 'History tome gets timely e-update', The Straits Times, Melody Zaccheus, 21 January 2017.  
<http://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/history-tome-gets-timely-e-update>

21. 'Syonan Gallery: Revamped war museum's name sparks questions', The Straits Times, Melody Zaccheus, 10 February 2017.  
<http://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/revamped-war-museums-name-sparks-questions>

22. 'Decades-old Sungei Road flea market to shut for good; July 10 will be its last day', The Straits Times, Melody Zaccheus, 14 February 2017.  
<http://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/decades-old-sungei-road-flea-market-to-shut-for-good-july-10-will-be-its-last-day>

23. 'Sungei Road flea market to make way for future homes', The Straits Times, Melody Zaccheus, 15 February 2017.  
<http://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/sungei-road-flea-market-to-make-way-for-future-homes>

24. 'Sungei Road flea market to close in July' The New Paper, Melody Zaccheus, 15 February 2017.  
<http://www.tnp.sg/news/singapore/sungei-road-flea-market-close-july>

25. '7 things you ought to know about Sungei Road market before it disappears', AsiaOne, 15 February 2017.  
<http://www.asiaone.com/singapore/7-things-you-ought-know-about-sungei-road-market-it-disappears>

26. 'Celebrating the common man: The rise of community history in Singapore', Channel NewsAsia, Linette Lim, 18 February 2017.  
<http://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/singapore/celebrating-the-common-man-the-rise-of-community-history-in-sing-7619732>

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<http://www.straitstimes.com/politics/singapolitics/blueprint-for-heritage-sector-being-drawn-up>

28. 'Experts want more say under heritage blueprint', The Straits Times, Melody Zaccheus, 14 March 2017.  
<http://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/experts-want-more-say-under-heritage-blueprint>

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<http://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/transport/tomb-cave-in-lapse-in-judgment-found>

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<http://www.zaobao.com.sg/news/singapore/story20170403-743947>

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<http://www.straitstimes.com/forum/letters-in-print/show-where-spore-shoreline-was-before-reclamation>

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<http://www.straitstimes.com/lifestyle/arts/contribute-to-singapore-history>

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<http://www.zaobao.com.sg/news/singapore/story20170416-749333>

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38. 'Goodbye to Jubilee Hall in Raffles Hotel Makeover', The Straits Times, Melody Zaccheus, 8 May 2017.  
<http://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/goodbye-to-jubilee-hall-in-raffles-hotel-makeover>

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<http://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/singapore/5-governments-5-hdbs-5-moes-tay-kheng-soon-on-decentralisation-8843960>

40. 'Say 'teng bong' to S'pore's first Kristang language festival', Today, Reena Devi, 17 May 2017.  
<http://www.todayonline.com/entertainment/first-kristang-language-festival-celebrate-its-heritage-showcase-what-it-means-be>

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<http://www.zaobao.com.sg/zopinions/views/story20170619-772367>

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<https://www.citylab.com/equity/2017/06/the-fate-of-one-house-is-causing-an-uproar-in-singapore/531255/>

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<http://www.straitstimes.com/opinion/a-unique-heritage-test-case>

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<http://www.todayonline.com/singapore/increasingly-anxious-sporeans-look-parliament-provide-answers-damaging-oxley-road-saga>

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<http://www.tnp.sg/news/singapore/pulau-ubin-kampung-houses-be-restored>

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<http://www.zaobao.com.sg/znews/singapore/story20170717-779531>

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<http://www.todayonline.com/singapore/tombs-football-icon-former-politician-affected-tengah-air-base-expansion>

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<http://www.todayonline.com/singapore/historic-kampong-bencoolen-thriving-league-faiths>

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# PUBLIC OUTREACH

SHS has continued our long-standing reputation of organising a full year of expert-led events for members and the public. Representatives of SHS were also invited to speak at public events organised by others. Upon invitation, the Society also provides public lectures and tours, primarily to educational and non-profit organisations.

From September 2016 to August 2017, SHS has organised 12 public events, more than half of which were free. For our indoor talks, forums and seminars, we have on average 100 to 150 participants; majority of them are non-members who had an interest in our topic and were informed of our events through social media or word of mouth.

As the 30th anniversary of the Singapore Heritage Society, this year’s public events also centred around a series of ‘Public Conversations’ with all previous SHS presidents, who reflected on their experiences in heritage advocacy. We are grateful to partner with the Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA) and Singapore Management University’s School of Social Sciences for this series.

We have received overwhelming responses for our paid local walks this year, hosting on average 25 to 30 participants each time. Our Ubin tour this June was fully subscribed within 24 hours, while Under Wraps was held three times to accommodate continued requests from our members and the public. The surge in interest reflects a more engaged citizenry that has greater desire to understand our surrounding physical spaces. SHS will continue to organise community-led walks and tours that provide narratives of Singapore’s heritage and history.

