



### **ANNUAL REPORT FOR YEAR ENDED 31 August 2012**

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.

UEN Number: S87SS0042J

Registered Address: 179 River Valley Road #05-06  
Singapore 179033

Management Committee The Management Committee elected at the Annual General Meeting held on 3 September 2011 is as follows:

1. Ms Dahlia Shamsuddin (President)
2. Dr Chua Ai Lin (Vice-President)
3. Dr Loh Kah Seng (Hon Secretary) [resigned December 2011]
4. Dr Yeo Kang Shua (Hon Secretary wef January 2012)
5. Mr Tan Wee Cheng (Hon Treasurer)
6. Dr Terence Chong (Member)
7. Mr Ho Chi Tim
8. Ms Junaidah Jaffar
9. Mr Alex Tan Tiong Hee (Member)
10. Mr Tony Tan (Member)

Trustees NIL

Banker OCBC Bank

Auditor Louise Neo & Co  
619E Bukit Timah Road  
Singapore 269725

Investment Advisor NIL

Other Advisor(s)

NIL

### **OBJECTIVE**

The Society is dedicated to the preservation, transmission and promotion of Singapore's history, heritage and identity. The Society further aims to promote active interest in the cultural life and history of Singapore and to initiate action on research, evaluation, documentation, publication, collection, display, and preservation and restoration of skills and items of historical interest.

### **POLICIES**

#### **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.

#### **Premises for Registered Address & Meetings**

The Society does not own any property. Its registered and correspondence address is at 50 East Coast Road #02-57, Roxy Square, Singapore 428769. The Executive Committee holds its monthly meetings in the Events Room at Betel Box Living Bistro, 200 Joo Chiat Road, Singapore 427471 has made possible through the generosity of Betel Box Asia Pte Ltd.

### **REVIEW FOR THE YEAR 2011–2012**

#### **Introduction**

This report covers the period August 2011 to August 2012.

#### **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. Since January 2009, the Society has been given Institution of Public Character (IPC) status.

## **SHS Silver Jubilee**

2012 marks the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Society since it was registered as a society in 1987. To mark the milestone, the Society's logo was updated and a special Silver Jubilee logo was also created, a new website was launched and a series of events were organised including three exhibitions held at the National Library building and a heritage tour to Taiping, Kuala Kangsar and Ipoh in Perak, Malaysia's 'Silver State', was organised in June 2012.

## **Updated SHS Logo**

The SHS tree logo was updated and launched in January 2012. Designed by Shamsuddin H Akib, the updated logo features luxuriant leaves and strong roots reflecting the Society's growing presence and its rootedness to Singapore's heritage. The updated logo is visually stronger, more vibrant and is compatible in digital format.

## **Silver Jubilee logo**

The Silver Jubilee logo was created by Shamsuddin H Akib to commemorate the Society's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary after SHS Executive Committee members chose the phrase 'Silver Jubilee' to mark this important milestone.

## **New Website**

The Society's new website was launched in February 2012. The website has information about the Society's office bearers, annual and financial reports for the last 3 years, activities, publications and advocacy work throughout the years. The URL for the website is [www.singaporeheritage.org](http://www.singaporeheritage.org)

## **Advocacy**

The Society has led the debate on Bukit Brown by highlighting the conflict between heritage, development and urbanisation and its importance to Singapore's history and the Chinese in Southeast Asia. It also argued that the Bukit Brown issue offered new opportunities for discussions on nation building and making the younger generation interested in history and heritage issues. The Society published its "Position Paper on Bukit Brown" in January 2012 and several Op-Ed comments and letters in the media and notes on the SHS Facebook page. It co-organised a public symposium on 19 November 2011 and a public forum on Belitung and Bukit Brown on 14 April 2012. The Bukit Brown issue has fired the imaginations of ordinary Singaporeans to become passionate activists for a cause they strongly believe worth protecting.

