

# BUKIT TIMAH HERITAGE TRAIL

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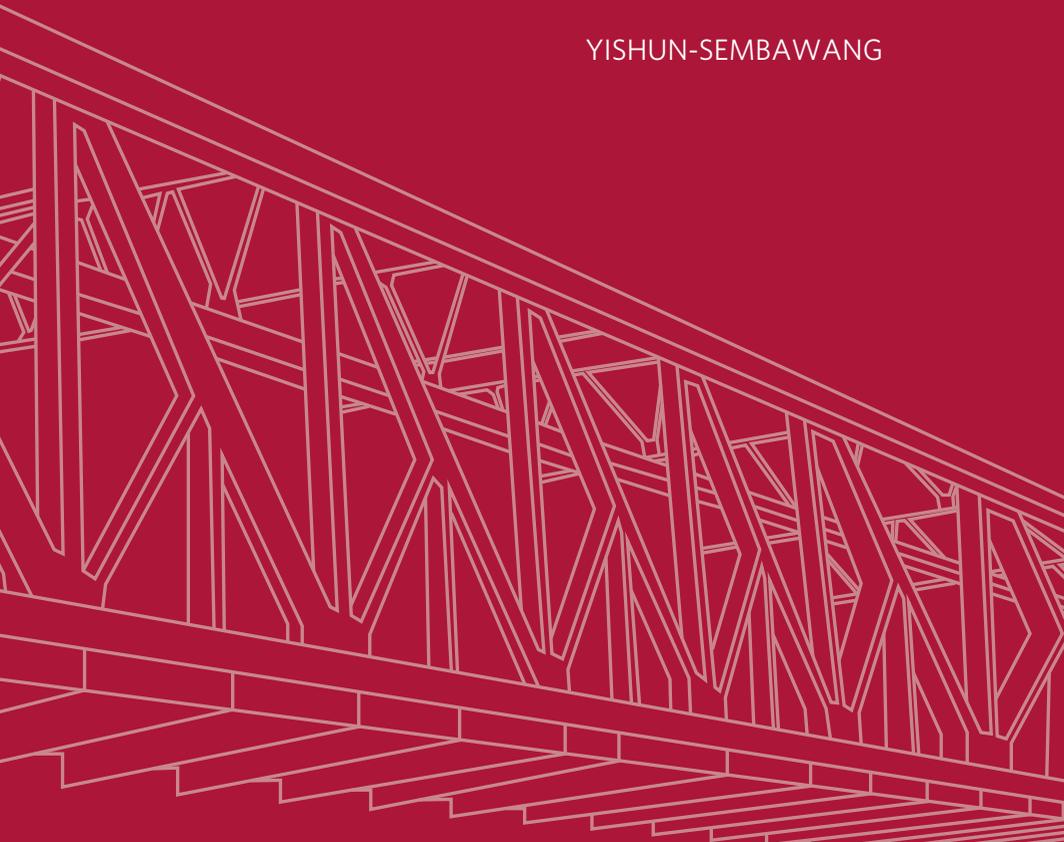
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*A road leading up to Bukit Timah Hill, 1890s  
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# INTRODUCTION



*Bukit Timah, 2016*  
Courtesy of National Heritage Board

Most Singaporeans today would associate Bukit Timah with its eponymous hill or the Bukit Timah Nature Reserve. While the area's natural heritage no doubt defines Bukit Timah in the public consciousness, there is nevertheless much more to this area than the lush greenery that meets the eye.

Older generations of Singaporeans may remember the idyllic villages of Kampong Tempe, Kampong Chantek, Kampong Racecourse and Bukit Timah Village. Some, on the other hand, may recall the valiant battles fought in Bukit Timah just days before the fall of Singapore on 15 February 1942.

Yet, there are others who associate Bukit Timah with the vibrancy of the Beauty World entertainment and shopping area, or trips across the Causeway via the Singapore-Johor

Railway. There are also many schools in this area such as the former Raffles College (now the National University of Singapore) and National Junior College which possess long and illustrious histories, and have played important roles in the development of Singapore.

Through the Bukit Timah Heritage Trail, you can learn more about the area's history, beginning from the early 1800s when early settlers established plantations, to the nascent development of former industries in the 1950s and finally to the emergence of well-loved places such as Adam Food Centre and Coronation Plaza in later decades.