Our outreach at a glance:

12

Public Events

60%

are Free

25

average participants for our local walks

100

average participants for our talks and seminars

# Calendar of Events for 2016-2017

Date	Event Name	Partners and Co-Organisers	Venue
TALKS, FORUMS AND SEMINARS			
17 Sep 2016	Mosaic and Stories: My Kampung Gelam Story by Khir Johari		Mamanda Restaurant
29 Apr 2017	Public Conversations (I): The Living Presence of the Past with founding SHS President, Dr William SW Lim, Kelvin Ang, Asst Prof Hiro Saito, Prof James Tang, and moderated by Dr Chua Ai Lin	SMU School of Social Sciences, URA	URA Centre Auditorium
3 Jun 2017	Public Conversations (II): Garden, Ocean, Archipelago; Re-imagining Space, Social Life, Singapore with Prof Kwok Kian Woon, Kelvin Ang, Assoc Prof Bussarawan (Puk) Teerawichitchainan, Asst Prof Ijlal Naqvi, and moderated by Dr Chua Ai Lin	SMU School of Social Sciences and URA	SMU Mochtar Riady Auditorium
18 Jun 2017	Panel Discussion on Sungei Road Market: A Future for Street Culture Heritage with Prof Tay Kheng Soon, Dr Laavanya Kathiravelu, Faiz bin Zohri and moderated by Dr Chua Ai Lin	The Substation	The Substation
26 Aug 2017	Public Conversations (III): Memory, Identity and the Battle for Our Heritage with Dr Kevin YL Tan, Kelvin Ang, Assoc Prof Tan Yoo Guan, Asst Prof Hiro Saito, and moderated by Dr Chua Ai Lin	SMU School of Social Sciences and URA	URA Centre Auditorium
EXHIBITIONS, INSTALLATIONS AND FESTIVALS			
10 May 2017	Booklets on the Pulau Ubin Tua Pek Kong Festival in English & Chinese produced by SHS, distributed to Pulau Ubin visitors	Pesta Ubin	Pulau Ubin Tua Pek Kong Temple
16 Jul 2017	Photos of My Backyard: An Ubin Photo Exhibition curated by Clarice Lee, for NParks' Ubin Day	NParks, Pesta Ubin	Pulau Ubin Assembly Area
WALKS AND TRAILS			
26 Feb 2017	Under Wraps (I): Traversing Downtown Singapore with SGfilmhunter (Toh Hun Ping), conducted in English	URA Car-Free Sunday	Civic District, Telok Ayer
26 Mar 2017	Under Wraps (II): Traversing Downtown Singapore with SGfilmhunter (Toh Hun Ping), conducted in English	URA Car-Free Sunday	Civic District, Telok Ayer
30 Apr 2017	Under Wraps (III): Traversing Downtown Singapore with SGfilmhunter (Toh Hun Ping), conducted in Mandarin	URA Car-Free Sunday	Civic District, Telok Ayer



6 May 2017	Disappearing Landscapes – Thieves Market and Rochor Centre with Andrew Lin	Jane's Walk Singapore 2017	Sungei Road Market and Rochor Centre
26 Jun 2017	Pilot Test for Wayfinder at Bukit Brown Self-Guided Trail with 40 selected public participants	Bukit Brown Working Group comprising MND, NHB, LTA, URA, NParks, SHS	Bukit Brown
16 Jul 2017	Jalan Jalan di Ubin: A Heritage Tour with Dr Vivienne Wee	Pesta Ubin	Pulau Ubin
20 Aug 2017	17a Keong Saik Book Tour with Charmaine Leung	Ethos Books	Chinatown
<b>PUBLIC SPEAKING INVITATIONS</b>			
11 Mar 2017	Dr Chua Ai Lin, Built Heritage: Sign Posts to the Past for Singapore Design Week 2017 Design Trails	Shophouse & Co.	Chong Wen Ge
8 Apr 2017	杨芷善博士, “文化遗产民间组织与国家关系——以新加坡传统文化学会参与“铁道走廊”与“武吉布朗坟场”案例为”, 民间智识团体与社会参与” 华语论坛	Singapore Society for Asian Studies 新加坡亚洲研究学会	National Library, The Pod
21 May 2017	Dr Chua Ai Lin, panel speaker for Minority Languages in Singapore: Challenges and New Horizons, Kristang Language Festival 2017	Kodrah Kristang	Asian Civilisations Museum, Ngee Ann Auditorium
1 Jul 2017	Elaine Mok (SHS intern), 'What is heritage?' Singapore Buddhist Youth Day Community Service at Lorong Buangkok	Buddhist Youth Network (BYN)	Kampong Lorong Buangkok
<b>PRIVATE LECTURES, WORKSHOPS AND TOURS CONDUCTED UPON REQUEST</b>			
14 Sep 2016	Stories of Ourselves; A guided walk with Catherine Lim and Fabian Tee for 22 students and 2 teachers, complemented by a class presentation and Q&A, for Yale-NUS	Yale-NUS, All Things Bukit Brown	Bukit Brown
24 Sep 2016	Threats to Cultural Sites - Bukit Brown, a live case study; A guided walk with Catherine Lim for 15 students and 2 teachers for Kyushu University	Kyushu University, All Things Bukit Brown	Bukit Brown