## Talks and Forums

Talks and forums remains the most popular of the Society's numerous events and initiatives. During the period under review, most of our talks were co-organised with the National Library Board, the Arts House, the Asian Civilisations Museum, Singapore Management University's School of Law, APD Singapore and Betel Box Living Bistro. The following are a list of talks the Society organised between August 2011 and August 2012

### BACK & BEYOND TO THE IVORY TOWER: STUDENTS & POLITICS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

Reynaldo C. Ileto, Charnvit Kasetsiri, Lai Ah Eng & Yeoh Lam Keong

moderated by Kwok Kian Woon

2.30 pm, Saturday 3 September 2011

The Chamber, Arts House

The idea behind this forum was to highlight student activism in Singapore and other Southeast Asian neighbours between 1945 and 1976. The Society was fortunate that 2 professors of Southeast Asian history, Professor Ileto and Professor Charnvit, were in Singapore to talk about student activism in the Philippines and Thailand respectively. Together with Dr Lai Ah Eng who spoke about her experience as a student in Malaysia and Mr Yeoh Lam Keong who spoke about his experience as a Singaporean student studying in London during the 1970s, the forum provided the audience an opportunity to learn more about student activism and Southeast Asia. The Society hopes to organise more events on Singapore and its Southeast Asian neighbours in future.

### SPACES FOR THE LIVING: A DISCUSSION ON BUKIT BROWN CEMETERY

Raymond Goh, Irving Chan Johnson, Ho Hua Chew, Hui Yew-Foong & Chew Kheng Chuan

Moderated by Lai Chee Kien

5.00 pm, Saturday 19 November 2011

Ngee Ann Auditorium, Asian Civilisations Museum

This forum was jointly organised with the NUS Southeast Asian Studies Society and drew an overwhelming crowd. The forum provided the public information about the history of the cemetery, the people buried there and the natural heritage of Bukit Brown. A descendant of Chew Boon Lay, who is buried in Bukit Brown cemetery, provide the background history of the Chew family followed by a Q&A session

### SHOPPING IN ANCIENT SINGAPORE: WHAT THE ARCHEOLOGY OF VICTORIA CONCERT HALL & VICTORIA THEATRE TELLS US

Lim Chen Sian  
3.00 pm, Saturday 3 December 2011  
Possibility Room, National Library, Victoria Street

About 50 people attended this talk to hear Lim Chen Sian, archaeologist and SHS member, talk about the findings of the archaeological dig and material culture in Singapore. The archaeological excavation at the Victoria Theatre and Victoria Concert Hall was organised by the Society with a grant from the National Heritage Board's Hi2P fund and funding from an anonymous donor.

BOOK TALK ON SPICE ISLANDS  
Ian Burnet  
3.00 pm, Saturday 3 February 2012  
Creative Design Space, NAFA Campus 2, Bencoolen Street

SHS and APD Singapore organised a talk by Ian Burnet on his book about the history of the Indonesian Spice Islands and the spice trade. The book was published in 2011 and attracted nearly 40 people. The event was held at the Centre Design Space, NAFA Campus 2.

CAKAPHERITAGE@BETELBOX: TALKING SHOP  
Dr Lai Ah Eng  
3.00 pm, Saturday 25 February 2012  
Betel Box Living Bistro, Joo Chiat Road

Dr Lai Ai Eng kicked off the inaugural CakapHeritage series with a discussion on provision shops, kopitiam, food stalls and wet markets in our local housing estates. Dr Lai shared her findings based on her extensive fieldwork conducted over the years. The CakapHeritage series held in smaller venues with a small group of participants is the Society's attempt to encourage discussions in a cosy setting. Participants appreciated the opportunity to meet, discuss and exchange views in Joo Chiat, Singapore's first heritage town.

COST & VALUE OF HERITAGE IN SINGAPORE: THE BELITUNG SHIPWRECK & BUKIT  
BROWN  
Mr Michael Flecker, Dr Hui Yew-Foong, Dr Jack Lee & Mr Kwa Chong Guan  
moderated by Dr Kevin Tan  
2.00 pm, Saturday, 14 April 2012  
Mochtar Riady Auditorium, Singapore Management University,  
Bras Basah Road

Heritage and Bukit Brown continued to be a hot topic. The Society decided that it was timely to discuss the cost and value of heritage in Singapore. Over 150 people came to hear the presentations on the controversy over the Belitung shipwreck artefacts and the Smithsonian Institution, the merits and limitations of the Bukit Brown documentation project, the legalities posed by the Belitung shipwreck and Bukit Brown and the value of these two cases in the ongoing debate on heritage and historical scholarship in Singapore followed by a lively Q&A session.