This trail booklet shares not only the above-mentioned history of this area, but also the personal memories of those who have lived, worked and played here.

# EARLY HISTORY

In Malay, Bukit Timah means “Tin Hill”, even though tin was never discovered in the area. It is possible that the hill was actually called Bukit Temak by locals in reference to the Temak trees that grew in the area, with the name being altered when it was subsequently transliterated into English.

While it is unclear which tree species the Malay name Temak refers to, the *Shorea curtisii* is a likely candidate. Abundant in the Bukit Timah Nature Reserve, these lowland rainforest trees are also known as Seraya. Other renditions of this area’s place-name include “Bukit Tima” or “Bukit Teemar”, both of which are commonly found in early British maps from the 1800s.

## SETTLEMENT AND EARLY LAND-USE

Historical scholarship has yet to uncover any settlements in Bukit Timah before the arrival of the British in 1819, although it is possible that coastal and riverine-dwelling locals may have visited the area’s forests in search of agarwood for incense, timber, herbs and food.

During the early years of colonial Singapore, the municipal government was located primarily in the town area around the Singapore River. The island’s outlying districts and interior, including Bukit Timah, were largely covered with forests and swamps, and were unexplored by Europeans. As the *Singapore Chronicle* newspaper described the area in 1825:

*“Bukit Tima [sic], although not above seven or eight miles from the town of Singapore, has never been visited by an European – seldom by a native, and such is the character of the intervening country, that it would be almost as easy to make a voyage to Calcutta as to travel to it.”*

While the island’s interior was largely unfamiliar to Europeans in the early 1800s, Chinese planters had already ventured inland

to set up gambier and pepper plantations. By 1827, some three-quarters of the route from town to Bukit Timah had been cleared of primary rainforest by these settlers.

Operating before Singapore’s early road network was laid out, it is likely that these cultivators transported their commodities on *pukats* (“canoes” in Malay) along the rivers and coasts. Many of these pioneers toiled on small-scale plantations, and were able to eke out only a subsistence living.

Most of these planters worked the land without legal title, a practice which reflected the inability of the British government to exercise its full authority over areas outside of the town. Writing in his diary in 1839, Sir James Brooke, a British naval officer who later became Rajah of Sarawak, described the plantations and villages around Bukit Timah in this way:

*“The most interesting class of Chinese are the squatters in the jungle around the high hill of Bukit Timah. Their habitations may be distinguished like clear specks amidst the woods, and from each a wreath of smoke arises, the inmates being constantly engaged in the boiling of gambier. We may estimate at nearly 2,000 of these people who, straying from the fold of civilisation, become wild and lawless on its very confines. The nature of the country renders [British] control difficult, if not impossible, so that they may be said to live beyond the reach of all [colonial] law ....”*

The plantation owners and workers often lived in or near *bangsals*, a Malay term referring to shed-like structures which were often used more broadly to indicate a plantation, as well as its processing areas and accommodations. The *bangsals* were the predecessors of kampongs (“villages” in Malay).

With a significant population of plantation workers inland and around the northern coast by the 1840s, Christian missionaries established churches and mission stations to proselytise and convert the Chinese in these areas. A number of these institutions are still around today, including St Joseph's Church and Glory Presbyterian Church.

From the 1830s, gambier planting became highly profitable due to an increased demand for the crop from the tanning and dyeing industries in Europe and elsewhere. However, this gambier boom also brought a number of social and economic conflicts to the fore, resulting in widespread communal violence in the mid-1850s.

As gambier cultivation often left plots of land that were infertile and unsuitable for further planting after a couple of years, the demand for fertile land rose exponentially. From the 1840s, the colonial government also began to regulate and impose rents for land that had previously been worked without legal title. With suitable land at a premium, disputes between planters became more frequent.

These pressures on a now increasingly competitive industry explain, in part, the outbreak of the Anti-Catholic Riots of 1851. During that year, violent clashes occurred between members of secret societies and Chinese villagers who had converted to Christianity. The latter group stood apart from the traditional societies, and were rivals for control of the gambier industry. As converts to a foreign faith, the Chinese Christians were perceived by the secret societies to have betrayed their communities by adopting a religion that was mainly associated with Europeans at that time.