Under Wraps: Traversing Downtown Singapore tour with Toh Hun Ping, 26 Feb 2017. (Photo: Lynn Wong)

Dr William SW Lim, founding president of SHS, holds a Public Conversation with current SHS president, Dr Chua Ai Lin, 29 Apr 2017. (Photo: Chua Ai Lin)



Speakers at the Panel Discussion on Sungei Road Market: A Future for Street Culture Heritage, 18 Jun 2017. (Photo: JJ Wong)

Pilot Test for Wayfinder at Bukit Brown Self-Guided Trail, 26 June 2017. (Photo: Foo Hee Keng)

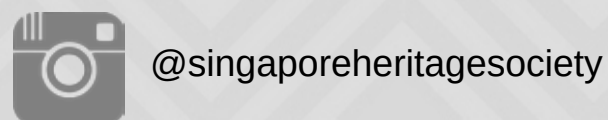




## ONLINE MEDIA PRESENCE

SHS maintains an active online media presence. In particular, the daily news updates provided on our Facebook Page help our followers stay abreast of heritage-related developments, and contribute to building a more informed and active citizenry.

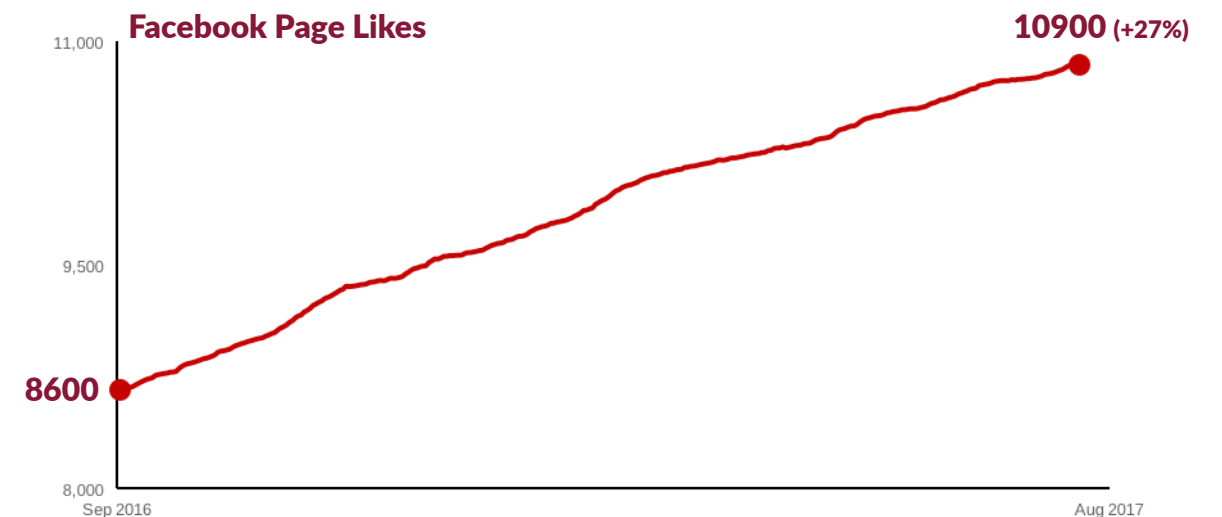
Our online media channels:



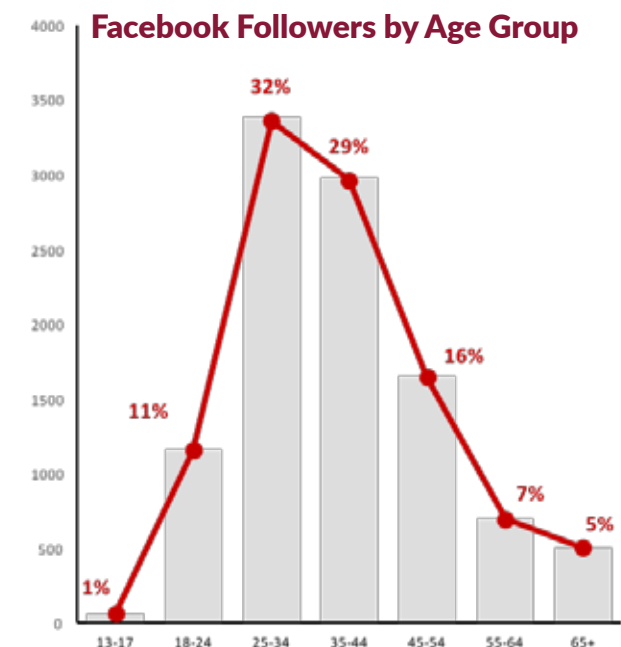
## 1. Facebook

Started in July 2011, our Facebook page has seen tremendous growth in viewership and likes over the past year. SHS Member and Volunteer Han Ming Guang curates and uploads content regularly to communicate and interact with our followers. Through Facebook Live, we also live-stream our events for public viewing and future documentation. We regularly welcome direct messages for partnership and event opportunities.

