



[Media Release] Explore the Sites and Stories of Singaporeâ??s World War II History with the National Heritage Boardâ??s Battle for Singapore

Description

The National Heritage Board (NHB)â??s annual **Battle for Singapore** returns from 15 February to 2 March 2025, in commemoration of the 83rd anniversary of the Fall of Singapore. From compelling stories of resilience to iconic wartime sites, this yearâ??s line-up of programmes invites participants to delve deeper into pivotal moments and experiences that have shaped the nation during its darkest days. Sites featured include Tengah Air Base, the first airfield to be captured when Japanese forces invaded Singapore, and Clifford Pier, the site which served as a key point of evacuation during World War II (WWII).



Mr Goh Chour Thong, Director (International & Museum Relations), NHB, said: “The stories of those who were impacted by the events of WWII in Singapore remain fascinating and compelling even after an increasing passage of years and significant developments in our landscape and way of life. We are excited to organise another season of Battle for Singapore with immersive tours, interactive workshops and educational talks, many of which are being offered for the first time with the support of many partners including Museum Roundtable members. We hope this year’s participants will continue to be stirred and moved by being able to experience this pivotal period in Singapore’s history.”



New Signature Programme – Fort Siloso Twilight Tour

This year's edition of Battle for Singapore presents over 20 programmes with a wide range of tours, talks, workshops, and exhibitions by participating Museum Roundtable members, government agencies, and heritage organisations and researchers. This includes a new signature programme, Fort Siloso Twilight Tour, led by historian Dr John Kwok and Deputy Manager, Recreational Nodes Unit, Environmental Management Division, Sentosa, Muhammad Saifullah Kamaludin. A collaboration between [NHB](#) and Sentosa Development Corporation, this exclusive after-hours tour of Fort Siloso will immerse participants in actual events leading up to the Fall of Singapore. Participants will be brought through historic fortifications, tunnels and strategic sites, where they can uncover more about the harrowing hours of those who defended Singapore to the very last.



New Battle for Singapore programmes

In addition, members of the public can also look forward to other new programmes offered under the Battle for Singapore initiative this year:

1. A Soldier's Kit & Field Rations during World War Two

Date: 15 February 2025

Time:

• 10am – 11am (for families with children aged seven and above)

• 11.30am – 12.30pm (for participants aged 16 and above)

Price: \$21.80 per adult-child pair, \$10.90 per adult pax

Location: Reflections at Bukit Chandu

Explore a soldier's kit featuring actual items from World War II as well as replicas from the collection of Alvin's Bunker. Learn more about what soldiers in the 1940s ate and how they groomed themselves, as well as the design and evolution of ration and hygiene kits from past to present, with examples from the armed forces of different countries. The programme will be led by Alvin Lee of Alvin's Bunker. Each participant will also receive their own mini World War II ration pack.



Check out what kept the soldiers going in the 1940s during the war

This programme is presented by Reflections at Bukit Chandu.

2. Heritage Chat on Sport in Syonan: The Role of State Shinto and Sport in Integrating Singapore into the Japanese Empire (1942-1945)

Date: 28 February 2025

Time: 6.30pm - 7.30pm

Price: Free of charge

Location: Yan Kit Pool Heritage Gallery

During the Japanese Occupation of Singapore, military and civilian officials governing Singapore used a combination of State Shinto and sport to assist in culturally assimilating Singapore into Japan's Empire. A planned massive sports complex was to be located at Singapore's own State Shinto shrine, the Syonan Jinja, partly modelled on Japan's Meiji Shrine which regularly held on its own grounds sports events and games that mixed the rituals of State Shinto with athleticism. Participation in sport was used to assimilate local populations into an imperial identity united under the Japanese Emperor.

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Watch Shelter and Soldiers' Recreation

哨房及兵士娱乐区(大约为

監視壕と兵士用娯楽場 (1930-



Join Professor Kevin Blackburn from NIE, NTU and Dr Nick Aplin, DD Sport Heritage, Sport Singapore, as they share their expert insights.

