



PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**NATIONAL HERITAGE BOARD CELEBRATES 15TH ANNIVERSARY
WITH 15 DAYS OF FESTIVITIES**

- Free entry to all NHB museums and institutions for 15 days from 1500 hours till closing

Did you know that the portrait of Sir Frank Athelstane Swettenham at the National Museum of Singapore is the highest valued artefact in the whole of the National Heritage Board's (NHB) collection? Or that the only known Straits Settlements envelope in the world – complete with the first set of stamps issued by the East India Company in 1854 – can be found at the Singapore Philatelic Museum? These and 13 other priceless treasures make up the 15 star artefacts of NHB. Together with NHB's 15 milestones, they will be collectively unveiled on 1 August 2008 as NHB commemorates its 15th anniversary in *NHB Celebrates 15!*

Free Entry for All from 1 to 15 August from 1500 Hours

Formed on 1 August 1993, NHB turns 15 this year. Participate in our birthday cheer with an exciting list of activities happening at our museums and heritage institutions from 1 to 15 August 2008. To kick off the celebration, NHB will offer 15 days of free entry – from 1 to 15 August – at all NHB museums and institutions from 1500 hours (3.00pm) till closing!

Treasure Hunt for 15 Star Artefacts Across Eight Museums and Institutions

Feeling adventurous? Get on your feet and *Hunt Down Our 15 Stars* in this one-of-a-kind treasure hunt for Singapore's 15 star artefacts across eight NHB museums and institutions. Visitors simply have to collect their treasure hunt cards containing 15 fun trivia questions from the museums' front counters, locate the 15 artefacts across the different museums and institutions, and stand to win attractive prizes such as a pair of air tickets to Hong Kong and cool gadgets in a lucky draw! With 15 days of free entry from 1500 hours, you can explore our museums and discover the 15 star artefacts at your own leisure. *Please refer to Annex A for the list of 15 artefacts and their respective locations.*

15 Milestones Over 15 Years – Choose Your Favourite and Win

For the web savvy, we invite you to participate in an online contest involving 15 of NHB's most significant milestones – *15 Years, 15 Milestones*. From NHB's first blockbuster exhibition *Alamkara: 5000 years of India* which attracted a record-breaking 165,000 visitors, to the reopening of the National Museum after three whole years of redevelopment, these iconic milestones form part of the rich tapestry of Singapore's heritage.

To participate, simply log on to www.nhb.gov.sg/nhb15 to select your favourite NHB milestone, and tell us why it is significant to you. The top three entries stand to win great prizes such as a Sony PlayStation 3 while 15 others will receive mystery consolation gifts. *Please refer to Annex B for the list of NHB's 15 milestones.*

Free Family Passes for 15 Year Olds Born on 1 August 1993

That's not all. As a special birthday gift to youths born on 1 August 1993, NHB will present free family season passes valued at \$120 each to those who visit NHB's museums and institutions during the 15-day celebration.

Singapore's Newest Museum Opens

On 15 August 2008, the 15 days of festivities will end on a high note with the opening of 8Q sam at 8 Queen Street, and free entry to NHB's newest contemporary art space from 15 August to 29 August 2008! Developed by the Singapore Art Museum (SAM), 8Q sam will house the growing contemporary art collection of SAM across six galleries.

Accompanying the opening will be the launch of 8Q sam's inaugural exhibition – *School: 8Q-Rate*. Tracing the collaborations between eight curators and eight artists, the exhibition focuses on the concept of "school" and features the artists' responses to the museum's grounds which used to belong to the Catholic High Primary School. Embracing the wide spectrum of contemporary and experimental art, 8Q sam serves as an ideal platform for the showcasing of works by younger contemporary artists in Singapore. Everybody is invited to join in an evening of live music, drinks and refreshments as we welcome Singapore's newest museum on the block.

With so much to see and do, there really isn't any reason to stay home this August!

- End -

About the National Heritage Board

The National Heritage Board (NHB) champions the development and promotion of a vibrant cultural and heritage sector in Singapore. It makes heritage enriching, relevant and accessible to all through staging innovative programmes and forging collaborative partnerships with both private and people sector counterparts. NHB leverages on state-of-the-art technology and refreshing new approaches to make heritage more dynamic, alive and exciting for different audiences. It also manages both national and public museums, the National Archives of Singapore, and the Heritage Conservation Centre. NHB was formed on 1 August 1993 as a statutory board under the Ministry of Information, Communications and the Arts (MICA).

