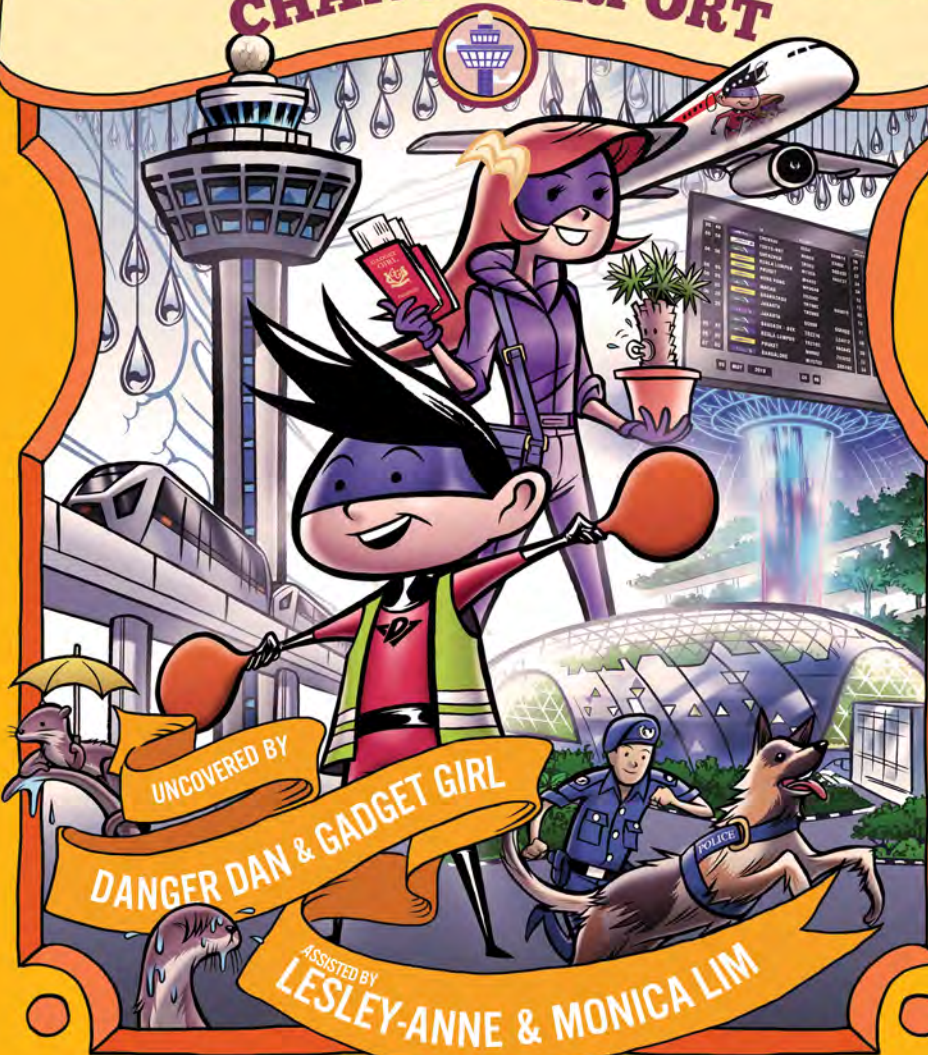


SECRETS OF SINGAPORE

CHANGI AIRPORT



“Changi Airport has always had a special connection with the young ones—from toddlers who run freely through the terminals with their parents, to teenagers who seek calm and focus as they study at the airport. A fun and engaging read, this book takes young readers on a deeper journey of learning and discovery about the airport they are so familiar with. Through interesting stories, anecdotes and simple explanations of how things work, these fun-filled pages pack a wealth of insights about aviation in Singapore. Entertaining and highly educational at the same time.”

—Lee Seow Hiang, chief executive of Changi Airport Group

“There must have been many books written about Changi Airport. This is probably the first written specially for children, yet it is a serious story on what makes Changi tick, especially things that happen behind the scenes. An easy-to-read, interesting book which contains many nuggets of fascinating facts and figures about the airport. I am sure it would appeal not only to children but also inquisitive adults!”

—Wong Woon Liong, senior adviser of Changi Airport Group, and former director-general of Civil Aviation Authority of Singapore

“A light-hearted yet comprehensive look at all things aviation in Singapore. Packed with fun facts and behind-the-scenes nuggets of the aviation ecosystem, this book will pique the interest of young aviators.”

—Kevin Shum, director-general of Civil Aviation Authority of Singapore

**SECRETS OF
SINGAPORE
CHANGI AIRPORT**



SECRETS OF
SINGAPORE
CHANGI AIRPORT

written by
Lesley-Anne & Monica Lim
illustrated by
Elvin Ching



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SINGAPORE · LONDON

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*Dedicated to the Boy
who is the wind beneath our wings.*


**It's a bird! It's a plane!
It's...**

A DISASTER!