Our page followers have grown by 27% from 8600 to 10900 between September 2016 and August 2017. We are heartened by the expanding interest in heritage issues and participation in heritage discussions on our Facebook page. SHS will continue to put up regular content that is engaging, relevant and insightful for our followers.




We are pleased to note that our content has reached the younger population in Singapore, with 44% of our followers between 18 and 34 years old. This highlights not only has our content been able to engage a new generation of heritage enthusiasts, but also a growing consciousness among the younger population towards heritage and its impact on Singapore.





The insights offered by our content continues to be the biggest draw for our Facebook followers. The top 3 posts with the highest number of unique impressions (persons who have seen the post) and engagements (liking, clicking on the link or commenting on the post) are:

	POST SNAPSHOT	DATE POSTED	UNIQUE IMPRESSIONS	ENGAGEMENTS
1		18 July 2017	22845	4333
2		9 Dec 2016	22122	2899

3		13 Dec 2016	14482	2311
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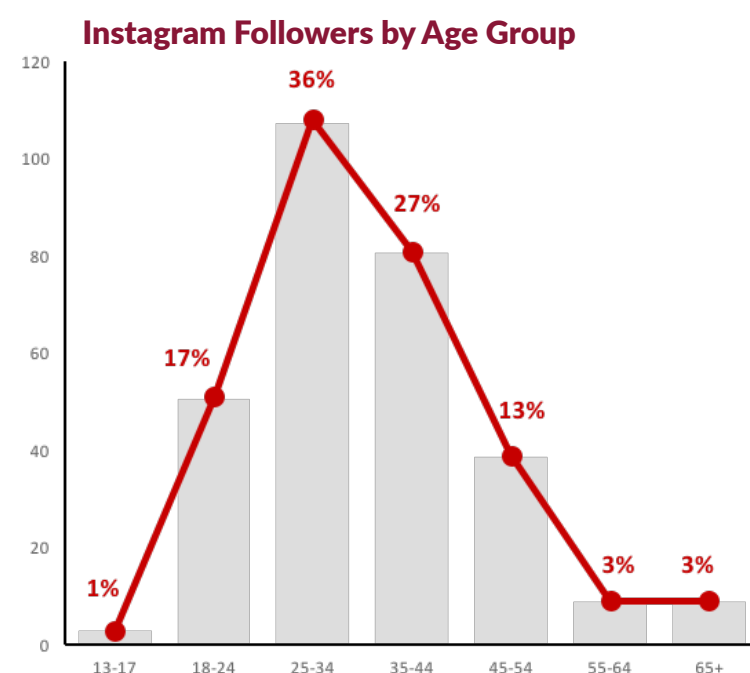
Our top 3 posts uphold the Society’s concerns towards the gradual loss of physical and living heritage. We will continue to share human stories that are pertinent to Singapore’s development, and provide all-rounded narratives across the island.



## 2. Twitter and Instagram

Our Instagram and Twitter presence remain complementary to our Facebook engagements. We have a total of 307 followers on Twitter and 298 followers on Instagram, although content on both pages are publicly accessible. While most of our Twitter content directs followers to our Facebook, our Instagram content was previously curated and promoted by former SHS Intern Elaine Mok. SHS Exco will continue to guide our interns to produce unique and intimate Instagram content that focus on specific heritage issues and special events.

The age distribution of our Instagram followers is similar to that of Facebook: 53% of our Instagram followers are between 18 and 34 years old. As Instagram remains a fast-growing engagement platform for a next-generation of young heritage enthusiasts, we will continue to put up engaging and relevant stories that are relatable and accessible for a wider audience.