3. Day Zero

Date: 15 February 2025, 16 February 2025, 1 March 2025

Time: 10am - 12.20pm

Price: \$5 per pax

Meeting Point: Singapore Discovery Centre

Relive the fear and chaos upon first contact with Japanese invasion forces. Find out how poor leadership and miscommunication quickly brought about the capitulation of the whole of western Singapore. This bus tour will be led by volunteer guide Dr John Kwok and will cover the following sites:

• Singapore Discovery Centre

• Sarimbun Beach Landing

• Sungei Buloh Visitor Centre

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This programme is presented by the Singapore Discovery Centre.

4. The Naval Volunteer Reserve and WW2

Date: 16 February 2025

Time: 9am – 11.30am, 2pm – 4.30pm

Price: \$5 per pax

Meeting Point: Telok Ayer Basin / Lau Pa Sat pick-up

This bus tour explores spaces featured in Singapore's early defences such as the significance of names like Fullerton and Battery Road, the development of the harbour and its importance to Singapore, the development of the volunteer forces in general, shipping (and the Straits Steamship Co – which provided many of the evacuation ships) and also the site of the SSNVR and stories of the evacuation. The tour will be led by heritage enthusiast Jerome Lim and will cover the following sites:

- Clifford Pier
- Ocean Financial Centre
- Cavanagh Bridge
- Singapore Navy Museum



This programme is presented by the Singapore Navy Museum.

5. Singapore Air Force Museum Feature Tour: War over Singapore

Dates and Timings

• 15 February 2025 (10am, 11am, 1pm)

• 22 February 2025 (9am, 11am, 1pm)

• 16 February 2025, 23 February 2025, 1 March 2025, 2 March 2025 (9am, 10am, 11am, 1pm)

Price: \$5 per pax

Meeting Point: Yew Tee MRT pick-up

The programme provides an exclusive access into Tengah Air Base, the site which came under the control of the Japanese and become Yamashita's first command centre during World War II. This bus tour will be led by volunteer guide Dr John Kwok and will cover the following sites:

• Tengah Air Base

• Singapore Air Force Museum



This programme is presented by the Singapore Air Force Museum.

For all Battle for Singapore 2025 Programmes Details,

6. Fort Siloso Twilight Tour

Date: 15 February 2025, 16 February 2025, 22 February 2025, 23 February 2025, 1 March 2025, 2 March 2025

Time: 6pm – 7.30pm

Price: \$25 per person

Meeting Point: Fort Siloso, Sentosa

This immersive tour takes you through the historic fortifications and strategic areas of Fort Siloso, where you'll learn about the pivotal events leading to the fall of Singapore during World War II. As dusk falls, hear stories of the soldiers and civilians as they prepared for the war in Singapore and explore preserved areas of the fort that once played a crucial role in defending the city. A moving tribute to the resilience and perseverance of those who endured the darkest days in Singapore's history.

This tour is presented in partnership with the Sentosa Development Corporation (SDC).

7. Cashin House: Witness to Invasion

Date: 15 February 2025, 22 February 2025

Time: 9am – 10.30am and 11am – 12.30pm

Price: Free of Charge

Meeting Point: Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve

Join heritage veteran Jerome Lim on a trip to the sensitively reconstructed Cashin House, located at Lim Chu Kang Nature Park. The site witnessed some of the first landings of the invading Japanese forces during World War II. Learn about the perspectives of men on opposing sides as they engaged in battle, and explore the area's historical landscape.

8. Can Singapore be Defended?

Date: 22 February 2025, 23 February 2025, 1 March 2025, 2 March 2025

Time (and Duration): 10am, – 12.30pm; 2pm – 4.30pm (2.5h)

Price: \$5 per person

Meeting Point: BattleBox, Fort Canning

Step into the past and uncover the gripping story of the Fall of Singapore in 1942. Journey through the Battlebox, Fort Canning Centre, and National Gallery Singapore as we relive the struggles of wartime defence and draw powerful connections to our present-day efforts in safeguarding our nation. Led by Historian and co-founder of Total Heritage, Dr. John Kwok.