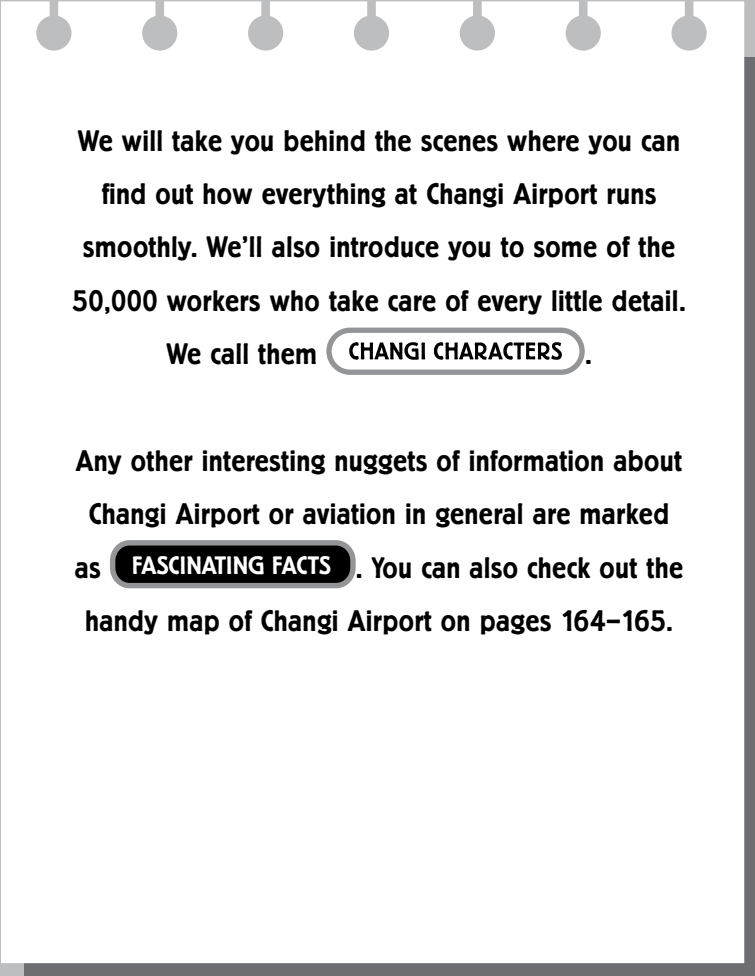




At an airport, birds and planes don't mix.
Do you want to know why?



We'll tell you in this book! And answer other burning questions you might have about Changi Airport, like what is the ball on top of the control tower for?



We will take you behind the scenes where you can find out how everything at Changi Airport runs smoothly. We'll also introduce you to some of the 50,000 workers who take care of every little detail.

We call them **CHANGI CHARACTERS**.

Any other interesting nuggets of information about Changi Airport or aviation in general are marked as **FASCINATING FACTS**. You can also check out the handy map of Changi Airport on pages 164–165.

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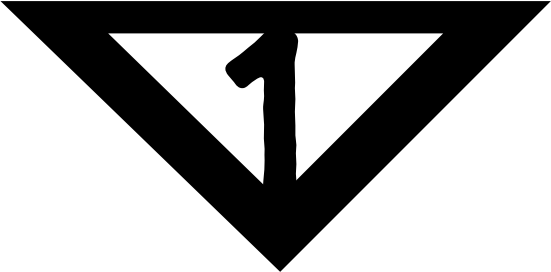
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SECTION



Today, if you want to go on a holiday overseas, you can book an air ticket, pack your bags and go to Changi Airport to catch your flight. But not too long ago, Changi Airport didn't even exist!

To understand how Changi Airport came about, we need to go back in time and talk about how air travel started in Singapore. So fasten your seatbelts!

Singapore's first flight happened more than 100 years ago in 1911. M. Joseph Christiaens was the pilot and he took off from the old race course (today's Farrer Park).

Breath of Fresh Air

Kallang Airport

In 1931, when Singapore was under the British, the British government announced that they would build an airport in Kallang. Before then, Singapore didn't have an airport purely for leisure travellers. There was a small airport in Seletar but it was used mainly for military planes (see page 17).

After six years of construction, Kallang Airport was finally opened on 12 June 1937. It was described as the

**FINEST AIRPORT
IN THE BRITISH
EMPIRE.**

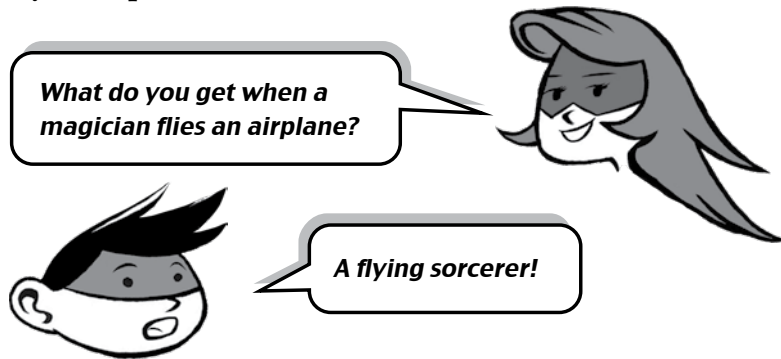
Everyone was impressed!

The airport had—***DRUMROLL***—one terminal building, a control tower and hangars to park planes! Hmm...it sounds very small by today's standards, but back then, it was a really, really big deal. It had many facilities that were advanced for its time. Amelia Earhart, the first female pilot to fly across the Atlantic Ocean on her own, stopped at Kallang Airport shortly after it opened and called it the

AVIATION MIRACLE
OF THE EAST.



An automobile company called Wearne Brothers Limited started Wearne's Air Service and operated the first commercial flights in Malaya. In the same month the airport opened, the airline operated three flights a week. For the first time, people could fly from Singapore's Kallang Airport to Kuala Lumpur or Penang. It was a great moment! Unfortunately, the Japanese Occupation happened soon after and ruined everyone's plans. Bleeah.



FASCINATING FACTS

After Kallang Airport was shut down in 1955, most of its structures were demolished. However, the main terminal building with the iconic control tower was kept. The terminal was designed to look like an aeroplane, with wings on both sides and the glass control tower in the centre, like a cockpit. There was no viewing gallery back then. Visitors had to walk

up a spiral staircase to the open rooftop if they wanted to wave to planes taking off!

In 2008, the terminal building with the control tower was named a historic monument to be conserved. It stands tall and proud at 9 Stadium Link.