Violent clashes took place at Bukit Timah Village among others, and the colonial government had to enlist the help of the police, sepoys, marines and conscripted convicts to quell the disorder. Writing in *The Malay Archipelago*, visiting naturalist Alfred Russel Wallace described an incident at Bukit Timah during the riots:

*"One morning 600 Chinese passed our house in straggling single file, armed, in the most impromptu manner, with guns, matchlocks, pikes, swords, huge three-pronged fishing spears, knives, hatchets and long sharpened stakes of hard wood. They were going to buy rice, they said, but they were stopped on the road by a party of about a dozen Malay police, five of them shot, and the rest turned back."*

In the face of these socio-economic upheavals, many gambier planters relocated to Johor in search of fresh land to cultivate. Eventually, the gambier industry in Singapore became less profitable and by the end of the 19th century, gambier and pepper plantations had mostly been replaced by vegetable and fruit farms, and later by the cash crop of rubber.



*A photograph of bangsals ("huts" in Malay), late 19th century  
National Museum of Singapore Collection, Courtesy of National  
Heritage Board*



*A gambier and pepper plantation, 1900s  
National Museum of Singapore Collection, Courtesy of National  
Heritage Board*

## BUKIT TIMAH ROAD AND EARLY COLONIAL EXPLORATIONS

For the colonial government, the first steps towards regulating Singapore's rural interior involved increasing access to and expanding their knowledge of these outlying districts. In 1827, the colonial administrator John Prince explored the route to the summit of Bukit Timah Hill in preparation for the construction of a road that would enable access into the northern part of Singapore, hitherto largely unexplored by Europeans.

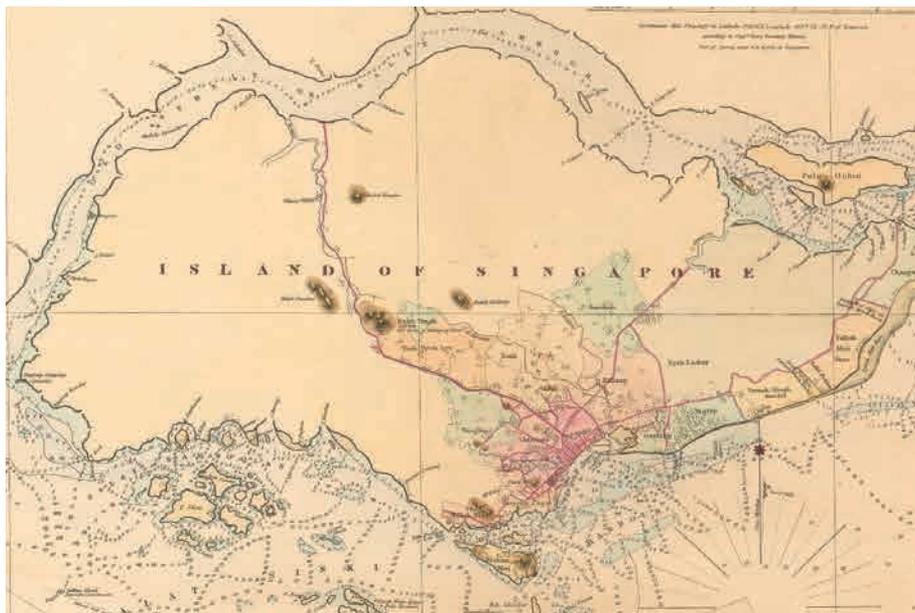
Proceeding from town and accompanied by a contractor for the road, Prince's journey took five hours on foot. A platform with a shelter was then quickly erected at the summit of the hill. Half a decade later in the mid-1830s, the construction of Bukit Timah Road began and reached the 7th milestone (near the present-day King Albert Park) in 1840.

The road was laid using convict labour under the charge of the Government Superintendent of Public Works George Dromgold Coleman.

These convicts, most of whom were brought to Singapore from the Indian subcontinent, were also responsible for clearing forested areas as well as hunting down tigers.