TRACING THE 'ELUSIVE' MELAYU IN HISTORY AND ITS IMPLICATIONS TODAY: RAKING THROUGH THE LEAVES OF THE SAME TREE

Professor Leonard Andaya  
4.00 pm, Wednesday, 25 April 2012  
Possibility Room, National Library  
Kent Ridge Campus

This talk by Professor Leonard Andaya was jointly organised with the Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences, National University of Singapore, under its Distinguished Leaders in Asian Studies Series. Professor Andaya spoke about the idea of 'Malayness' based on his book *Leaves of the Same Tree* to about 60 people.

CAKAPHERITAGE WITH THE ANDAYAS

Professor Barbara Watson Andaya & Professor Leonard Andaya  
2.00 pm, Saturday, 2 June 2012  
Betel Box Living Bistro  
Joo Chiat Road

Professors Barbara and Leonard Andaya shared their life story as students and academics with an audience of 30 people in the second CakapHeritage @BetelBox. This cosy setting allowed the Andayas, former classmate, Professor Reynaldo C. Iletto, and Professor Wang Gungwu to reminisce about their experiences and the people who have made an impact in their lives.

THE STAINED GLASS STORY: EUROPEAN AND COLONIAL

Mr Alfred Fisher  
3.00 pm, Saturday, 18 August 2012  
Imagination Room, National Library  
Victoria Street

Mr Alfred Fisher, an expert on the conservation of stained glass, gave an educational and witty presentation on stained glass to an audience of 60 people. The issue of artist as conservator or should conservation only be done by chemists and scientists were raised by Mr Fisher. The audience were delighted to see the learned that humour can be found in stained glass in the powerpoint presentations showed by Mr Fisher.

### **Book Launches**

#### **THE BATTLE OF PENANG**

Dr John Robertson

10.00 am, Saturday 7 April 2012

Possibility Room, National Library, Victoria Street

The French and Russian Ambassadors to Singapore officially launched *The Battle of Penang*, a book by Dr John Robertson, in Singapore. About 50 people attended the event that was jointly organised by the Society and Trafalgar Publishing House at the National Library. Dr Robertson, a former Medical Officer of the Royal Navy and member of the Penang Heritage Trust, presented an overview of the exploits of SMS Emden, the German cruiser, and its exploits in Penang and Southeast Asia followed by a discussion of the book by Dr Kevin Tan and Dr Ernest Chew and a Q&A session. *The Battle of Penang* is published by Trafalgar Publishing House.

#### **THE FALL OF SINGAPORE: 90 DAYS: NOVEMBER 1941 – FEBRUARY 1942**

by Justin Corfield & Robin Corfield

10.00 am, Saturday, 19 May 2012

Possibility Room, National Library

Victoria Street

This book launch was organised jointly organised with APD Singapore, the distributor of this book. The year 2012 marks the 70 anniversary of the fall of Singapore during World War 2 and this book is useful for historians and history enthusiasts by providing a day-by-day account of the Malayan Campaign and the fall of Singapore. *The Fall of Singapore: 90 Days: November 1941 – February 1942* is published by Talisman Publishing.

### **Exhibitions**

#### **Four Days in February: Adam Park the Last Battle**

**&**  
**Images of Internment: The Eye and Art of William Haxworth**  
in conjunction with 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Fall of Singapore  
8 February 2012 to 24 June 2012  
The Singapore Flyer, 30 Raffles Avenue

The exhibition will commemorate the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the fall of Singapore.  
Jointly organised with NHB (Adam Park) and NLB (Wm Haxworth)

#### RAFFLES' LETTERS EXHIBITION

This ground-breaking exhibition will feature never-before-seen letters by Raffles to the Marquis of Hastings from the Bute Archives. The exhibition is made possible through the generosity of Dr John Bastin, the world's leading Raffles expert, who offered to persuade the Bute Archives to open their collection. This exhibition is being organised in conjunction with the National Library (who will foot the entire bill), and will be curated by Kevin & Chen Sian. In addition, a book featuring the letters will be published by NLB.

