

The Lives of Women in Singapore

An exhibition by the Singapore Women's Hall of Fame

07 May 2018: What was life like for women in pre-independence Singapore? What roles did women play in a society where, until well into the 20th century, there were far more males than females? Who were the women who first broke through the gender barriers in the professions? What brought about the new laws that were introduced soon after Independence and which significantly affected the lives of women?

These are some of the questions explored in an exhibition by the Singapore Women's Hall of Fame (SWHF) at the National Museum of Singapore (NMS) that opens on 11 May and will run till the end of July.

The Lives of Women: What life was like for women in pre-Independence Singapore is the first of a three-part series by the SWHF in collaboration with the National Museum. The second, in 2019, will look at the key issues affecting women in Singapore since Independence, and the final exhibition in 2020 will look at what lies ahead.

The aim of the Hall of Fame, which was launched in 2014 by the Singapore Council of Women's Organisations, is to celebrate the achievements and contributions of Singapore's outstanding women and to document and share their stories, many of which are not well-known.

With the exhibitions, the aim is to provide the context for the achievements of the Hall of Famers, to show what it was like to be a woman in those times.

The Lives of Women series of exhibitions is the Hall of Fame's second collaboration with the National Museum. The first, titled *A Salute to the Pioneering Women of Singapore*, was held in 2015 as part of Singapore's SG50 celebrations. It ran for 11 weeks and was visited by some 60,000 people.

Two talks will be held in conjunction with this year's exhibition.

She Works Hard for the Money: Sociologist Dr Lai Ah Eng, who has researched and written extensively on women, heritage and multiculturalism in Singapore, will shed light on the lives of women who worked in tin-mining, rubber production, construction, domestic service, hawking and leisure in early to mid-20th century Singapore and Malaya. This talk will be held at the National Museum of Singapore on 25 May.

I am Woman, Hear me Roar: Educationist Dr Phyllis Chew will talk about the half-forgotten and under-appreciated movement that struggled for women's betterment throughout the 1950s. The Singapore Council of Women campaigned passionately for the laws that would

Details of The Lives of Women exhibition:

Venue: National Museum of Singapore, The Concourse, Level 1

Dates: 11 May to 22 July 2018

Time: 10 am to 7pm, daily. Admission is free.

For more information, please contact Amanda at amanda@scwo.org.sg / 6571 0182 / 9634 5322.

About SWHF

The Singapore Women's Hall of Fame (SWHF) is an expansion of the Wall of Fame. Launched on 14 March 2014, it aims to recognise and salute the outstanding women of Singapore in all fields of endeavour. It is a celebration of the women who have made, or are making, an impact on our nation – the boundary breakers and record holders, the risk-takers and change makers, the role models and the standard setters.

They were the women who, at a time when social norms set limits on what a woman could do, pushed back the barriers and led the way for others. They were the pioneers, the pathfinders. They dared to dream and they turned their dreams into a new reality for the women of their time and the generations to come. They are, today, the women who are shaping our society with their vision and passion, their enterprise and leadership, their talent and creativity, their humanity. They are the women who inspire us, and we want to recognise them and honour them.

For more information, please visit www.swhf.sg

About SCWO

The Singapore Council of Women's Organisations (SCWO) is the National Coordinating body of women's organisations in Singapore. We have more than 50 Member Organisations representing over 500,000 women in Singapore.

Incorporated in March 1980, the SCWO, having been founded by women, seeks to unite the various women's organisations, clubs, committees, groups and women leaders together, working in accordance with its various aims and objectives.

The SCWO seeks to co-ordinate these associations into a national movement and to act on their behalf in matters for which is authorised by its members.

It seeks to promote the ideals of 'Equal Space, Equal Voice and Equal Worth' for women in Singapore.

Services

The SCWO offer a range of services mostly for women in need. They are the **Star Shelter**, the **Maintenance Support Central** and **Civil and Muslim Law Legal Clinics**.

Initiatives

The SCWO has various initiatives for women – to provide a platform for networking, education and inspiration through the **Women's Register (WR)** and bring awareness to the benefits of gender-balanced business through **BoardAgender**. It also celebrates the achievements of women through the **Singapore Women's Hall of Fame**.

Facilities

The SCWO has various facilities that caters to the public such as the **IT Hub**, **New2U Thrift Shop**, **Function Rooms**, and a **Library**.

For more information, please visit www.scwo.org.sg