

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

*For immediate release*

### **TALES OF PIRATES, SPIES AND MORE AT THE LAUNCH OF THE JURONG HERITAGE TRAIL**

**Singapore, 21 April 2015** – Many would remember the formation of Jurong Industrial Estate in the 1950s, and the subsequent operationalisation of Jurong Port in 1965, all of which has given Singapore’s Jurong town its reputation as an “industrial town”. But there is more to this “industrial town” than just factories, ports and shipyards. After all, it was once the hide-out of pirates, a spy training ground leading to the Japanese Occupation, and home to planters who worked at gambier and rubber plantations around Jurong.

2 Documenting all of this and more is the National Heritage Board’s (NHB) newest and 13<sup>th</sup> heritage trail – the *Jurong Heritage Trail*. Developed in close partnership with the Taman Jurong Citizens’ Consultative Committee, the trail uncovers the lesser known sides of Jurong town, and will be launched by Advisor to Jurong GRC Grassroots Organisations, Mr Tharman Shanmugaratnam, at the Taman Jurong Community Club on 25 April 2015, as part of *Singapore HeritageFest 2015*.

3 The new self-guided trail will feature a total of 12 heritage markers installed at various significant heritage sites in Jurong. These include the Jurong Railway, which was used to transport clinker and timber from Peninsula Malaysia; Jurong Hill (the highest ground in Jurong) that hosts a Garden of Fame where heads of state and dignitaries such as Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping, British monarch Queen Elizabeth II, and Japanese Crown Prince Akihito planted trees to commemorate their visits to Jurong Industrial Estate; and the former Jurong Drive-In Cinema, which was the first and only drive-in theatre in Singapore.

4 To complement the self-guided trail experience, trail participants can learn more about Jurong through a comprehensive trail booklet published by NHB. The trail booklet introduces 35 Jurong sites and spaces, including the 12 marked heritage sites, and details the town’s rich heritage that dates back to pre-colonial days. These historical accounts are complemented by personal stories and memories of the Jurong community, who have lived,

worked and played there. To download a copy of the Jurong Heritage Trail booklet, please visit <http://heritagefest.sg/explore-heritage/jurong-heritage-trail>.

### **A Community Trail**

5 It is the people and their stories that help bring our heritage trails to life. The *Jurong Heritage Trail* is no exception. From the stories, memories and personal accounts of the Jurong community, historic sites and iconic landmarks are given new meaning. For example, one might be surprised to learn that Tanjong Balai, now a part of today's Jurong Port, used to be the location of a "millionaire's estate", and once served as a spy and guerrilla training camp where the Japanese military attempted to build a submarine base during World War II.

6 Singapore's well-loved hawker heritage can trace its beginnings to the Yung Sheng Food Centre, now known as the Taman Jurong Market and Food Centre, which was Singapore's first hawker centre built by the government to re-house itinerant hawkers. Pioneer hawker Mdm Tan Chai Cheu fondly recalls her days as a pushcart hawker: "Jurong was already a bustling community back in those days, families would patronise the stalls mostly in the evenings and neighbours would gather together to catch-up over food. In 1972, the experience of moving to a hawker centre was exciting as it provided us with new facilities under one roof!"

7 Says Mrs Rosa Daniel, Chief Executive Officer of NHB: "Many know Jurong Town for its port and industrial estates, and landmarks such as Jurong Bird Park, Science Centre and Chinese Garden. However, there is so much more to it. Embedded in its history are inspiring stories and even intriguing tales of piracy and espionage that many would not have known about. The Jurong Heritage Trail offers fascinating glimpses into this rich and diverse tapestry of life in the early history of the town you would never have thought existed! Hence, the role of our heritage trails, such as the *Jurong Heritage Trail*, is to tell the tale of Jurong and its people, thus allowing others to experience Jurong as they have never known."

8 The launch of the *Jurong Heritage Trail* will be accompanied by the official opening of a new exhibition at Singapore's first community museum, Our Museum@Taman Jurong, titled *My School is Cool: An Exhibition of Education Institutions in Jurong*. It features the transformation of Jurong's educational institutions since the 1930s, and is the community museum's sixth special exhibition since its launch. And as part of Taman Jurong's SG50 celebrations, the Taman Jurong Community Arts and Culture Club will also be organising a

*Our Heritage Our Home Carnival* that will feature various arts and heritage activities and performances.