#### Walks, Tours etc

AN ANCIENT HOKKIEN MUSICAL TRADITION IN SINGAPORE  
a Tour with Mr Chan Chow Wah  
5.00 pm, Sunday, 26 February 2012 & Saturday, 17 November 2012  
Siong Leng Musical Association  
4B Bukit Pasoh Road

This landmark exhibition is jointly organized by the Singapore Heritage Society and the National Library and features the collections of Mr Lim Shao Bin, Mr Lim Chen Sian and the Lee Kong Chian Reference Library. Originally scheduled to close on 31 October 2009, it was extended for two more months till the end of 2009. A special curator's tour was given by curator Lim Chen Sian and map consultant Mok Ly Yng. What had originally been planned as a two-hour event ended up almost four hours later with lots of questions still to be answered.



## ROYAL & COLONIAL PERAK

with Dr Lai Chee Kien

14 to 18 June 2012

The Society's overseas tours are a wonderful opportunity to learn the history of our Southeast Asian neighbours, catch-up with old friends and make new friends. Led by Dr Lai Chee Kien, the participants visited Kuala Kangsar, Taiping, Ipoh and Kuala Sepetang in Perak. We were also fortunate to have Mr Teoh Chee Keong as our local expert guide on a tour of his hometown, Taiping. In Ipoh, Mr Mohamed Taib Mohamed, President, and Mr Law Siak Hong, Vice-President, of the Perak Heritage Society, served as our guides and enjoy the warm and generous hospitality of the Perak Heritage Society. Our overseas trips allow us to enjoy the warm and generous hospitality of our heritage counterparts, the Perak Heritage Society.

### FOUR DAYS IN FEBRUARY: ADAM PARK, THE LAST BATTLE EXHIBITION & IMAGES OF INTERNMENT: THE EYE & ART OF WILLIAM HAXWORTH

Curator's Tours with Lim Chen Sian & Jon Cooper

2.30pm, Saturday, 31 March 2012 & Saturday, 23 June 2012

National Library Gallery, Level 10, National Library

Victoria Street

The first Curator's Tour was conducted by Mr Lim Chen Sian for 25 people while the second Curator's Tour was conducted by Mr Jon Cooper for 50 people. Jon Cooper was joined by three members of the Syonan Reflections Living History group who came dressed as Japanese and British infantrymen equipped with replica weapons and equipment. Most people did not know about the battle at Adam Park and the art of William Haxworth and all came away with a better understanding of the history of World War 2 in Singapore.

### Conference

#### **HISTORY AS CONTROVERSY: WRITING & TEACHING CONTENTIOUS TOPICS IN ASIAN HISTORIES, 14-15 December 2011**

This conference was jointly organised by the Society, the Asia Research Institute (ARI), National University of Singapore, the Humanities and Social Studies Education, National Institute of Education, Singapore from 14-15 December 2011. The Lee Foundation supported with a S\$10,000 donation that was used to defray the cost of organising the conference. The two day conference attracted over 120 speakers and participants from countries in Asia and outside Asia. There were three keynote

speakers, 44 papers presented, a book launch and a discussion with The Necessary Stage. The convenors, Dr Syed Khairudin Aljunied, Dr Mark Baildon and Dr Loh Kah Seng together with the administrative staff of ARI and the Society worked very hard to organise a very well received conference.

### **Miscellaneous**

Dahlia Shamsuddin represented SHS at the Temu Pusaka Indonesia (TMI) 2011 from 5 to 9 October 2011 in Medan & Lake Toba organised by the Indonesian Heritage Trust (Badan Pelestarian Pusaka Indonesia). TMI is an annual gathering of Indonesian heritage professionals and activists. The gathering was an opportunity for SHS to network with Indonesian heritage activists and find out heritage issues that Indonesians are concerned with.