Roads in that area were specifically named to reference Kallang Airport. They include Old Airport Road, Kallang Airport Drive and Kallang Airport Way. You probably don't realise that Dakota MRT station, Dakota Crescent and Dakota Close were named after a type of plane that used to land at Kallang Airport: the Douglas DC-3—also known as the Dakota!

After the war, Kallang Airport was reopened and upgraded to handle more flights and larger planes coming into Singapore. However, it was difficult to expand Kallang Airport as that would mean encroaching on neighbouring areas like Geylang. The government decided to build a new and larger airport at Paya Lebar instead.

(Air)port of Call

Paya Lebar Airport

On 20 August 1955, Paya Lebar Airport was officially opened. It had very modern equipment and was described as the **FINEST IN ASIA!** After expansion in 1962, the airport had one of the longest runways in Asia at the time, so it was able to handle large jets.

Eleven airlines operated at Paya Lebar Airport, offering 125 flights weekly.

FASCINATING FACT

When building Paya Lebar Airport, workers found live explosive shells left behind from the Japanese Occupation.

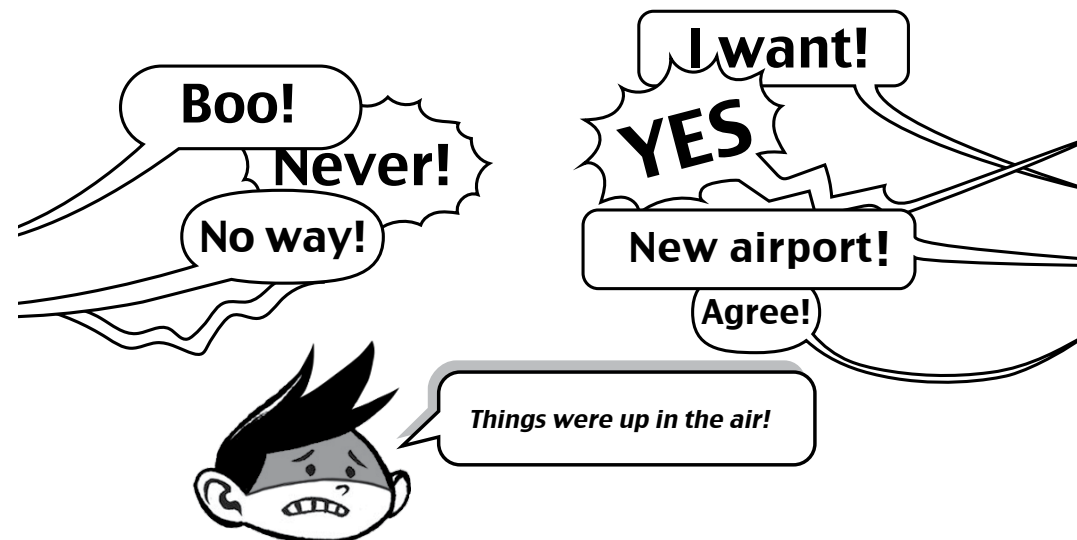
Yikes!

A bomb disposal unit had to be called in to remove the shells safely.

The government thought Paya Lebar Airport would solve Singapore's air travel problems, but they were

wrong! Air travel became even more popular (planes are a lot quicker than trains, ships and buses) and many people started flying to other countries for holidays, work or study. By the mid-1970s, Singapore faced the same problem it had with Kallang Airport—Paya Lebar Airport just could not cope with the number of planes and flights.

By 1975, it was crunch time—the government had to decide how to solve the problem. Not everyone agreed on what to do. Many, along with foreign experts, felt that building a second runway at Paya Lebar Airport was the way to go, because building a new airport would be very expensive.



Howe Yoon Chong, head of the Civil Service then, set up a committee to study the future needs of aviation in Singapore. He thought that building a new airport at Changi, located at the eastern end of Singapore, would be a more permanent solution. Moreover, expanding Paya Lebar Airport would be difficult. That airport was near the city centre and expansion would increase noise and air pollution in the area.

Howe was so sure of his views that he wrote a proposal pushing for his plan to then Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew.

Lee was **CONVINCED!**

The plan to build Changi Airport was very expensive, and therefore risky. Half of the land for the airport had to be reclaimed from the sea and everything had to be built from scratch. The cost was about \$1.3 billion, a staggering amount of money back then.

The government was also racing against the clock,

because it was projected that Paya Lebar Airport would not be able to handle the growing number of flights by 1981, even with upgrades.



From the time the decision to build Changi Airport was made in 1975, it was full speed ahead. The sea reclamation was completed in under two years and on 1 July 1981, Changi Airport started operations, replacing Paya Lebar Airport.

The last flight out of Paya Lebar Airport was by Singapore Airlines on 30 June 1981, 11pm. It flew to Abu Dhabi and Frankfurt.

After that, Paya Lebar Airport was converted into an airbase for military aircraft. It was renamed Paya Lebar Air Base and is still being used today as a base for the Republic of Singapore Air Force.

FASCINATING FACT

Paya Lebar Air Base is often used to receive VIPs who fly in to Singapore via private planes. In June 2018, US President Donald Trump met North Korean leader Kim Jong-un in Singapore for the North Korea–United States summit. The plane carrying Donald Trump, Air Force One, landed at Paya Lebar Air Base. (Kim Jong-un went through Changi Airport's VIP Complex (see page 71).)



Flying Colours

Changi Airport

When the beautiful and spanking-new Changi Airport opened in 1981, it was the largest in the region. It had one runway, a passenger terminal, other supporting buildings and facilities, as well as one of the most visible buildings associated with Changi Airport.

You will find this icon on many Singapore souvenirs, like magnets and keychains. Can you guess what it is?



