

6 highlights from the Victoria Concert Hall dig

1 Rare Yuan Dynasty blue-and-white Chunping porcelain vase

This vessel features grape and vine motifs, and a classical scroll on its foot ring. There is no record of a similar vessel with the same design motif and it is, at present, the only known specimen of its kind.

2 Fragment of blue-and-white porcelain from shoulder of Meiping vase

This vase is decorated with a cloud and lotus motif. It employs the underglaze painting technique utilising cobalt to achieve the distinct blue decorating the ceramic. Blue-and-white porcelain was produced only between 1330 and 1352, during the Yuan Dynasty, at Jingdezhen industry kiln complex in Jiangxi province, China.

3 Chinese chess piece

This provides evidence for gaming and recreation activities during the Temasek period. This stoneware Chinese chess piece bears the incised marker of Shuai (marshal or general) in Chinese script.



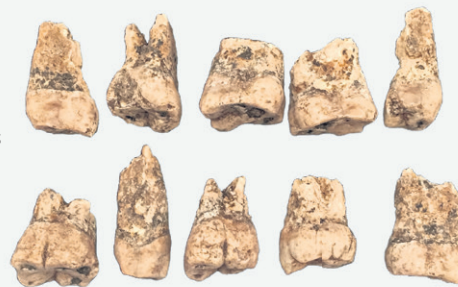
4 Head of a mammal figurine

The ornamental porcelain figurines of mammals, such as the head of a horse or camel, were also discovered.



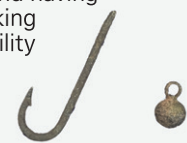
5 Human teeth

Archaeologist Lim Chen Sian notes that it is extremely rare to find any human remains from pre-modern archaeological sites in Singapore due to the tropical environment. In this case, 45 individual adult teeth were recovered from the excavation zone.



6 Fishing hook and bell trinket

These items were likely produced locally during the Temasek period. Other archaeological digs have pointed to the island having its own metal-working manufacturing facility at the site of the Parliament House building.



Left: An artist's impression of what the site could have looked like in the 14th century.

The Victoria Concert Hall site appears to be an extension of a commercial neighbourhood within the larger Singapore River bank precinct. Mr Lim, the archaeologist, says the volume and variety of artefacts uncovered during the dig demonstrate that the lawn in front of the Victoria Theatre was an active marketplace or commercial square, and Victoria Concert Hall was also home to a range of activities that potentially included small cottage industries for copper or metal work and shops retailing a variety of wares. The Victoria Concert Hall site also had residences.