Under the supervision of colonial surveyor John Turnbull Thomson, Bukit Timah Road was later extended further northwards to Kranji, with the road meeting the crossing to Johor by 1845. In that year, the road was first traversed in its entirety by Thomson and the medical doctor and coroner Dr Robert Little. Having returned from a trip up the Skudai River in Johor, the duo made the journey on horseback from Kranji to town via the newly constructed Bukit Timah Road.

By 1856, the colonial government had built a bungalow on the hill, close to where two telecommunications towers stand today. Priority for the use of the bungalow was accorded to government officers on rural duty, but it was also available to the public to rent for two Straits dollars a day.



An 1855 map of Singapore showing Bukit Timah Road stretching from the city area towards Kranji  
Urban Redevelopment Authority Collection, Courtesy of National Archives of Singapore



*A road leading up to Bukit Timah Hill, 1890s*

National Museum of Singapore Collection, Courtesy of National Heritage Board

These developments opened the way for an expansion of economic activities in Bukit Timah, which had previously been dominated by Chinese gambier and pepper planters. Europeans like J. I. Woodford established nutmeg plantations here from the 1840s, while the mammoth Chasseriau Estate was established in 1872 at Bukit Tinggi.

Within seven years, this estate under the charge of the French-Mauritian Leopold Chasseriau grew to span 1,200 acres. It employed 450 coolies, producing tapioca and later Liberian coffee. A large part of this former estate now lies in the Central Catchment Nature Reserve.

Serving as a cross-island artery, Bukit Timah Road was critical to the flow of produce and people from plantations and rural areas to the town centre. It also served as the main route to Malaya, and in particular Johor whose gambling establishments drew the island's residents in droves. By the end of the 19th century, the colonial government was considering a new channel for this stream of ever-growing traffic – a railway.



*A postcard showing a bungalow on Bukit Timah Hill, 1900s*  
Collection of Singapore Philatelic Museum: Donated by Prof Cheah Jin Seng



*A postcard showing Bukit Timah Road, 1922*  
Collection of Singapore Philatelic Museum: Donated by Mr Koh Seow Chuan

## THE RAILWAY IN BUKIT TIMAH

The former Bukit Timah Railway Station is within a short walking distance from King Albert Park MRT (exit A)

While studying the feasibility of a railway in 1896, colonial engineer Captain F. J. Anderson monitored traffic passing by the police station at the 6th milestone of Bukit Timah Road (near today's Sixth Avenue Centre). In 12 months, Anderson recorded more than 270,000 journeys made in both directions and noted that these journeys were made on foot, gharries (horse-drawn carriages), rickshaws and bullock carts. Anderson's findings justified the building of a railway, and the Singapore-Kranji Railway (also known as the Singapore-Johor Railway) was constructed between 1900 and 1903.

The Singapore to Bukit Timah section of the railway opened on 1 January 1903, with the town end of the line located at Tank Road. The Bukit Timah to Woodlands section followed on 10 April 1903, and from Woodlands, passengers made the connection to Johor via ferry.

At its inception, a one-way first class fare from Singapore to Bukit Timah cost 56 cents with a return fare at 84 cents, while third class fares were priced at 21 cents and 32 cents respectively. By 1905, the railway had an annual passenger volume of more than 500,000. Many of these passengers headed to Johor on Sundays, lured by the gambling establishments there, which offered to cover the return fares of their customers.

Much like the effect of Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) lines today, the railway precipitated the growth of Bukit Timah as a residential suburb. With the line running parallel to Bukit Timah Road until the 7th milestone (near the present-day King Albert Park), the stations at Cluny Road, Holland Road and Bukit Timah encouraged residents living in town to move to these areas. As a result, residential estates soon replaced former plantations and burial grounds.

The opening of the Causeway in 1923 allowed trains to bridge the Johor Strait, and also enabled goods and commodities to flow unimpeded between ports at Penang and



*The railway station at Bukit Timah, early 20th century*  
National Museum of Singapore Collection, Courtesy of National Heritage Board



*An aerial view of Upper Bukit Timah, showing the railway truss bridge in the centre, 1957*

Aerial photographs by the British Royal Air Force between 1940 to 1970s, from a collection held by the National Archives of Singapore. Crown copyright.