- For the full list of NHB's heritage trails, please refer to **Annex A**.
- For the full list of 35 sites and spaces featured in the Jurong Heritage Trail booklet, please refer to **Annex B**.
- For more information on the 12 marked sites on the Jurong Heritage Trail, please refer to **Annex C**.
- For information on the other exhibitions and programmes taking place in conjunction with the launch of Jurong Heritage Trail, please refer to **Annex D**.

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### **About the National Heritage Board**

The National Heritage Board (NHB) was formed on 1 August 1993. As the custodian of Singapore's heritage, NHB is responsible for telling the Singapore story, sharing the Singaporean experience and imparting our Singapore spirit.

NHB's mission is to preserve and celebrate the shared heritage of our diverse communities, for the purpose of education, nation-building and cultural understanding. It manages the national museums and heritage institutions, and sets policies relating to heritage sites, monuments and the national collection. Through the national collection, NHB curates heritage programmes and presents exhibitions to connect the past, present and future generations of Singaporeans. NHB is now a statutory board under the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth. Please visit [www.nhb.gov.sg](http://www.nhb.gov.sg) for more information.

### **About Singapore HeritageFest**

The *Singapore HeritageFest (SHF)* is the National Heritage Board's signature community outreach programme. Taking place in April from 2015 onwards, it is a fun, educational and interactive celebration of Singapore's shared culture and heritage, and brings together different communities on an exciting journey of discovery and participation in local heritage.

The festival was inaugurated in 2004 and is currently in its twelfth year. Over the years, the festival has offered Singaporeans and residents a platform to raise awareness and appreciation of Singapore's heritage and culture through specially-curated exhibitions, heritage trails, competitions, cultural performances, community activities and more.

The festival has consistently been found to heighten its participants' sense of heritage, raise their cultural awareness and strengthen their sense of belonging to Singapore.

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**HERITAGE TRAILS DEVELOPED BY THE NATIONAL HERITAGE BOARD**

- 1 Ang Mo Kio Trail
- 2 Balestier Trail
- 3 Bukit Timah Trail
- 4 Jalan Besar Trail
- 5 Jurong Heritage Trail
- 6 Kampong Glam Trail
- 7 Queenstown Trail
- 8 Civic District Trail
- 9 Singapore River Trail
- 10 Tiong Bahru Trail
- 11 Toa Payoh Trail
- 12 World War II in Singapore – A Heritage Trail
- 13 Yishun – Sembawang Trail

For more information, please visit <http://www.nhb.gov.sg/NHBPortal/Places/Trails/Overview>

## HERITAGE SITES AND SPACES FEATURED IN JURONG HERITAGE TRAIL

- 1) Former kampongs in Jurong
- 2) Hong Kah Village**
- 3) Chew Boon Lay and the Peng Kang Area**
- 4) Early Educational Institutions (village schools, new town schools and Nanyang University)
- 5) 101 Special Training School
- 6) Kranji-Jurong Defence Line
- 7) SAFTI**
- 8) Agriculture and Fishing
- 9) Jurong brickworks industry and dragon kilns
- 10) Transportation in Jurong
- 11) Jurong Industrialisation History
- 12) Former Jurong Town Hall**
- 13) Jurong Port**
- 14) Jurong Shipyard**
- 15) Jurong Fishery Port
- 16) Jurong Railway**
- 17) Jurong and Singapore's Waste Management
- 18) Jurong Road, Jurong Island, Jalan Ahmad Ibrahim, Jalan Boon Lay, Jalan Peng Kang, Jalan Buroh, Jalan Jentera, Jalan Pabrik, Jalan Perkakas, Jalan Gudang, Jalan Bandaran
- 19) Sungei Jurong (Jurong Lake)**
- 20) Chinese Garden
- 21) Japanese Garden
- 22) Jurong Hill**
- 23) Jurong Bird Park
- 24) Former Jurong Reptile Park & Crocodile Paradise
- 25) **Pandan Reservoir** and Sungei Pandan
- 26) Former Jurong Drive-In Cinema**
- 27) Former Tang Dynasty City
- 28) Science Centre Singapore**

- 29) Masjid Hasanah
- 30) Tong Whye Temple
- 31) Tuas Tua Pek Kong Temple
- 32) Arulmigu Murugan Temple
- 33) Church of St. Francis of Assisi
- 34) “60 Stalls” (六十档) at Yung Sheng Road and “Market I”**
- 35) Our Museum@Taman Jurong