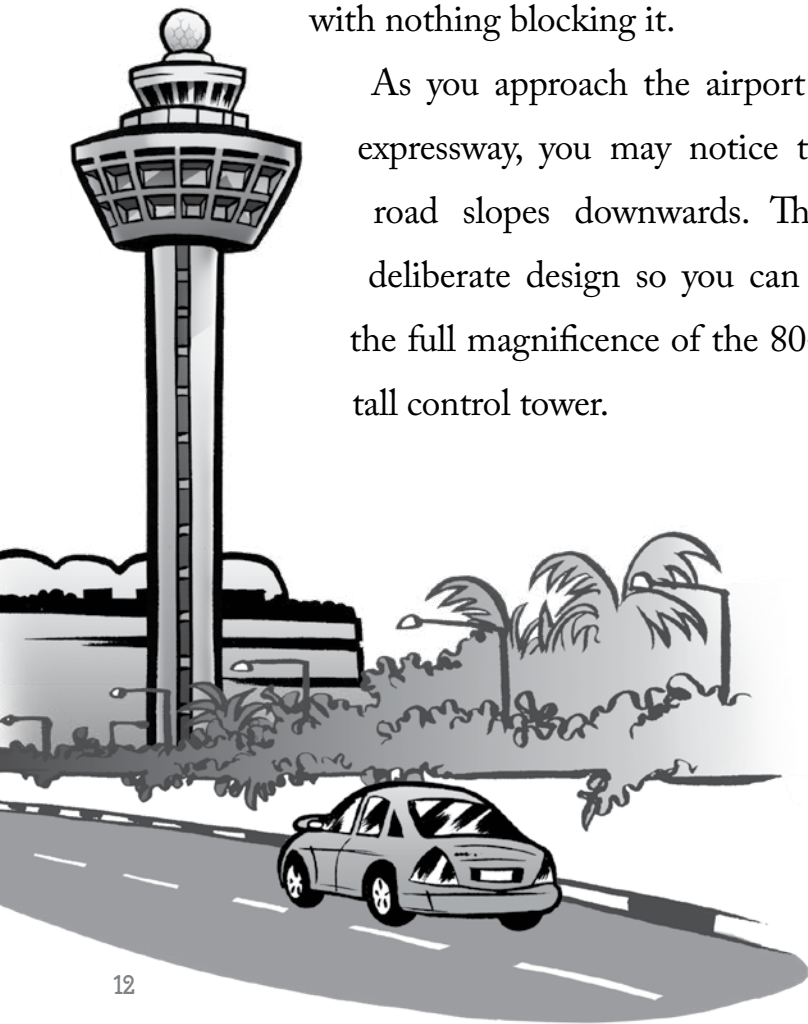
The control tower!

FASCINATING FACT

Check your wallet and search for a 20-cent coin. Do you see what's pictured on it? That's right—the control tower! You may have been carrying the control tower in your pocket this whole time without knowing it.

One man who was heavily involved in Changi Airport's development was then Senior Minister of State for Communications Ong Teng Cheong. He determined that the control tower should be the landmark of Changi Airport, and that as people drove towards the airport, they would see the tower first, with nothing blocking it.

As you approach the airport on the expressway, you may notice that the road slopes downwards. This is a deliberate design so you can take in the full magnificence of the 80-metre-tall control tower.



Even though it cost a lot of money, building Changi Airport turned out to be a brilliant decision. In 1980, Paya Lebar Airport handled 7.2 million passengers and was already bursting at the seams. In 1981, Changi Airport handled more than 8 million passengers.

Nowadays, many airports around the world are modern and comfortable. Back in the 1970s and early 1980s, however, most airports were crowded, noisy and unpleasant places for travellers. You usually had to wait in queues for a long time to get your passport stamped, and collecting your baggage was another long wait. There were few shops or restaurants where you could spend your time, and toilets were notoriously dirty. People often couldn't wait to leave the airport as soon as possible!

Why did the burglar sweep the airport floor?



He wanted to make a clean getaway!

Changi Airport was one of the first airports in the world to change the airport experience. Planners focused on prioritising passenger flow (this means the way and speed that people move in and out of the airport). Just like the city of Singapore, Changi Airport was clean and green.

The airport was also designed to be a destination in itself. It was the first airport to have a pool, a slide and even a butterfly garden!

You can say Changi Airport was off to a flying start!



Travellers all over the world were impressed. Ever since Changi Airport started operations, it has been praised for its modern facilities, cleanliness and very efficient services. Over the years, it has won more than 500 awards and is consistently voted one of the best airports in the world.

FASCINATING FACT

It is quite common to see families or groups of students visiting the airport for a meal or just to enjoy the facilities. You may have even done so yourself. But do you know that in the rest of the world, hanging out at the airport is considered very strange? Changi Airport is one of the few airports that people visit even when they're not flying anywhere or receiving anyone!

Changi Airport grew bigger....and bigger...and bigger! Even before the dust settled on the new airport in 1981, planning had already begun for a second terminal and a second runway. Terminal 2 was completed in 1990, and the Changi Skytrain linking Terminal 1 and 2 was a great hit with the public. Terminal 3 was opened in 2008 and Terminal 4 was completed in 2017.

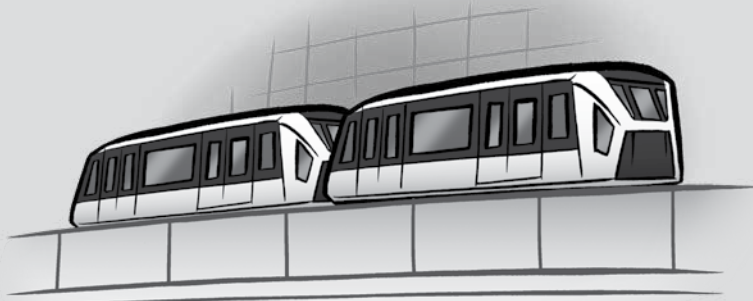
FASCINATING FACT

Need to get from one terminal to another? Take the Skytrain! This is a quick and popular way of getting around Changi Airport and it links Terminals 1, 2 and 3. The MRT closes around midnight, but the airport is often busy even at night, so the Skytrain operates until 2.30am! What a hard worker.