This programme is presented by Defence Collective Singapore, together with National Gallery Singapore, Fort Canning Centre and Battlebox.

9. Under Occupation by Catherine

Date: 15 February 2025

Time: 9am - 11.30am

Price: Free of Charge

Meeting Point: Bus stop 41161 on Lornie Highway towards Mcritchie Reservoir

Stories from the graves—a recounting of the events leading up to the Japanese invasion of Singapore, from surrender to post-war reckoning. This tour will offer insights into the history and significance of Bukit Brown, with a focus on the people who lived through these turbulent times.

This programme is presented by Catherine Lim, a founding member of all things Bukit Brown, with a deep interest in WWII, revolution, women in Bukit Brown, and the rites and rituals of honoring the dead.

10. Remembering WW2 by Fabian

Date: 16 February 2025

Time: 9am - 11.30am

Price: Free of Charge

Meeting Point: Platform at Hill 1, via Lor Halwa into Bukit Brown Cemetery

Join Fabian Tee and learn about the narrow escapes, the brutality of the Japanese war machine, and the David and Goliath fight to the bitter end—just some of the unending stories that make up Bukit Brown Cemetery's history.

This programme is led by Fabian Tee, a docent at the Sun Yat San Memorial Hall & the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce & Industry.

11. Voices of the Past at Bukit Brown by Bianca

Date: 22 February 2025

Time: 9am - 11.30am

Price: Free of Charge

Meeting Point: Platform at Hill 1, via Lor Halwa into Bukit Brown Cemetery

Join Bianca to learn about stories of shipwrecks, heroes, and victims in WWII. The tour will cover Hills 1, 3, and 4, including the new Voices monument.

This programme is led by Bianca Polak, of Dutch origin, living in Singapore for 25 years. She is a licensed tour guide and has been conducting heritage tours in Bukit Brown cemetery for over a decade. She's passionate about telling stories of migrants and maritime history.

12. Battle of Bukit Brown and Mount Pleasant by Beng Tang

Date: 23 February 2025

Time: 8.30am – 11.45am

Price: Free of Charge

Meeting Point: Bus stop B41141 on Adam Road, aft Adam Dr.

A tour of one of the last relatively intact battlefield sites in Singapore, following the course of the battles from 11–15 February 1942 between elements of the Japanese 5th Division and the British 18th Division, ending at the final front line on the day of surrender.

This programme is led by Beng Tang, a volunteer nature and heritage guide who leads tours on the history of WWII and the biodiversity of Bukit Brown. All Things Bukit Brown is a group of volunteers recording the heritage, habitat, and history of Bukit Brown and its surrounding areas.

13. Bukit Brown Memorial Tour – Remembering the Victims and its Heroes by Peter Pak

Date: 1 March 2025

Time: 9am – 12pm

Price: Free of Charge

Meeting Point: Hill 1, via Lor Halwa into Bukit Brown Cemetery

Join Peter Pak on an exploration of Bukit Brown Cemetery. Learn about tragic events, such as the sinking of a ship that killed women and children, betrayal leading to a hero's delayed burial, and stories of resistance ambushes and Chinese leaders forced to collaborate with the Japanese during WWII.

This programme is led by Peter Pak, a volunteer guide for All Things Bukit Brown and a blogger known as Rojak Librarian.

14. Walking Tour from Botanic Gardens to Adam Park with Attention to No. 11 Adam Park by Claire Leow

Date: 1 March 2025

Time: 8.30am – 11am

Price: Free of Charge

Meeting Point: Botanic Gardens MRT Exit A.