*\* Highlighted sites and spaces are marked by a Jurong Heritage Trail marker.*

**LIST OF JURONG HERITAGE TRAIL MARKED SITES**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Trail Site</b>
1	<p><b>“60 Stalls” (六十档) at Yung Sheng Road and “Market I”</b></p> <p>Government records show that Singapore’s first hawker centre built to house itinerant hawkers was the Yung Sheng Food Centre at 3 Yung Sheng Road. Opened in July 1972, it housed some 70 hawker stalls and was referred to as the ‘60 stalls’ (六十档) colloquially. It then merged with the Corporation Drive Market and Food Centre (previously known as Jurong Market I in the vicinity of Hu Ching) and was renamed Taman Jurong Market and Food Centre. Located on Corporation Drive, the Taman Jurong Market and Food Centre is known for its distinctive banana leaf-shaped roof.</p>
2	<p><b>Around the Jurong River</b></p> <p>During the development of the industrial town in the 1960s, Economic Development Board (EDB) planners decided to convert the Sungei Jurong into a lake, rendering it easier to provide water for industrial purposes and create social and leisure amenities around the water. Jurong Lake Park was then constructed on the west bank of the lake, while the Chinese Garden and Japanese Garden were established on two man-made islets. A third islet forms part of the Jurong Country Club golf course.</p>
3	<p><b>Former Jurong Drive-In Cinema</b></p> <p>The Jurong Drive-In Cinema, run by Cathay Organisation, was the first and only drive-in theatre in Singapore. Opened on 14 July 1971, the Drive-In proved to be a hit with young adults and couples since the confines of the car provided a more romantic and private movie viewing experience than the usual theatres. While the novelty of the Drive-In drew large crowds early on, a host of factors such as the poor sound system, gatecrashers, unruly audience members and illegal circuit racing, detracted from the viewing experience. The widespread availability of pirated videotapes eventually led to the closing of the Jurong Drive-In on 30 September 1985. The former cinema grounds were later occupied by the Fairway Club.</p>
4	<p><b>Science Centre Singapore</b></p> <p>Officially opened on 10 December 1977 by Dr Toh Chin Chye, the Minister for Health and former Minister for Science and Technology, the Science Centre</p>

	<p>Singapore became the first public education and exhibition institution in Singapore. It was also one of the first to have such facilities in Asia. The Science Centre's 14 galleries house more than a thousand exhibits that utilised interactive interfaces and inventive presentation techniques to educate and entertain. In 1979, the International Council of Museums declared the Science Centre Singapore to be one of the top institutions of its kind in the world.</p>
5	<p><b>Former Jurong Town Hall</b></p> <p>The Former Jurong Town Hall symbolised the nation's confidence in industrialism as a pillar of development. Its 58m clock tower with one of the largest digital clocks in the region was a landmark for visitors to Jurong. It also housed a Garden of Fame, an extension of that on Jurong Hill, where distinguished visitors planted trees. When the Jurong Town Corporation (JTC) eventually outgrew the Town Hall, it was then occupied by iHub, a space for start-up companies.</p>
6	<p><b>Jurong Railway</b></p> <p>As the production of the Jurong Industrial Estate grew steadily from the late 1960s, planners sought another option besides Jurong Port for the transport of raw materials and the export of finished products. The Economic Development Board (EDB) then worked with Keretapi Tanah Melayu (KTM, Malayan Railways Limited) to develop Jurong Railway, which started from the Bukit Timah Railway Station next to King Albert Park and ran through Pasir Panjang and ended at Shipyard Road, near the Mobil refinery. Regular cargo services utilised the railway to transport clinker and timber from Peninsula Malaysia into Jurong and brought manufactured products the other way. Changing trends in logistics led to more efficient methods of transportations and the Jurong Railway ceased operations in the mid-1990s.</p>
7	<p><b>Pandan Reservoir</b></p> <p>Before the industrialisation of Jurong, swampy ground around the Sungei Pandan provided for the most productive prawn farming ponds in Singapore. Prawn farming sustained a number of kampongs and villagers, and continued until the mid-1960s. In 1974, the Pandan Reservoir was built by enclosing the swamps of the Sungei Pandan estuary with an earthen dyke. A tidal gate was built to allow freshwater from the river to enter the reservoir, which also serves as a recreation site.</p>
8	<p><b>Jurong Hill</b></p> <p>The highest ground in Jurong, the hill is also known by its Malay name <i>Bukit Peropok</i>. In 1968, the Jurong Town Corporation (JTC) converted Jurong Hill into a park with a sunken garden, miniature waterfall and streams. A spiralling Lookout</p>