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NHB's 15 Star Artefacts

Asian Civilisations Museum

- Makara Head
- Kushana Buddha

Memories at Old Ford Factory

- Lim Bo Seng's War Diary
- Prisoners of War Cook Book

National Archives of Singapore

- Building Plan of City Hall (Municipal Building)

National Museum of Singapore

- Portrait of Sir Frank Athelstane Swettenham
- The Singapore Stone

Peranakan Museum

- Beaded Tablecloth
- Catholic Altar

Reflections at Bukit Chandu

- Lt. Ibrahim Sidek's Tin Mug
- Valerius Sepi's Wall Mural

Singapore Art Museum

- Dotting the Eye
- We're Happy, Are You Happy?

Singapore Philatelic Museum

- Intaglio Printing Plates
- Straits Settlements Cover

15 Years, 15 Milestones

1. National Heritage Board Was Born

On 1 August 1993, NHB was formed with the amalgamation of the National Archives, National Museum and Oral History Department.

2. First Blockbuster Exhibition

In 1994, NHB's first blockbuster exhibition, *Alamkara: 5000 years of India* at the ACM, attracted a record-breaking 165,000 visitors.

3. Singapore Art Museum Opens

On 20 January 1996, SAM was officially opened at the former St Joseph's Institution at Bras Basah Road by then Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong. SAM has since hosted successful exhibitions such as *Leonardo da Vinci: Scientist, Inventor, Artist* and *The Big Picture Show*.

4. Museum Roundtable Formed

In 1996, the Museum Roundtable chaired by NHB was formed to develop a stronger museum-going culture in Singapore. Today, with 46 member museums, it attracts more than 5.21 million visitors annually through festivals such as International Museum Day.

5. Singapore's First Heritage Trail

On 29 August 1999, NHB officially launched the Civic District Trail, the first permanently marked heritage trail in Singapore.

6. Heritage Conservation Centre Opens

On 15 September 2000, HCC was officially opened by the then Minister for Information and the Arts, Mr Lee Yock Suan. The first of its kind in Southeast Asia, the state-of-the-art facility houses close to 180,000 historical and artistic treasures of Singapore.

7. Reflections at Bukit Chandu Opens

On 15 February 2002, RBC, a World War II interpretative centre focusing on the last battle of the Malay Regiment in Singapore, was officially opened by then Deputy Prime Minister, Dr Tony Tan.

8. Asian Civilisations Museum Opens at Empress Place

On 1 March 2003, ACM relocated to the newly restored Empress Place building where 5,000 years of Asian cultures are housed in 11 themed

galleries. To date, ACM has featured many well-received exhibitions such as *Eternal Egypt: Treasures from the British Museum* and *On the Nalanda Trail: Buddhism in India, China and Southeast Asia*.

9. Singapore HeritageFest Kicks Off

On 16 July 2004, SHF, NHB's award-winning festival, was launched to raise awareness and appreciation of Singapore's rich and diverse heritage. The festival attracted more than one million participants in 2007, and is into its fifth year.

10. Memories at Old Ford Factory Opens

On 16 February 2006, Memories was officially opened by Minister for Defence Mr Teo Chee Hean. The WWII interpretative centre features the original Board Room where the British army surrendered to the Japanese.

11. National Museum of Singapore Reopens

On 7 December 2006, the refurbished National Museum was officially opened by President S R Nathan after three years of redevelopment. At 120 years old, it is Singapore's oldest museum with the youngest and most innovative soul, and has housed blockbuster exhibitions such as *Greek Masterpieces from the Louvre*.

12. Singapore's First Heritage Blog

In 2006, *Yesterday.sg*, Singapore's first heritage and museums blog, was introduced. Covering a wide range of topics related to museums to art, nostalgia and heritage, it caters to audiences of all ages.

13. Singapore: The Encyclopedia Launched

In 2006, NHB published *Singapore: The Encyclopedia*. *The Encyclopedia* contains more than 2,500 entries and features 2,400 photos, maps and illustrations, many of which were published for the first time. It is probably one of the most ambitious publishing project on the island.

14. Explore Singapore! Introduced

In 2006, NHB launched the popular *Explore Singapore!* campaign targeted at the masses. *Explore Singapore! 2007* attracted more than 550,000 participants with activities such as museum tours by local comedian Mark Lee.

15. World's First National Peranakan Museum

25 April 2008 marked the opening of the world's first national Peranakan Museum. This boutique museum focuses on the colourful history of the Peranakans, and features the world's most comprehensive public collection of Peranakan culture.