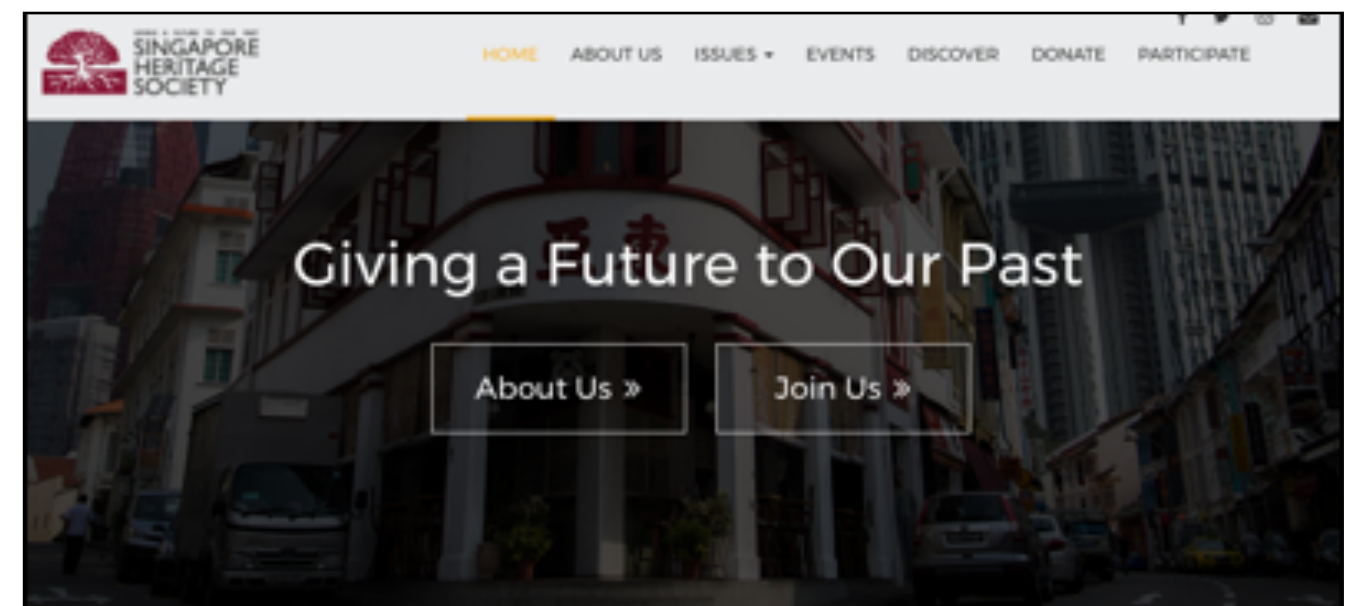


## 3. Website

SHS maintains a website where we host articles, commentaries, publications and issue-specific microsites. The online space remains an important repository for our past events, position papers and media releases, and we are committed to keeping it as freely-accessible as possible.

In December 2016, SHS kicked off a complete revamp of our website. The last time this was done was in 2011 and advances in web design have rendered the old site obsolete. SHS has engaged Ingenim (formerly known as The Adventus), who have once again offered heavily-discounted rates in order to support SHS. To better understand the needs of our audience, a user experience (UX) workshop was held on 10 January 2017 with 16 SHS members, partners and potential audiences including representatives of government agencies and funding bodies.

The new website will be launched by end 2017 with a refreshed search function and an integrated events page that allow us to better manage traffic flow across our online pages.





# PUBLICATIONS

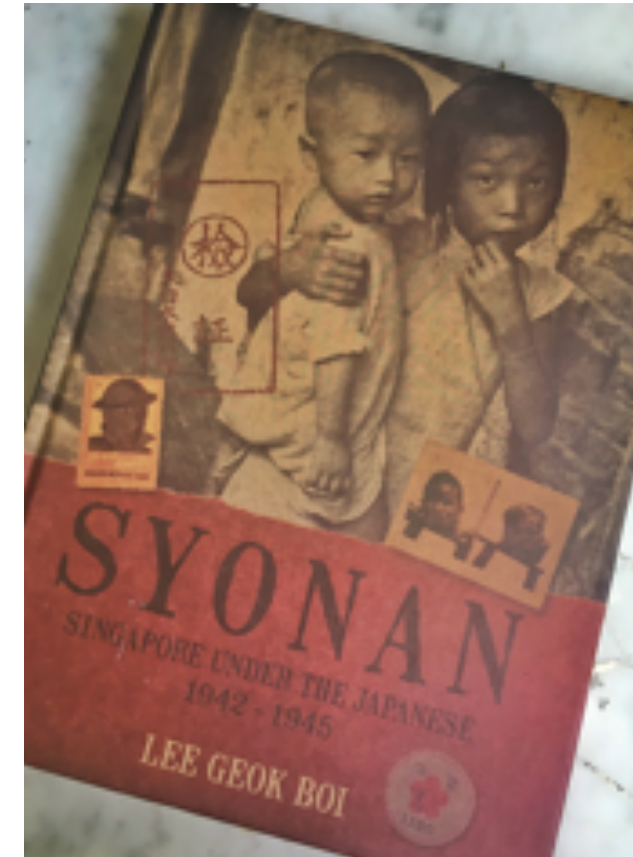
## 1. *'Song Ong Siang's One Hundred Years of the Chinese in Singapore – a revised and annotated version'* edited by Kevin Tan (April 2017, E-book).

Commissioned by the National Library Board, the Society embarked on a project to annotate, edit and re-publish Sir Song Ong Siang's classic volume, *One Hundred Years of the Chinese in Singapore*, as an e-book under the general editorship of Dr Kevin Tan. This volume was first published in 1923 and underwent two reprints in 1968 and 1991 before going out of print. As Song passed away in 1941, the book is now in the public domain. The book is available for free download from the National Library website at <http://eresources.nlb.gov.sg/printheritage/detail/90de4577-25a7-416f-8ec6-994f1536c40b.aspx>

Through the National Archives of Singapore's Citizen Archivist initiative to crowdsource for further information, the public is 'invite[d] you to contribute and share materials such as photographs and/or fresh information from trusted sources that can shed new light into this classic. This will provide current and future generations with a more comprehensive telling of the early history of the Chinese in Singapore.' Submissions can be made at <http://www.nas.gov.sg/citizenarchivist/Annotate/Transcribe?itemId=33548&collectionId=134>.