	<p>Tower was also opened in 1970 and offered visitors panoramic views of Jurong as well as Malaysia and Indonesia in the distance. Families flocked to the hill as a place to relax and for children to explore the green spaces. The hill also hosted a Garden of Fame where heads of state and other dignitaries such as Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping, British monarch Queen Elizabeth II and Japanese Crown Prince Akihito planted trees to commemorate their visits to Jurong Industrial Estate.</p>
9	<p><b>Jurong Port and Shipyard</b></p> <p>The natural deepwater harbour of Jurong, from Tanjong Gul to the waters around Pulau Samulun and Pulau Damar Laut, was one of the main reasons Jurong was selected as Singapore's first industrial town. The Jurong Port handled a diverse range of cargo and also started supply and support services for the offshore oil, gas and marine industries in 1970.</p> <p>The Jurong Shipyard was also incorporated in April 1963 to construct, maintain and repair all manner of ships and vessels, and also housed workshops for the construction, manufacture and assembly of heavy equipment. It was part of the government's economic strategy to make Singapore a major player in shipping, shipbuilding and repair. In its first year of operations, it has built 11 vessels worth more than \$5 million.</p>
10	<p><b>SAFTI</b></p> <p>On 18 June 1966, SAFTI was officially opened by Dr Goh Keng Swee, then Minister for Interior and Defence. It gradually grew its training capabilities with the Officer Cadet School (OCS), School for Infantry Section Leader Training (SISL) and schools for artillery, armour, signals, combat engineer and other service arms in the 1970s. Once used to train officers for the army, navy and air force separately, the new SAFTI Military Institute which was then opened in 1995 brought their training together to enhance operational integration and understanding. What is also interesting is the architectural design of its buildings which are influenced by the Chinese monasteries, Malay kampong houses and Peranakan terrace houses.</p>
11	<p><b>The Origins of Peng Kang and Boon Lay</b></p> <p>Both place names evoke memories of Jurong's pre-industrial past. <i>Peng Kang</i> derives from the Hokkien term for the processing of the cash crop gambier. At that time, plantations of gambier and rubber dominated the landscape and provided the main reason for new settlers in the area. Though most gambier planters moved to fresh grounds in Johor by the late 1800s, the <i>Peng Kang</i> name lives on in the Jurong area, with a Peng Kang Avenue and the infamous Peng Kang Hill in Pasir Laba Camp bearing the boom and bust legacy of gambier.</p> <p>Boon Lay was named after Chew Boon Lay, an early entrepreneur who owned vast</p>

	tracts of rubber land in Jurong. He established gambier and pepper estates in Jurong by 1885 and converted them to rubber plantations in the early 1900s.
12	<p><b>Hong Kah Village</b> <i>Formerly at 12<sup>th</sup> milestone, Jurong Road</i></p> <p>Hong Kah Village was started by 10 Chinese Christian families after the leaders of St John's Church helped to apply for a place for them to live in at a time when Christian missionaries spread their faith among Chinese farmers, agriculturalists and plantation workers. They named it <i>Hong Kah Choon</i> which means Christian Village in Teochew and Hokkien. What is interesting is that the official, who was recording the name of the village, then changed the meaning of the village's name to 'increasing abundance' after he mistakenly named the village 丰加 instead of 奉教.</p>

For the full list of the 35 Jurong sites featured in NHB's Jurong Heritage Trail booklet, please visit <http://heritagefest.sg/explore-heritage/jurong-heritage-trail>.

**OTHER EXHIBITIONS AND PROGRAMMES AT OUR MUSEUM @ TAMAN JURONG**

1	<p><b>Daily art and craft activities</b></p> <p>Our Museum@Taman Jurong organises daily art and craft activities, suitable for children and adults alike. The crafts are displayed in the museum galleries so that young visitors can feel a sense of ownership to the museum.</p>
2	<p><b>Bookcross @ Taman Jurong</b></p> <p>Our Museum @ Taman Jurong is one of the hotspots for Bookcross@SG, an initiative supported by the National Library Board. The museum welcomes visitors to borrow and donate books to spread the love of reading. Storytelling sessions are also conducted every day by the museum's own gallery sitters.</p>
3	<p><b>Guided tours of <i>My School is Cool</i> Exhibition</b></p> <p>The museum conducts free guided tours for the new exhibition <i>My School is Cool</i> at the request of visitors. From the exhibition, visitors can learn more about the history of schools in Jurong and how they have adapted to meet the challenges we face as a nation.</p>