*The KMT train in operation, 2007*  
Courtesy of National Heritage Board

Singapore. These commodities included tin and rubber, both of which formed the backbone of the colonial Malayan economy. Locals also used trains to travel to Malayan holiday destinations such as Port Dickson, while Malaysians made their way to Singapore for leisure and work.

The railway was realigned in 1929 to accommodate the new terminus at Tanjong Pagar, which began operations in 1932. That same year, a new Bukit Timah Railway Station was built near King Albert Park and located on higher ground to avoid the frequent flooding that disrupted services at the former station.



*The stationmaster's office, 2007*  
Courtesy of National Heritage Board

The new station was constructed in the style of traditional small town railway stations found in the United Kingdom and is reminiscent of European country cottages. The single-storey building had an open platform and six structural bays, as well as a stationmaster's office, open and closed waiting areas, and a signals office. The station also served as an unloading point for racehorses due to its proximity to the former Singapore Turf Club.



The Bukit Timah Railway Station when it was still in operation, 2007  
Courtesy of National Heritage Board

As a child, Arthur George Alphonso (b. 1921) lived in Bukit Timah Village in the 1930s, and his father, a railway engineer, helped construct the realigned railway and two truss bridges on Bukit Timah Road. Alphonso remembered travelling on the railway as a young boy:

*"On Sundays, we used to go to church, at St Joseph's Church at Bukit Panjang. I used to go with (my father) on a trolley ... we used to go on the railway line, pushed by four Indian labourers. I travelled with him sometimes on the railway, when they were building these two overhead railway bridges on Bukit Timah Road ... (and) I used to see these people laying the tracks."*

Like the rest of the railway line after it was sold to the Federated Malay States Railway (FMSR) in the 1910s, ownership of the Bukit Timah Railway Station and the land it sat on was later transferred to FMSR's successor, Keretapi Tanah Melayu (KTM). When KTM ended train services between Woodlands and Tanjong Pagar in 2011, Bukit Timah and other stations likewise ceased operations.



The signboard at the railway station, 2007  
Courtesy of National Heritage Board

The now-defunct Bukit Timah Railway Station is the only suburban station which still stands today, and it is often frequented by railway, heritage and photography enthusiasts. As a well-loved local landmark, the station itself was accorded conservation status by the Urban Redevelopment Authority in 2011. Two railway truss bridges, at Fuyong Estate and on Bukit Timah Road near King Albert Park, have also been conserved.

# NATURAL HERITAGE

## HISTORY OF THE BUKIT TIMAH NATURE RESERVE

The reserve is located at the end of Hindhede Drive

The beginnings of the Bukit Timah Nature Reserve can be traced back to the 1840s when Europeans began visiting the area regularly. Travelling through large tracts of land denuded by gambier planters, many were alarmed at the scale of deforestation, which was even more apparent when viewed from the summit of Bukit Timah Hill.

Believing that deforestation would negatively affect Singapore's climate, the colonial government proceeded to designate the hill as a forest reserve. Christened the Bukit Timah Forest Reserve, the reserve spanned 342.4 hectares, with about a third of that area covered by trees and the rest by brushwood and *lalang* grass.

However, it was only in the 1870s that the colonial government started to officially assess the extent of deforestation. The dire state of the forests was first revealed in reports authored by J. F. A. McNair, then surveyor-general, and Nathaniel Cantley, who was later Superintendent of the Singapore Botanic Gardens from 1880 to 1888. The latter's 1883 report recognised the government's general neglect of the forests in Singapore, stating that it was "hard to conceive (of) a more short-sighted policy".

Following the release of these reports, the former Forestry Department was established in 1884, and the forest reserves of Singapore, Penang and Malacca were placed under its purview. Watchmen were hired by the department to prevent illegal timber harvesting, while labourers delineated boundary paths, constructed bridges and replanted native trees on former gambier plantations. The tree species planted by the department included the American Rain Tree (*Samanea saman*), mahogany and teak.



A forest scene at Bukit Timah, 1894  
National Museum of Singapore Collection, Courtesy of National Heritage Board

A vegetable garden was also established on the hill in the 1880s. The garden grew lettuce, tomatoes, peas and other produce for local markets and also served as a distribution point from which farmers could obtain seeds for various crops. These initiatives were undertaken by the Forestry Department to aid reforestation of the area. A gutta-percha (*Palaquium gutta*) plantation was also established in 1898, which grew to 16 hectares by 1910.