## 2. *Revised version of 'Syonan: Singapore under the Japanese, 1942-1945'* (August 2017).



To coincide with the 75th anniversary of the Fall of Singapore in World War II, SHS has produced a revised edition of this 1992 SHS publication with revised content by the author and publisher of the original 1992 edition, Lee Geok Boi and Landmark Books, with support from the National Archives of Singapore and the National Library Board. The book will be officially launched at the SHS Annual General Meeting on 9 Sep 2017.



# MEMBERSHIP

Our members believe strongly in SHS’s work of speaking up for heritage conservation. Our activities, social media updates and regular mailers help them to stay abreast of current affairs relating to heritage, as well as their knowledge of Singapore history and heritage. This helps them to participate more effectively in public discussions on heritage issues.

As of 28 August 2016, we have 245 members, as compared to 254 a year ago. Moving forward, we aim to improve the processes for membership registration and renewal, and are exploring suitable software platforms for this. The role of existing members in introducing friends to join SHS has been particularly important, as is our growing profile in the social media sphere.

Join us as a member at:



a community of  
**245**  
registered members

for only  
**60**  
dollars a year in  
support of heritage  
in Singapore

# Member Engagement

SHS members have priority and discounted rates for all SHS events, with selected activities exclusive to members. SHS members also receive exclusive offers and special invitations to activities by partner organisations. In 2016, these were:

DATE	EVENT	PARTNERS
10 Jan 2017	SHS website revamp User Experience (UX) Workshop	Inginim
Jan 2017	Discounted price for <i>State of Motion</i> guided bus tours	Asian Film Archive (AFA)
9 Apr 2017	Curator’s Tour of Former Ford Factory Gallery	National Archives of Singapore (NAS)
Jun 2017	Discounted price for Singapore’s Permanent Territorial Revolution: Fifty Years in Fifty Maps by Rodolphe De Koninck	APD
21 Jul 2017	Researchers’ Networking Session	National Library
31 Jul 2017	Legal Deposit Networking Session	National Library

With a plethora of history and heritage events being organised island-wide by many different organisations throughout the year, SHS takes special effort to send email announcements of relevant external activities to members.



**All five current and past presidents of SHS, 3 June 2017.**  
Top, L-R: Dahlia Shamsuddin, Chua Ai Lin; Bottom, L-R: Kwok Kian Woon, William SW Lim, Kevin Tan.



## FUNDRAISING

Since 14 January 2009, SHS has been conferred the status of Institution of Public Character (IPC), one of less than 600 registered charities in Singapore which meet the stringent criteria of the Commissioner of Charities. IPC status allows SHS to issue tax deductible receipts to donors who want to claim tax relief based on the amount of qualifying donations made. The current tax relief is 250% of the amount donated.

Visit our fundraising portal at:



[www.giving.sg/singapore-heritage-society](http://www.giving.sg/singapore-heritage-society)

## Our Fundraising Channels

SHS is eligible for the Cultural Matching Fund (CMF) fund established by the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth (MCCY). It offers dollar-for-dollar (1:1) matching grants for private cash donations to arts and heritage charities since 2014. SHS was successfully awarded CMF grants in 2014 and 2015, and are awaiting the results of our 2016 application.

Aside from cheque and cash donations, SHS is registered with the government-run online donation portal, **Giving.Sg**. Due to its convenience as well as appeals for donations via the SHS Facebook Page, online donations showed a marked increase in 2015-2016. We also display the QR Code to SHS page at Giving.Sg at our events to encourage donations. Giving.sg also allows for us to create specific fundraising campaigns, and in addition any registered individual may create their own campaigns to raise donations for their chosen charities.



Donations and sponsorships in the Financial Year ending 31 March 2017 totalled **\$10,669**.



# ORGANISATIONAL MATTERS

## 1. Administration

The Society has no paid staff. Since June 2006, the secretarial work of the Society has carried out by Ms Wendy Chua of Bizcomm Pte Ltd who acts as the Society's administrative secretary on a service contract.

From Aug 2015 to April 2017, SHS conducted a recruitment exercise to hire a full-time or part-time paid staff to organise outreach programmes for members and the public. We have been unable to secure a suitable candidate so far and have decided to develop alternative plans for SHS manpower resources.

## 2. Cloud Solutions

SHS actively uses technology to improve our organisational efficiency and work collaboratively. We have since adopted:

- Doodle for organising meetings,
- Eventbrite for event registration,
- Google Docs for collaborative writing and
- Facebook groups for organising work teams.

We also take advantage of free premium software offered to non-profit organisations such as Canva for Work and Google for Non-Profits, and are exploring additional platforms.

## 3. 30th Anniversary and Refreshed SHS Logos

For the 30th Anniversary of the SHS, our special logo was created by industrial designer, Yang He Xiang, who kindly provided his services pro bono. His concept is based on the theme of 'Emergence', which he explains thus:

*"In recent years, I have observed from the general public, an exponential increase in interest on issues pertaining to Singapore's heritage. These issues general concern conservation, preservation, and discussions about its cultural importance. There for the 30th anniversary celebration, it is nature that we illustrate this 'emergence' via the SHS logo. This proposal retains the overall form of the original logo, while using simple techniques of inversion and shadow play to communicate the increasing present tension and awareness of heritage (and thus SHS) for Singapore."*

Yang He Xiang also refreshed the main SHS logo, adding in our new tagline which was suggested by members during the 2015 Annual General Meeting: Giving a Future to Our Past.

