



Mr Chung Chee Kit with a sketch of Jurong Shipyard (above) and discussing the route around Jurong Island with the boat operator (below). The 66-year-old spent five hours sketching and snapping photos of the coastline from a motorboat last week. The resulting works will go on display during Singapore Maritime Week in April. ST PHOTOS: JAMIE KOH

Sketching secrets of S'pore's shores

Maritime artist to capture coastal landmarks in restricted areas

By MELODY ZACCHEUS

SINGAPORE'S skyscrapers extend beyond the mainland.

Giant gas tanks, towering submersibles, and massive oil rigs as tall as 12-storey buildings dot the Republic's waters.

Few have seen these looming water giants up close as they lie in private, policed waters along Singapore's coasts.

But the public will soon get glimpses of these structures from a series of paintings maritime aficionado and self-taught artist Chung Chee Kit is doing.

One of the first recipients of the Maritime Heritage Fund launched last year, Mr Chung was given \$2,000 in funding for his

passion project and will be creating 50 paintings of Singapore's modern shoreline.

The \$500,000 Maritime Heritage Fund targets community-initiated projects related to maritime heritage.

Said Mr Chung, a 66-year-old naval architect: "Today, we see only the shipping containers as we drive along the West Coast highway... we don't have a sense of the water and shipping activity and structures around us, although we live on an island that is home to one of the largest international ports in the world."

Some of his paintings will be shown at the 10th Singapore Maritime Week at Marina Bay Sands' Events Plaza from April 19 to 24.

Mr Chung started fieldwork last week, spending five hours sketching and snapping photos around Jurong Island on a motorboat.

Landmarks along the route include some of the largest cement silos in the world and a car terminal with thousands of cars coming off a car carrier.

Mr Chung, a former director of Keppel's telecommunications and transport department, will go on three other boat trips to cover the rest of Singapore's coast over the next few weeks.

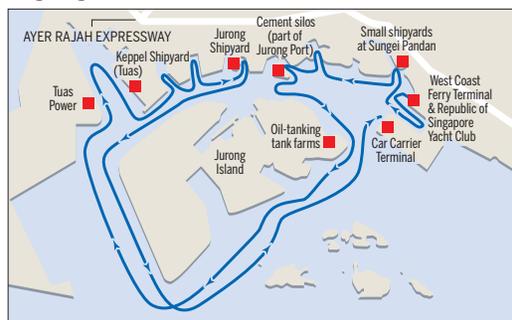
The expeditions will include places such as Sentosa, Changi, Punggol and Marina Bay.

Approval from the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Maritime Port Authority of Singapore (MPA) is needed to gain access to these waters.

Mr Au Kheng Sheng, director of communications and communi-



Highlights of the Western Coast



ty division at MPA, said projects like Mr Chung's help to "raise the profile of Singapore's rich and diverse maritime history".

Naval architect and heritage enthusiast Jerome Lim, who is part of a team of two producing a photo exhibition on the shores of Singapore, said Mr Chung's project offers a new perspective.

"We are cut off more and more from the coast to a point where we have almost forgotten about it. Mr Chung's work reminds us of the coast and, to some extent, its importance to us," said Mr Lim.

Mr Chung, who has two grown-up children, said he loves being out at sea. "I feel like a boy in a toy shop," he said.

His love for the maritime industry was sparked by British naval war comics which he started to read avidly at 11.

Through the comics, he learnt how to identify and sketch various types of vessels such as torpedo boats, destroyers and aircraft carriers.

"Without cameras, explorers of the past always had naval artists on board to depict the shoreline," said Mr Chung.

"No one here has done an updated, modern-day version... Fifty years on, I'm trying to do my part as a modern-day maritime artist."