If the Skytrain is closed, you can still get around by taking shuttle buses or by the good old-fashioned method—walking!

Or...you can wait until the Skytrain opens again at 5am.



Shooting for the Stars

Seletar Airport


You may have heard something in the news about Seletar Airport.



What? Another airport?

Yup! Singapore has another small airport at Seletar that is even older than Kallang Airport! It was used as a military airbase by the British air force before Singapore's independence.

In 1968, the British handed over the operations of Seletar Airport to the Singapore government. It was converted into an airport for smaller private planes and flying schools. Air ambulances carrying injured passengers from other countries also land at Seletar Airport.



Did you hear about the student who flew his plane through a rainbow?



He passed with flying colours!

Since then, Seletar Airport has been gradually upgraded and in 2018, a new passenger terminal opened to cater to more planes and passengers. The plan is to move the flights of smaller planes from Changi Airport to Seletar Airport, to free up space at Changi Airport for larger jets. Smaller aircraft use propellers and usually fly shorter distances. They typically fly within the region, especially to and from Malaysia.

FASCINATING FACTS

Celebrities like actor Tom Cruise (from the *Mission: Impossible* movies) and singer Bruno Mars have flown into Singapore via Seletar Airport.



If you want to learn how to fly a plane, chances are you will take lessons at the Singapore Youth Flying Club, which is based at Seletar Airport.

Pit Stop

Why Transit or Transfer (and What Do They Mean)?

People travel by plane to get from one place to another but things aren't always that simple. Sometimes, a flight stops at an airport halfway through the journey. For instance, people may want to fly from London to Sydney, but the airplane may stop in Singapore while on the way to Sydney. This is called a transit stop. So when we say a flight transits at Changi Airport, it means the plane and its passengers have not reached their final destination but are just stopping over in Singapore's airport for a while.



Sometimes I get tired when I run from one place to another and stop for a rest. Does the plane stop because it gets tired too?



Well, something like that! A transit stop is usually for the aircraft to top up its fuel or to be cleaned.



If it's a short transit stop, passengers may have to stay on the plane. For longer transit stops of a few hours, passengers can leave the plane and move around the transit area in the airport. If passengers have enough time, they can even leave the airport and visit the city, before going through security again to board the plane.

In some cases, people may need to stop at Changi Airport to change planes or airlines to get to their destinations. These stops are called transfers. A transit passenger usually needs only one boarding pass to complete their journey, while a transfer passenger may need a different boarding pass for the second flight.

FASCINATING FACT

A record number of 65 million passengers passed through Changi Airport in 2018. The busiest day of the year was 21 December 2018, which saw more than 220,000 people come through the airport!

Transit and transfer stops are important to Singapore because when passengers pass through Changi Airport, they may shop, eat and enjoy the facilities, thus bringing business to our Little Red Dot.

Airlines, too, pay to stop over at Changi Airport, topping up their fuel and doing maintenance and repair work. So while these airline workers may not actually leave the airport to visit the rest of Singapore, they may bring business to Changi Airport in other ways.

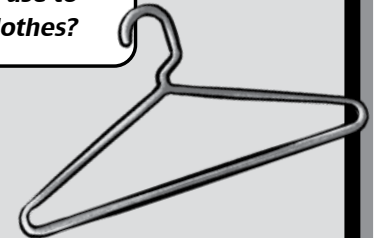
FASCINATING FACT

When a car needs to be fixed, it is sent to the workshop. At other times, nothing's really wrong with the car but it is still taken to the workshop to be spruced up so it can run well. Regular maintenance like oil changes and tyre changes gives the car a longer life on the road.

Just like cars, aircraft need to be repaired and maintained as well. There are more than 100 companies located at or near Changi Airport that offer aircraft repair and maintenance services. These companies have hangars and use fancy equipment to reach all parts of the aircraft.

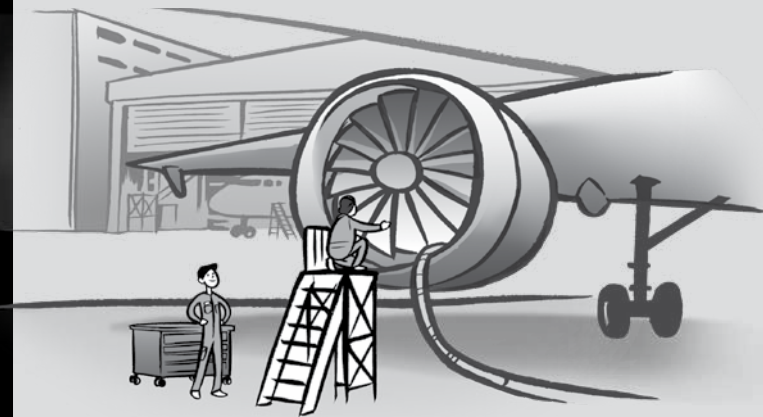


**Hang on! Hangers?
Like what I use to
hang my clothes?**



**Hangars, not hangers!
Hangars are large
covered spaces where
planes are stored.**





Singapore is well known for being able to repair and maintain many kinds of aircraft, as well as different parts of the aircraft, so customers can get all the work done on the plane in one place. This makes Changi Airport very attractive for aircraft companies.

Apart from repair and maintenance, some of the interesting work companies are asked to do for aircraft include painting the outside of the aircraft and designing the inside of the passenger cabin!