## 4. Internships

Internships play an important role in grooming new generations of heritage advocates with the necessary domain knowledge and real-world experience in the sector. They also bring fresh blood and energy to the SHS organisation, and hopefully develop a relationship with SHS that lasts long after the end of the official internship.

Our part-time internship programme allows selected students and young adults to

- Develop knowledge of heritage issues, research questions and industry best practices
- Gain an inside view and first-hand experience of (a) the heritage industry (b) the non-profit sector and (c) advocacy work
- Meet key industry players
- Be mentored by experienced heritage advocates, including academics, architects, conservation experts, historians, anthropologists, researchers, writers, editors, librarians, curators, lawyers, tourism professionals etc.
- Get to know a community of like-minded individuals with a passion for Singapore heritage

We place great emphasis on guiding our interns to get a broad exposure to heritage sector activities and topics, including attending events by other organisations, and allowing interns to attend policy-level discussions with government agencies. Our internships run for four to six months as we find that it takes time for interns to gain the necessary exposure and experience in order to be able to contribute effectively.

Under the guidance of Executive Committee members, SHS interns contribute substantially to the day-to-day running of SHS through administrative assistance, event logistics, photography and videography, graphic design, social media, research and fieldwork. And after gaining experience, interns are also given responsibilities in planning and organising public outreach activities.

Following a very positive experience with several general interns, as well as project-based internships from January to August 2015, SHS embarked on its first ever public call for general interns in December 2015, and has subsequently put out a call every half year. Each round has attracted an average of 12 applicants, with a bumper crop in December 2016 of 30 applications. Interested people come from a variety of backgrounds, ranging from junior college to Master's level students, and majoring in social sciences, humanities, business administration and even Mechanical Engineering.

Thus far, every batch of interns has produced at least one or more who have continued volunteering actively with SHS after the end of the internship.

INTERNSHIP PERIOD	NO. OF APPLICANTS	NO. SELECTED	NO. SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED
Aug-Dec 2016	12	5	4
Jan-Jun 2017	30	6	5
Aug-Dec 2017	12	2	n/a





SHS refreshed logo designed by Yang He Xiang

SHS 30th Anniversary logo designed by Yang He Xiang.



SHS President, Dr Chua Ai Lin, with interns and youth volunteers. (Photo: Han Ming Guang)

## 5. Capacity Building

SHS Executive committee members, key volunteers and interns attend workshops and professional conferences to network and raise their capabilities in skills relevant to the work of the Society. In the last year, these events have included:

DATE	EVENT	ORGANISER	VENUE
28 Oct 2016	IPS Digital Frontiers Seminar: "Upscaling Online Collaboration for Offline Good - Making It Work" (by invitation only)	Institute of Policy Studies (IPS)	Institute of Policy Studies (IPS)
21 Nov 2016	The Greenhouse Sessions #13: "The Role of the Artist in Place-Making" by Janet Pillai	ArtsWok Collaborative	National Library Board
27 Feb 2017	The Greenhouse Sessions #14: "A Tale Of Two Cities: Arts-Based. Place-Based. Community-Based" by Han Xuemei, Koh Hui Ling, Alecia Neo, Jasmine Ng and ArtsWok Collaborative	ArtsWok Collaborative	National Library Board
15 Mar 2017	IPS-SAM Spotlight on Cultural Policy Series: "Roundtable on the Development of Community Arts in Singapore" (by invitation only)	Institute of Policy Studies (IPS)	Singapore Art Museum
17 Mar 2017	Participatory Community Planning & Design (PCPD) Symposium -- Asian Perspectives	Department of Architecture, NUS	National University of Singapore
12 Jun 2017	Social Return on Investment (SROI) Analysis Workshop by Assoc Prof Albert Teo	NUS Chua Thian Poh Community Leadership Programme	National University of Singapore
30 Jul & 5 Aug 2017	Heritage Management Workshop on Pulau Ubin by Prof Richard Engelhardt & Prof Pamela Rodgers	National Heritage Board	Singapore Botanic Gardens
16-17 Aug 2017	Conference: Remapping the Arts, Heritage, and Cultural Production: Between Policies and Practices in East and Southeast Asian Cities"	Asia Research Institute, NUS	National University of Singapore



## 6. Executive Committee Meetings

A total of 6 Executive Committee meetings were held in the last twelve months, in accordance with the number required by the SHS Constitution. Attendance at meetings by Executive Committee members was as follows:

NAME OF EXCO MEMBER	NO. MEETINGS ATTENDED
Dr Chua Ai Lin (President)	6
Mr Khir Johari (Vice-President)	4
Mr Siva S Krishnasamy (Honorary Treasurer)	1
Mr Alex Tan Tiong Hee (Honorary Secretary)	1
Ms Catherine Lim	6
Mr Timothy Pwee	4
Mr Tony Tan Say Kiong	5
Mr Tan Wee Cheng	6
Dr Yeo Kang Shua	3
Mr Victor Yue	4

## FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The Society’s main source of income is from donations and grants from government projects. Membership subscriptions alone are insufficient to meet day-to-day expenses. In all activities the Society has organised, every effort has been made to ensure that each event and project is self-funding. It should nonetheless be noted that subscriptions by members do not cover year-to-year operation costs and that cross subsidies are secured through money made in publishing, consulting and other ventures.

