

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

***For immediate release***

### **UNEARTHING SINGAPORE'S HISTORY – ONE CAPSULE AT A TIME**

**Singapore, 9 November 2017** – For young Singaporeans today, pagers are clunky and unfamiliar devices, obsolete in today's day and age. Yet, back in the 1980s – 1990s, pagers were such an important part of our daily lives that a pager was chosen as one of the objects to be sealed in a time capsule in 1984, as part of celebrations for Singapore's 25th year of self-government.

2 Members of the public can now find out more about such memorabilia and the time capsules that contained them at *Frozen in Time: Time Capsules in Singapore*, a new travelling exhibition produced by the National Heritage Board (NHB) to showcase the history of time capsules in Singapore. Visitors can also view some of the 40 objects on display, which are similar to those contained in the time capsules.

#### **History of Time Capsules in Singapore**

3 Since the 19th century, there have been more than 50 time capsules created in Singapore. Some have been uncovered, some placed on display, while others remain buried. Likened to treasure chests for the future, these time capsules commemorate important milestone events, embody precious memories, and tell stories that may have been forgotten, for the benefit of future generations.

4 While some of the memorabilia are everyday items and not commonly thought of as treasures, or are even obsolete by today's technological standards, they nonetheless tell the story of life in Singapore over the years, and bear witness to our nation's development.

5 Among the 40 objects on display, some of the highlights include the following items:

- Straits Settlements coins that visitors can observe through a magnifying glass. The coins are similar to those in a time capsule that was buried in 1937 during the colonial era, which, when uncovered, will provide insights into life in Singapore just before World War II. The capsule remains buried under the foundation stone of the former Supreme Court (now part of the National Gallery Singapore), and will only be opened in the year 3000.
- A 35mm Rollei camera and a HP-35 calculator from the 1970s, similar to the ones found in the Science Centre Singapore's 1973 time capsule that was opened a few times, and successively resealed with more items over the years. Once ground-breaking devices of their era, these items are testament to how technology has advanced so rapidly over time.
- A pager, an analogue telephone and a *Super Simon* game set that visitors can try their hand at, similar to those from the *25 Years of Nation Building* time capsule buried in 1984 at the National Museum of Singapore. These were popular items voted for by visitors at a national exhibition organised in 1984, when Singapore celebrated its 25th year of self-government.
- An original 1929, 14th edition Encyclopaedia Britannica that visitors can browse through, similar to the one contained in the 1938 Westinghouse Time Capsule of Cupaloy in America, whose burial marks the first time the term "time capsule" was coined and used. The time capsule is slated to be opened only in the year 6939.

### **Time Capsule 360° Gallery**

6 NHB will also be launching a time capsule gallery on its Roots.sg portal on 10 November 2017 to complement the travelling exhibition. The gallery will contain a synopsis of the exhibition content, a 360° view of the exhibition, as well as photographs and links to actual objects from two time capsules which are now part of the National Collection. For more information of the time capsule 360° gallery, please visit [www.roots.sg/frozen-in-time](http://www.roots.sg/frozen-in-time) on 10 November 2017.

7 Mr Alvin Tan, Assistant Chief Executive (Policy & Community), NHB, said: “Through this travelling exhibition, we hope that Singaporeans will learn about these “dormant mini-museums” which provide interesting insights into specific time periods and events in our nation’s past, and be intrigued enough to check out our 360° gallery to view more objects, or visit some of the actual time capsules on display at different locations in Singapore.”

8 *Frozen in Time: Time Capsules in Singapore* will be on display at Toa Payoh Public Library from today until 29 November 2017 before travelling to other public libraries throughout 2018. Admission is free.

(Note: Please also refer to **Annex A** for exhibition highlights and **Annex B** for schedule of the travelling exhibition.)

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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 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.

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**Exhibition Highlights**

Items/Highlights	Images
<p><b>Encyclopaedia Britannica (14th edition), 1929</b></p> <p>The 14th edition of the Encyclopaedia Britannica was one of the items inside the 1938 Westinghouse Time Capsule of Cupaloy in America. This is the first time the term “time capsule” was used, and it that gave all future time capsules their name. The Westinghouse Time Capsule was designed for the New York World’s Fair of 1939 is slated to be opened in the year 6939, on the 5,000th anniversary of the fair. Besides the encyclopaedia, other objects representing knowledge and ways of knowing were included in the capsule, such as a ruler, tape measure and newsreels.</p>	
<p><b>Straits Settlements coins (1 cent, 10 cents, 50 cents and 1 dollar)</b></p> <p>Straits Settlements coins such as these are buried under the foundation stone of the former Supreme Court (now National Gallery Singapore) together with newspapers from 1937. These are part of the time capsule that is scheduled to be sealed for the longest time in Singapore, to be opened only in the year 3000. At the exhibition, visitors can get up close with the coins, feel their texture and observe the details through magnifying glasses.</p>	
<p><b>Super Simon game set</b></p> <p><i>Super Simon</i> is based on <i>Simon</i>, an electronic memory game that was popular in the 1970s-80s. It was chosen as one of the 25 items out of 40 on display at a national exhibition that would go into a time capsule. This was called the <i>25 Years of Nation Building Time Capsule</i>, buried in front of the</p>	

Singapore History Museum (now the National Museum of Singapore) in 1984. The exhibition displays a working *Super Simon* game set for visitors to try their hand at this rarely-seen vintage game.

**HP-35 scientific calculator**

Singapore's early years of independence saw the launch of a number of time capsules. One example was the Science Centre Singapore's 1973 time capsule, specifically intended to track Singapore's progress over 10 years. This classic HP-35 calculator was among the 112 items inside the capsule representing contemporary local life.



**Citizen Blackie watch**

This watch model was part of an innovative usage of floating time capsules in 1974 to measure oceanic tides and currents. Singapore participated in this international scientific research project in conjunction with the 1975 International Ocean Exposition in Okinawa, Japan. 50 capsules were launched into the waters off Raffles Lighthouse on 28 July 1974 with 24 found within two months. Each capsule either contained a Citizen Blackie watch or watch coupon.



**Interactive Feature: Make your own Time Capsule**

Designed for children, but suitable for all ages, we invite visitors to create their own time capsule to take home and open in the future.



**Interactive Feature: What will Singapore be like in 2065?**

Visitors are invited to draw or write about their vision for Singapore of the future and share it with others by placing their cards into the display holders on the exhibition panel.

**WHAT WILL SINGAPORE BE LIKE IN 2065?**



**Schedule of Travelling Exhibition**

<b>S/N</b>	<b>Venue</b>	<b>Travelling Period</b>
1	Toa Payoh Public Library	8 – 29 November 2017
2	Queenstown Public Library	1 – 30 December 2017
3	Ang Mo Kio Public Library	2 - 30 January 2018
4	Marine Parade Public Library	1 – 30 March 2018
5	Jurong West Public Library	1 – 29 April 2018
6	Bukit Merah Public Library	1 – 30 August 2018
7	Woodlands Regional Library	1 – 29 September 2018
8	Serangoon Public Library	1 – 29 November 2018