WHY CHANGI AIRPORT IS A POPULAR PLACE TO TRANSIT AND TRANSFER

- **Conveniently located**

On the world map, Singapore is conveniently located about halfway between many major cities, so we are in a good place for airlines to take a break.

- **Easy for airlines**

Another big consideration is whether the airport can provide the facilities and services that airlines need. Changi Airport offers full service support to airlines, efficiently and conveniently. The fantastic teams at Changi Airport are able to prepare a plane for takeoff again within an hour of landing (see page 143).



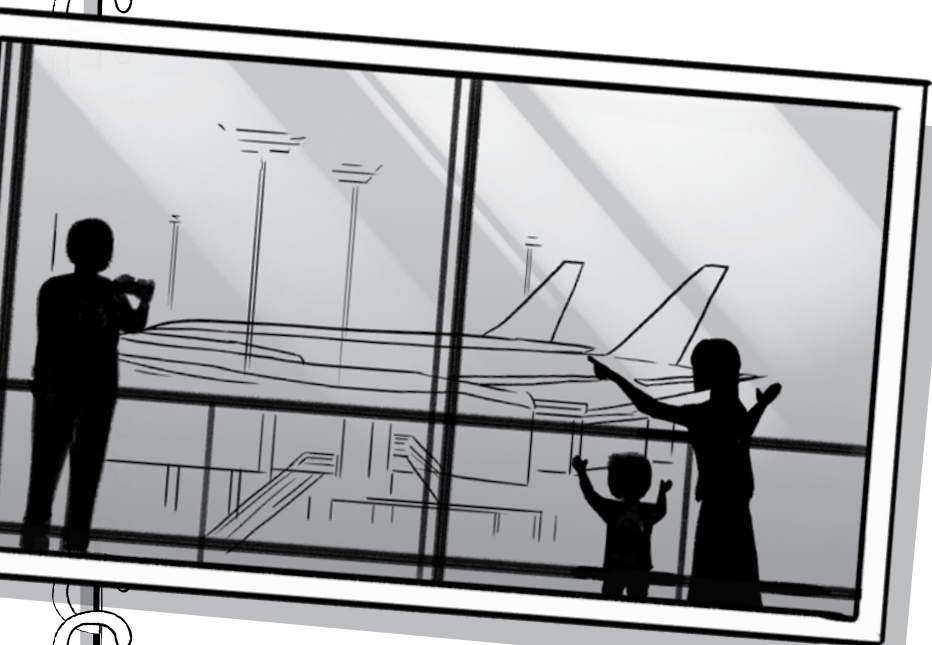
Why did the plane need to be repaired?

It was all tired out!



- **Fun for passengers**

As for passengers, many consider Changi Airport to be the perfect place to transit or transfer, because it has so many fun things to do and see (see page 74).



Up, Up and Away

Terminal 5

Work has already begun for a mega Terminal 5, scheduled to be ready around 2030.



*Why do we need another terminal?
Changi Airport is already so big!*

Well, for the past 10 years, the number of passengers passing through Changi Airport has been rising steadily each year. It's not just Singaporeans who are travelling more, people in our neighbouring countries are, too! If the numbers continue to grow, even at a slower rate, Changi Airport would be a tight squeeze by 2025. That's right, even with Terminal 4!

That's why Changi Airport has to constantly expand and upgrade, to ensure that the airport is able to handle the increasing number of people passing through.

About the Authors



Monica Lim and Lesley-Anne Tan are a mother-daughter writing team (in that order). They are co-authors of the action-packed Danger Dan children's book series.

Lesley-Anne likes quiet places and quiet moments. Yes, she's quiet. Why do you think she became a writer? From a young age, Lesley-Anne has had a passion for writing and a fascination with words. She loves literature lessons and topped her school's Secondary 4 level in Advanced Literature in 2013. The first Danger Dan book was published in January 2014, when she was just 16.

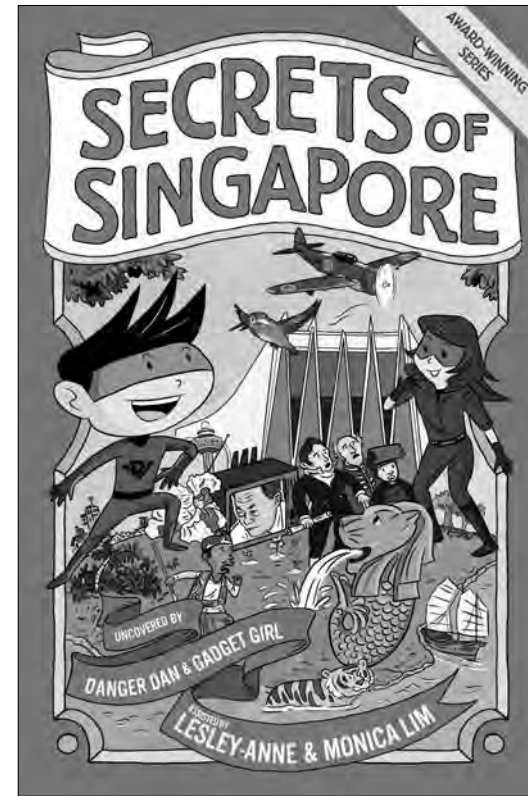
Monica is not as quiet but she has a deathly fear of public speaking. Why do you think she became a writer too? Monica runs her own writing agency for corporate clients. She also writes a popular blog on parenting and education, which inspired her first book, *The Good, the Bad and the PSLE: Trials of an Almost Kiasu Mother*. She has been featured by both Singapore and international media, including *The Straits Times*, *Lianhe Zaobao*, *Young Parents* magazine, Mediacorp, Hong Kong's *South China Morning Post* and the US documentary programme *Dan Rather Reports*.