These early efforts to protect the reserve were undermined when the management of the forest reserves was later passed to the former Collector of Land Revenue, who issued timber licences liberally and with little regard for sustainability. The early 1900s also saw more development encroaching on land originally designated as part of the forest reserve. To the east and north-east of Bukit Timah Hill, some 52 hectares of land were converted for water catchment purposes, adding to pressures on the land generated by granite quarries, railway lines and a rifle range.

Fortunately, the primary forest fragments in Bukit Timah were left unharmed partly through the efforts of Botanic Gardens staff including its then Director, Richard Eric Holttum, and then Assistant Director, Edred John Henry Corner. With his assistant Mohammad Noor, Corner would attempt to distract illegal woodcutters by discreetly removing their axes and other equipment. Still, by 1930, only 70 to 80 hectares of the reserve remained forested and its boundaries had to be redrawn.

Due to a lack of regulation, most colonial-era forest reserves across Singapore were denuded by 1951, and many reserves ended up being developed for other uses. In fact, only the reserves of Bukit Timah, Pandan and Kranji were retained and designated as nature reserves.

In recognition of the area's rich biodiversity, legislative protection for the Bukit Timah Nature Reserve was formally accorded by the colonial government in 1951. The Nature Reserves Ordinance recognised that reserves were essential for the preservation and study of Singapore's flora and fauna.

Despite this, the reserves continued to lack a sense of public ownership, as shown by continued acts of vandalism in the 1960s. H. M. Burkill, then Director of the Botanic Gardens, said in 1959:

*"The most urgent present task is to 'sell' the nature reserves to the public... Once the public realises that it has a collective stake in the reserves, then there is a strong defence against individual catch-penny commercialism, which at present is a grave danger hanging over Singapore's reserves."*

Despite the legislation, quarrying around Bukit Timah Hill continued to aggravate the environmental damage exacted on the reserve. Quarrying removed protective buffer zones, increased pollution and raised the temperature of the soil which resulted in drying effects. The closure of the quarries was recommended in 1951, but the last quarry only ceased operations in 1990.



Students from Bukit Panjang Government School swimming in a river during an excursion to the Bukit Timah Nature Reserve, 1950

Bukit Panjang Government School Collection, Courtesy of National Archives of Singapore



Students from Bukit Panjang Government School at the Bukit Timah Nature Reserve for an excursion, 1950

Bukit Panjang Government School Collection, Courtesy of National Archives of Singapore

Other forms of development also encroached onto land originally designated as part of the nature reserve. These included the construction of a telecommunications station, a Gurkha station and the Bukit Timah Expressway (BKE) in the 1980s. The BKE, in particular, isolated the Bukit



*An aerial photograph showing three craters where the quarries near Bukit Timah Hill were located, 1950*  
Aerial photographs by the British Royal Air Force between 1940 to 1970s, from a collection held by the National Archives of Singapore. Crown copyright

Timah Nature Reserve from the larger Central Catchment Nature Reserve. This impeded the movement of animals and the dispersal of plant species between the two reserves, as well as disrupted the ecological connection between the two areas.

In the 1980s, newspaper articles raised awareness of the threats faced by the Bukit Timah Nature Reserve. Considering the situation dire, members of the former Nature Reserves Board contemplated resigning en masse at the prospect of development overtaking the reserve. Professor Leo Tan, then a member of the Board, recalled: "We said, 'If we are here to supervise the demise of every nature reserve, there is no point'."

Members of the Board, including representatives from the Nature Society and academics, were however persuaded to stay with the formation of the National Parks Board (NParks) in 1990. This new statutory board adopted a more strategic and holistic approach to conserving the Bukit Timah Nature Reserve. It also introduced visitor management policies to regulate access, along with regular environmental monitoring and efforts to protect and restore fragile locations.