Dahlia Shamsuddin attended the Nature Conservation for a Sustainable Singapore Conference organised by the Nature Society Singapore (NSS) at Swissotel Merchant Court Hotel on 16 October 2011.

SHS and APD Singapore Pte Ltd organised two book sales for the Society's members at the APD warehouse on 15 October 2011 and 25 August 2012. Members had the opportunity to buy books from a wide range of imprints at a 40% discount.

### **Bukit Brown tour tutorial for Tertiary Students**

### **Book Projects**

#### **OUR MODERN PAST: MODERN ARCHITECTURE IN SINGAPORE 1920s TO 1970s**

This book project is progressing well. In 2005, the Society received a grant of \$60,900 from the Urban Redevelopment Authority under their Architecture and Urban Design Excellence (AUDE) grant scheme. It is expected that the final draft will be completed by end of November 2010. Delays in completing the manuscript have been occasioned by a combination of personal issues on the part of two of the authors as well as in the unearthing of new archival material that entails substantial revisions.

## **SONG ONG SIANG'S ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF THE CHINESE IN SINGAPORE**

Yes. We are working with NLB on this. PJ Thum is the project leader and we will be working with 3 researchers appointed from NLB's staff. We expect the work to commence in the next month or so and for the project to be completed 6 months after that. Publication should take maybe another 3 months.

## **OH MY GEYLANG**

The Society is working with well-known artist and caricaturist, Morgan Chua, on a graphic book on Geylang. Work on this book is on-going and the Society hopes to publish the book in June 2013.

## **Book on Sonny Chan Sau Yan**

The Society will be publishing a book about the architect Sonny Chan of Chan Sau Yan & Associates. is expected to be published in December 2012.

There has been a slight delay on the publication of the book due to some issues concerning use of copyrighted photographs. We expect the book to be out in December 2012.

## **Membership**

Over the past two years, our membership figures have varied between 200 and 220. This is the highest number of members we have had in our history. The Society offered members the option of annual or 3-year memberships. After amendment to the Constitution at the 2011 Annual General Meeting, members had the option of renewing their membership annually or for 3-years. Members who opted to renew for 3-year memberships were given a discount of S\$160 instead of S\$180. New members were also given this option when they opt to sign up for a 3-year membership.

## **Conclusion**

As can be seen, the Society has organised a great variety of events and projects. These have not only benefited members directly, but also substantially raised the profile of the Society. All this has been possible only because of the commitment and dedication of the Society's Executive Committee members as well as the ex-Officio members. The problem remains that most of the work is being handled by only a

very small minority of the Society's members and this is likely to result in fatigue in the long run. It is our hope that more members will come forward to serve and offer their expertise and help in running the Society so that its missions of Education, Research and Advocacy in the interests of Singapore's heritage may be advanced. The Society places on record its appreciation to the out-going members of the Executive Committee and also to Ms Wendy Chua for their hard work and dedication.

#### REVIEW OF FINANCIAL STATE AND EXPLANATION OF MAJOR FINANCIAL TRANSACTIONS

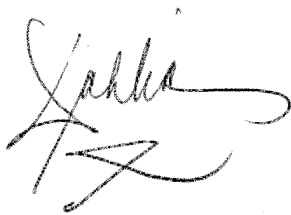
The Society's main source of income is from the sale of its books. Membership subscriptions alone are insufficient to meet day-to-day expenses. Major expenditure items in the Accounts for 2011–2012 are in the publishing of books as well as in the organising of tours. In all activities the Society has organized, every effort has been made to ensure that each event 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 and other ventures.

#### FUTURE PLANS AND COMMITMENTS

The Society plans to strengthen its financial position by the establishment of a finance and business committee and the development of a business model for the publication of its books and provision of its services. Currently, the Society has no financial commitment other than day-to-day operation expenses.

#### STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

Statement of accounts for the financial year ended 31 March 2012 is attached.



**Ms Dahlia Shamsuddin**

PRESIDENT

on behalf of the Executive Committee