This tour describes the last days of the Fall of Singapore with fierce battles from Bukit Timah and the fight to cut off the water supply to the city. It links sites such as Botanic Gardens, Raffles College, Trinity College, Adam Park, Sime Road, and Bukit Brown in the context of the war. You will also learn about No. 11 Adam Park, a site of resilience and dignity with connections to Bishop John Leonard Wilson of St Andrew's Cathedral and the Changi Chapel.

This programme is led by Claire Leow.

15. Adam Park: From Home to Battlefield by Simone Lee

Date: 2 March 2025

Time: 9am – 11.30am
Price: Free of Charge
Meeting Point: No 7 Adam Park

Civilians, soldiers, and prisoners of war – hear their stories through a house-by-house account of life before, during, and after the fall of Singapore.

This programme is led by Simone Lee, a volunteer guide for All Things Bukit Brown. Simone is passionate about social history and education, and her signature walks include “Ladies of the Straits Settlements” and “Back to School(s)”.

16. WWII Guided Tour Through Second World War Toys

Date: 15 February – 2 March 2025

Time:

• Weekdays: 2.30pm, 4.30pm

• Weekends: 11.30am, 2.30pm

Location: MINT Museum of Toys

The “WWII Guided Tour Through Second World War Toys” programme examines how toys were used to normalize war, encourage war efforts, and celebrate war achievements across both Allied Forces (Britain, France, USSR & USA) and the Axis Powers (Germany, Italy & Japan). The museum’s Second World War collection features figurines of iconic war heroes, collectibles of Sikh soldiers who fought during the Battle of Singapore in 1942, propaganda toys, and a focus on fighter planes and battleship toy models that have left a lasting legacy. The tour includes an engaging trivia session that uncovers little-known facts and strategies used by both the Allies and Axis. Specially curated for this programme, limited pieces of a “M-40” Gun Motor Carriage Collectable Toy, modelled after the iconic American self propelled artillery vehicle, will be available for purchase as a memorabilia piece.

This programme is led by Museum Docents and is presented by the MINT Museum of Toys.

17. Re-enactment by River Valley High School Students at the Former Ford Factory

Date: 15 February 2025

Time: 2pm – 3.30pm

Price: \$20 per person

Location: Former Ford Factory

Join River Valley High School students, passionate history enthusiasts, as they guide you through a special re-enactment and tour at the Former Ford Factory, focusing on the Battle of Singapore.

The student-led tour will take you through the museum’s exhibits, sharing the perspectives of both the Japanese and British forces during the battle. This tour features re enactments and storytelling, offering a closer look at the battles fought in Singapore. Led by River Valley High School students (passionate history enthusiasts).

This programme is presented by the Former Ford Factory.

18. Guided Tour by Docents of the Former Ford Factory

Date: 15 February 2025

Timings:

• English Tours:

o 11am – 12.30pm

o 3.30pm – 5pm

• Mandarin Tour:

o 11.30am – 1pm

Price: \$20 per person

Location: Former Ford Factory

Join us for a guided tour of the Former Ford Factory, a key site in Singapore's WWII history. Learn about the Battle of Singapore and the dramatic events leading to the British surrender on 15th February 1942.

Explore exhibits featuring personal accounts, wartime artifacts, and the challenges faced during the battle. Our in-house docents will share insights into the battle's impact on Singapore and its people, providing a deeper understanding of this pivotal moment in history. Led by docents of the Former Ford Factory.

This programme is presented by Former Ford Factory.

19. Resilience in Adversity – A Docent-Guided Tour and Hand-bound Notebook Workshop

Date: 23 February 2025

Timings:

• 10am – 11.30am

• 11am – 12.30pm

Price: \$15 per participant

Location: Changi Chapel and Museum

Amid hardship and deprivation, the internees of Changi Prison during World War Two found inventive ways to improve their lot. Faced with major shortages of shelter, food, and daily products, they worked together to scavenge materials and produce a variety of items, from soap and vitamin supplements to prosthetics and toothbrushes.