Monica and Lesley-Anne have spoken at events, such as the Hong Kong International Young Readers Festival; the Singapore Writers Festival's Words Go Round; the National Library Board's Read! Fest; as well as at many local and international schools. Yes, that's a lot of speaking. Which is tough for one so quiet and another who dislikes public speaking. But being able to share their love of writing makes it all worthwhile.

About the Illustrator



Elvin Ching works as an illustrator and storyboard artist in Singapore. He likes to create his own little comics in his free time and some of his short stories have been published in the Eisner-nominated comics anthology *Liquid City*. He has also illustrated trading cards for Marvel, comics for the *Pangu* series of books by Martha Keswick and the *Badang* mini-comic for National Day celebrations in 2016. Elvin has too many comic books at home. He has so many comics that there are some he hasn't even found time to read yet!

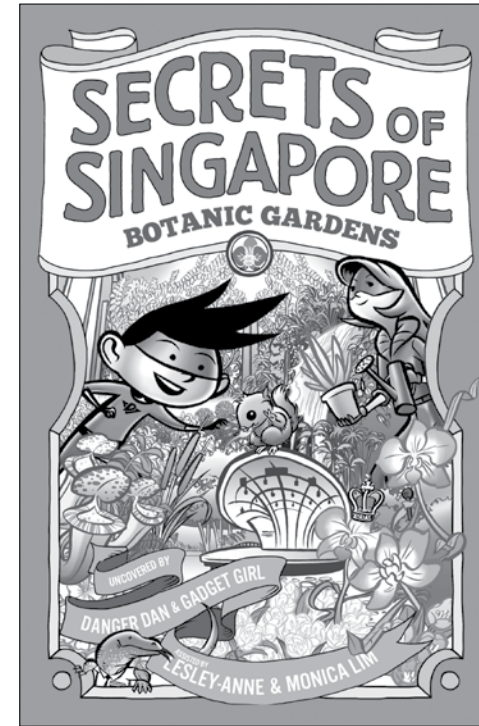
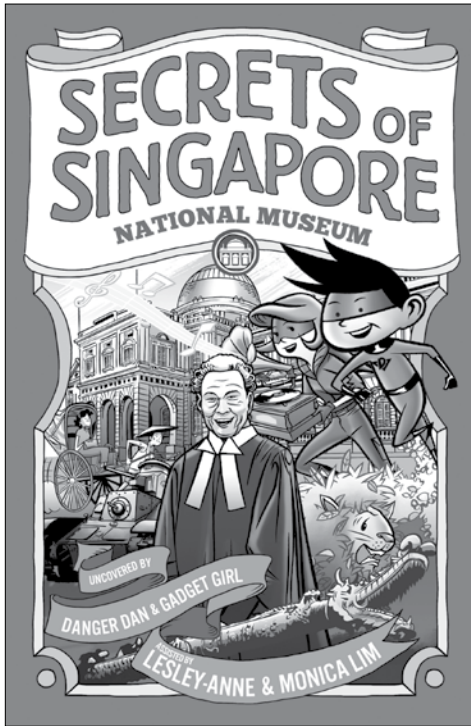


In *Secrets of Singapore*, Danger Dan and Gadget Girl uncover the nation's past, from the time of Sang Nila Utama in 1299 to independence in 1965. But wait, there's more!

They also investigate intriguing areas seldom found in your history books (shhhh!), like cinemas, airports, sports and, of course, food! Join the superhero duo as they unearth fascinating facts like:

- Which animals have escaped from the Singapore Zoo?
- How long was the very first MRT ride?
- Where can you see a tiger car? (And what on earth is a tiger car??)

The answers to these burning questions and much more in Danger Dan and Gadget Girl's guide to Singapore's past.



In *Secrets of Singapore: National Museum*, Danger Dan and Gadget Girl take a peek behind the pillars of the National Museum to see what secrets they guard. AND WHAT A TREASURE TROVE!

From way back to the time of Sang Nila Utama right up to modern day Singapore, the superhero duo unearths curious artefacts such as a headless horseman figurine from the 1300s, and banana money (not made from actual bananas) from the Japanese Occupation.

In exploring the museum, Danger Dan and Gadget Girl discover that the museum itself hides a curious past. It was once located in a school (Raffles Institution, no less!), and some of the more unusual gifts it received included an elephant and a tiger. Luckily, they were dead. Otherwise, there would have been chaos in the museum.

Join Danger Dan and Gadget Girl on an adventure through the National Museum and watch history come to life right before your eyes! #EpicThrowback

In *Secrets of Singapore: Botanic Gardens*, Danger Dan and Gadget Girl go out on a limb to uproot the Singapore Botanic Gardens' deepest, darkest secrets.

Within the lush grounds, the superhero duo find a tree so famous that its portrait can be found in any Singaporean's wallet, as well as an orchid older and taller than any human alive. Flying back 140 years into the past, they also discover that the Botanic Gardens used to be home to a mixed bag of critters, including a tapir who dreamed of being a rock. Not a rock star. Just a rock. #achievablegoals

There's more! Danger Dan and Gadget Girl realise that the botanical world is more twisted than they think. As it turns out, strawberries are only pretending to be berries, tomatoes can't decide whether they are fruits or vegetables, and sunflowers are really evil at heart.

Trek through the Singapore Botanic Gardens with Danger Dan and Gadget Girl. You will never look at your plant pals the same way again!

JUMP INTO THE ADVENTURES OF DANGER DAN AND GADGET GIRL IN FUTURE SINGAPORE



Welcome to Singapore 2135, where cars travel on “skyways”, the grass is soft enough to sleep on, and everything runs perfectly. In *The Animal Abduction*, a new secret friend brings trouble to the Zoo.



