



Technical Webinar

Co-Organised by

The Joint Branch of the RINA and IMarEST (Singapore)

The Society of Naval Architects and Marine Engineers Singapore

Singapore Shipping Association

And with the extraordinary support of

Singapore Maritime Heritage Interest Group

The Story of Singapore 100+ year–old Wooden Boats Twakow and Tongkang

by



LEE Kok Leong FRINA

Date : 20 October 2020 (Tuesday)

Time : Webinar will begin at 6:00 pm and ends at 7.30 pm

To register your attendance, please click the web-link below:

[Registration starts here](#)

Please, note this webinar is open to our members and guests. For the benefit of those who had pre-registered, please, do not share the access link further after registration. Log in time starts 30 minutes before the event.



Abstract

For more than a century up to 1983, twakow and tongkang were common at the outer waters of Telok Ayer and Clifford Pier, and on the Singapore River and Kallang River. These lighters were responsible for supporting regional and international trades, transporting rice sags, fresh products, livestock and other goods between cargo ships and Singapore River, whilst wooden boat builders were mainly housed along the river banks of Kallang River. Repair shacks could also be sighted under the Merdeka Bridge and at Robertson Quay.



Indeed, the 3.2 km's Singapore River was comparable to other great rivers around the globe in transforming the island covered with 90% primary forest to modern Singapore since the foundation of the colonial port city in 1819. By the turn of the 20th century, given the large influx of Chinese migrants, the Chinese lighters were replacing the Indian tongkang for both local water and regional shipment.

How did these Chinese lighters being constructed and maintained? How was the wooden boatyard organised? Where did the raw materials obtain from? And eventually, how were these lighters disposed? The speaker, who lived by the bank of the Singapore River for his first 19 years, interviewed the people working in these disappeared trades and documented them in the Chinese book “Jianghe Qingyuan” (Affection of the Rivers) published in 2019. He would share some of his findings through this webinar.

About the Speaker

LEE Kok Leong pursued his postgraduate education in the UK and spent over two decades in the naval architecture profession. He is a Fellow member of the Royal Institution of Naval Architects headquartered in London, UK.

Ten years ago, Mr LEE started engaging in freelance heritage researches with an unequivocal interest in connecting the immigrant history between Singapore and China. He has since published several Chinese books which, through comprehensive research and interviews, documented the immigrants' history in Singapore. His books were supported by several national agencies including China's local government, the National Arts Council, the MCCY and the National Heritage Board. His books were nominated as the best non-fiction publication by the Singapore Book Council. Mr LEE curated the Kwong Wai Siew Peck San Theng Heritage Gallery and the Kwong Wai Shiu Hospital Heritage Gallery supported by the National Heritage Board.



Instructions to join the webinar using Zoom

1. Before joining the webinar session, create a basic account (free of charge), and download the Zoom software at the web link: <https://zoom.us/download>
2. You may enter the webinar on 20 October 2020 by clicking onto the link provided in the email after registration. For security reasons, you should log in your basic account before entering the webinar.
3. Alternatively, you may join the webinar by clicking <https://zoom.us/join> and key in the Meeting ID and Password provided in the email after registration.
4. Video and audio function will be disabled during the session for all participants (except hosts and presenter).
5. For attendance recording purposes, please provide your name, company (or organisation or institution) and membership (e.g. SNAMES, RINA, IMarEST, SSA, SMHIG or Guest) in the chat window upon joining the webinar session.
6. During the Q&A, please key in your questions into the chat window, and it will be selected by the host and referred to the presenter.