Learn more about their extraordinary creativity and resilience through a docent-guided tour featuring actual items belonging to former internees, including a hand-stitched notepad made by Sergeant John Ritchie Johnston out of old prison records. Be inspired by their ingenuity and create your own hand-bound notebook using upcycled materials in a guided craft session after the tour.

This programme is presented by the Changi Chapel and Museum.

20. Former Japanese Soldiers: Their Memories of the Malayan Campaign and Fall of Singapore

Date: 27 February 2025

Time: 7.30pm – 8.30pm

Price: \$5 per participant

Location: National Museum of Singapore, Gallery Theatre

How did the Japanese soldiers remember the invasion of Malaya and Singapore, and what were their post-war fates? Many of those who survived the war were deeply impacted by their involvement in that violent period of history. Some even disagreed over how certain events should be approached and perceived. Dr. Ling Xi Min will share insights into the Japanese veterans' varied, complex, and often ambivalent reflections on the Malayan campaign, as they grappled with the loss of their comrades and the uncomfortable legacies of the atrocities their army inflicted on the local population.

This programme is led by Dr. Ling Xi Min and is presented by the National Museum of Singapore.

21. Resistance in Singapore

Date: 21 February 2025

Time: 7pm – 8pm

Price: Free of Charge

Location: Indian Heritage Centre, Activity Space

This session highlights the distinct networks of resistance within Singapore, focusing on Indian POWs and local civilians, as well as the role of key locations like the Radio Station, Cathay Cinema, INA HQ, and POW camps. Explore how information was passed through various civilian groups (Malay, Chinese, Indian, Eurasian) and their role in resisting Japanese forces. The talk concludes with the story of war hero Inspector Boudweyn, emphasising the significance of resistance within the local context.

Led by Gautam Hazarika and moderated by Liviyinah Parthipan (Assistant Curator / Indian Heritage Centre).

This programme is presented by the Indian Heritage Centre.

22. Seeking Justice: Singapore War Crimes Trials 1946

Date: 26 February 2025

Time: 6pm – 7.30pm

Price: \$5 per participant

Location: Haw par Villa, Rise of Asia Museum Auditorium

The first-ever war crimes trials were held in Nuremberg from 1945–1946, targeting senior Nazis for atrocities committed during World War II. Following this, war crimes trials were also held in Tokyo and Singapore. In commemoration of the 83rd Anniversary of the Battle for Singapore, Haw Par Villa is

organizing a talk on the Singapore War Crimes Trials. Join Gautam Hazarika as he delves into an exploration of the trials through official transcripts and photographs.

This programme is presented by Hellâ??s Museum.

23. Archives Invites: Dr Gary Lit â?? The Terrors and Nightmares of the Japanese Occupation: Recollections, Reflections, and Retrospection

Date: 27 February 2025

Time: 7pmâ?? 8pm

Price: Free

Location: Online via Zoom (Registration Required)

Given the recency of the anniversary of the Fall of Singapore and the 80th anniversary of the end of WWII, this talk offers an opportune moment for reflection on the most tumultuous period in Singaporeâ??s history. Dr. Gary Lit will unveil some of the dark legacies and uncover hidden truths of that turbulent period. Among other topics, the speaker will shed light on the nightmarish Sook Ching conducted by the Japanese Army, providing a voice to those who suffered under the Japanese Occupation.

This programme is led by Dr. Gary Lit Ying Loong, a retired academician from Nanyang Technological University (NTU), is an international speaker and visiting professor at universities in Asia and Europe, including Ukraine, Germany, and Vietnam. His research focuses on Force 136 and MPAJA activities, including his recent discoveries of wartime bases in the Kinta Valley. He has contributed to various regional newspapers and holds a PhD from the University of Melbourne.

This programme is presented by the Former Ford Factory.

Members of the public may visit www.museums.com.sg for more information and to sign up for Battle for Singapore 2025 programmes. Registration for tours and programmes commences 11 February 2025 (Tuesday) at 12pm, on a first-come first-served basis.

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