In *The Watery Wipeout*, Danger Dan, Gadget Girl and Power Paws navigate underground tunnels, break mind-boggling codes and even get to ride on a Hover Cab!

HOW DID DANGER DAN AND GADGET GIRL FIRST MEET? READ THE FIRST DANGER DAN SERIES TO FIND OUT!



In *The Gruesome Garden*, Danger Dan, Gadget Girl and Power Paws are in a leafy mess! A secret evil has taken root among the plants in 2135, causing them to have a life of their own. Join the superheroes as they untangle themselves from this overgrown problem!



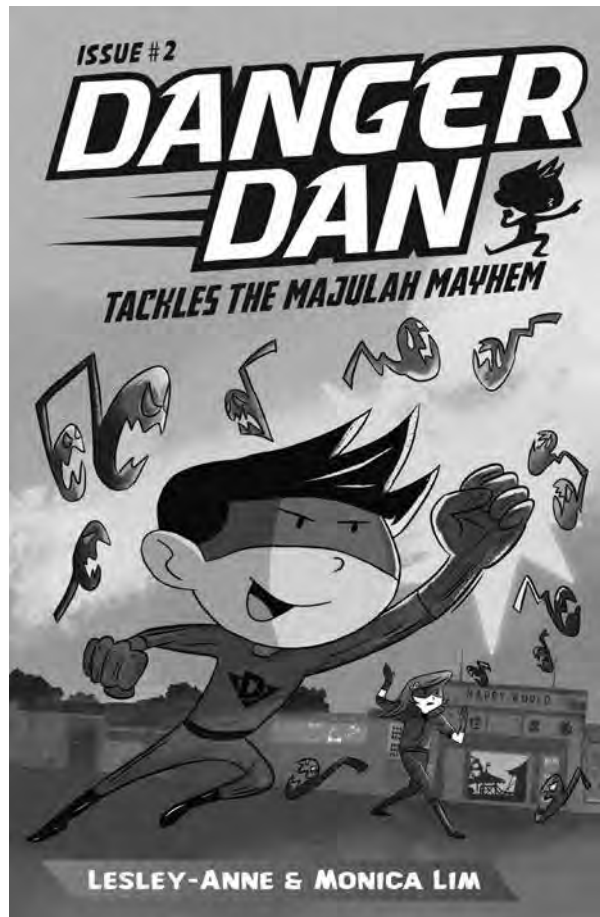
In *The Zany Zombie-Fest*, Danger Dan, Gadget Girl and Power Paws come face-to-face with the horrifying monsters of Haw Par Villa... and we're not even talking about those in the Ten Courts of Hell!



In *The Robot Revolution*, Danger Dan, Gadget Girl and Power Paws have to abandon all gadgets and rely solely on their imagination and wits to fight the technological takeover.



Danny will do anything to get him away from his three older sisters and the errands his mum always piles on. When he steps out of the MRT on yet another errand, Danny is in for the time-bending adventure of a lifetime. Channeling his favourite comic book superheroes, Danny becomes alternate personality Danger Dan—real life boy-hero!



It's up to Danny and Melody to save the composer of the national anthem from giving up on music. But the time warp appears to be more sinister than Danger Dan initially thought. What is the real story behind these time glitches?



Danny travels back to 1819 to stop a dastardly pirate from hijacking one of Singapore's most crucial historical events ever.



The mysterious time warp has messed with Queen Elizabeth's historic visit to Toa Payoh satellite town. The Queen is danger of being poisoned!



The year is 1299 and the legendary Sang Nila Utama has just landed on the island of Temasek. He sees something terrifying in the jungle. Is it a ravenous lion or something more sinister?

Praise for the Secrets of Singapore series

“*Secrets of Singapore* is one for the history buffs... It’s written in a breezy and accessible style, with lots of graphics [and] cheesy puns.”

—Sassy Mama

“A visit to Singapore, and the National Museum, would be incomplete without this book!”

—Sarah Mounsey, teacher librarian,
of *Secrets of Singapore: National Museum*

“A gripping read that once you start, you won’t be able to *leaf* it alone!”

—Dr Shawn Lum, president of Nature Society (Singapore), of *Secrets of Singapore: Botanic Gardens*

"These fun-filled pages pack a wealth of insights about aviation in Singapore. Entertaining and highly educational."

—Lee Seow Hiang, chief executive of Changi Airport Group

"This book will pique the interest of young aviators."

—Kevin Shum, director-general of Civil Aviation Authority of Singapore

IN *SECRETS OF SINGAPORE: CHANGI AIRPORT*, DANGER DAN AND GADGET GIRL TAKE TO THE SKIES!

THE TWO SUPERHEROES FIND OUT THAT THERE'S MORE TO CHANGI AIRPORT THAN JUST PLANES AND PASSENGERS. THEY REVEAL INTRIGUING SECRETS IN PLACES LIKE THE TAXIWAYS (WHICH HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH TAXIS), THE RUNWAYS (WHICH HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH RUNNING) AND THE APRON (WHICH HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH COOKING). JEWEL IS A REAL GEM, THOUGH.



THAT'S NOT ALL!

DANGER DAN AND GADGET GIRL ALSO DISCOVER THAT VIDEO GAME DEVICES ARE USED TO SCREEN BAGGAGE, THAT SOMEONE ONCE LOST A PET HAMSTER IN THE AIRPORT, AND WHY FOOD TASTES LIKE CARDBOARD IN A PLANE (HINT: IT'S NOT BECAUSE THE CHEF'S A DUD).

JOIN DANGER DAN AND GADGET GIRL AS THEY CLEAR THE AIR BY SOLVING ALL THE MYSTERIES SHROUDING CHANGI AIRPORT!



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