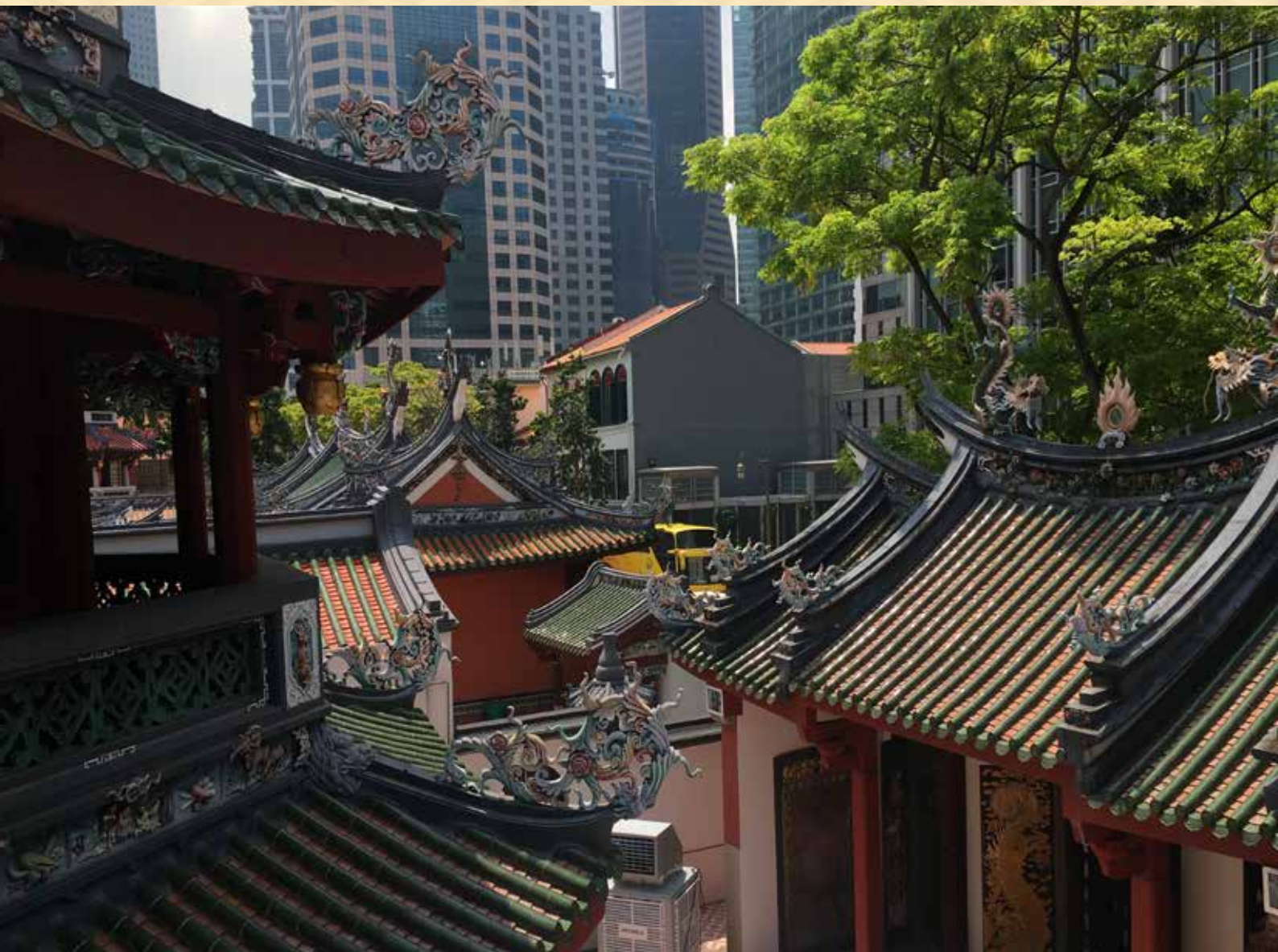
### Policy on Finance & Funding

The Society is funded by a combination of subscriptions from members, donations from well-wishers as well as through the sale of its publications and the provision of heritage consultancy services. It is the Society’s policy that all new projects be self-financing. Throughout its history, the Society has never taken a loan from any individual or institution to finance its activities.

### Statement of Accounts

Statement of accounts for the financial year ended 31 March 2017 is attached.





View of Asia Square from Chong Wen Ge  
*Taken by Chua Ai Lin*

**Photo Credits:**

Chua Ai Lin	Han Ming Guang
Claire Leown	Foo Hee Keng
Marvin Tang	URA
JJ Wong	NHB
Christian Zhang	MND
Angelica Habulan	
Wilson Tang	