*The visitor centre at the Bukit Timah Nature Reserve, 2016*  
Courtesy of National Heritage Board

Other initiatives that were put in place included the reintroduction of plant and animal species, as well as the establishment of buffer zones to better protect the forest. A visitor centre was set up in 1992 and the number of visitors to the reserve grew from less than 100,000 in the 1980s to more than 400,000 in 2013. The construction of the Eco-Link@BKE in 2014, a purpose-built bridge for wildlife, also attempts to restore the ecological connection between the Bukit Timah Nature Reserve and the Central Catchment Nature Reserve.

Today, the Bukit Timah Nature Reserve stands as a sanctuary not only for flora and fauna but also for the urban dwellers of Singapore. An invaluable resource for conservation, nature-based recreation and research, it plays a vital role in educating the public and maintaining our connection to the natural world. As Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong remarked:

*"I go to Bukit Timah quite regularly. You're so close by and yet in such a radically different environment. You can imagine what it was like before Singapore got developed."*

## FLORA AND FAUNA OF THE BUKIT TIMAH NATURE RESERVE

Bukit Timah Nature Reserve contains the largest contiguous patch of primary rainforest in Singapore today, and the diversity of plant and animal life found in the reserve is remarkable.

The reserve consists of a good representative population of coastal hill Dipterocarp forest. This is notable because while these forests usually grow at elevations of between 300 metres and 700 metres above sea level, the highest elevation in Bukit Timah stands only at 163 metres. Dipterocarp trees are named for their characteristic winged fruits, and this genus (a taxonomic category ranking above species) includes many tropical trees with names that may be familiar to locals: Seraya, Meranti, Keruing and Mersawa.

In the reserve, giant Dipterocarps crown the upper canopy of the forest. With other tree species forming the forest's lower canopies, the dense forest cover ensures that only five per cent of sunlight reaches the forest floor. Close to the ground, one can find herbaceous plants, wild orchids, rattans, lianas and epiphytic figs intertwining to form a dense, often impenetrable undergrowth.

The remaining gutta-percha and rubber (*Hevea brasiliensis*) trees occasionally found in the reserve are living testaments to Singapore's rich economic history. The sap of the gutta-percha had been used by Southeast Asian peoples for centuries, but became sought-after worldwide in the 19th century as it was used as insulation for undersea telegraph cables.



*A Malay Pangolin, undated*  
Courtesy of Jeanne Tan, National Parks Board



*A Malay Colugo, undated*  
Courtesy of Jeanne Tan, National Parks Board



A group of Long-tailed Macaques, undated  
Courtesy of Jeanne Tan, National Parks Board



A Singapore Freshwater Crab, undated  
Courtesy of Cai Yixiong, National Parks Board

Demand for rubber grew similarly in the early 20th century, and large quantities were shipped from Malaya to make tyres and insulation for electrical wiring. Traces of plantations growing both trees can still be found in the Taban Loop of the reserve, with gutta-percha trees being easily identifiable by the distinctive copper-brown underside of their leaves.

The reserve is also an important refuge for forest birds, mammals, reptiles, amphibians, fish and insects, and is home to some 40 per cent of mainland Singapore's plant and animal life. Visitors to the reserve may catch sight of Malayan Colugos (*Galeopterus variegatus*) gliding overhead, Long-tailed Macaques (*Macaca fascicularis*) and Asian Fairy Bluebirds (*Irena puella*) in the trees, or the wandering Slender Squirrel (*Sundasciurus tenuis*) and Wagler's Pit-viper (*Tropidolaemus wagleri*).

The reserve is also a natural habitat for the Reticulated Python (*Python reticulatus*), the rare Malayan Pangolin (*Manis javanica*) and St Andrew's Cross Toadlet (*Pelophryne signata*).

Numerous other species have yet to be formally recorded and a recent NParks survey in 2015 found five species of spiders that were previously unknown to science.

Of endemic species (or animals only found in Singapore), perhaps the most iconic is the Singapore Freshwater Crab (*Johora singaporensis*) which is known to exist in Bukit Timah. The Singapore Freshwater Crab needs clean water and specific stream conditions, and is listed among the top most threatened species in the world.

Today, the Bukit Timah Nature Reserve is one of the few places left where one can gain a sense of pre-modern Singapore. Together with a section of primary rainforest at the Singapore Botanic Gardens, it is part of The Queen's Commonwealth Canopy, a forest conservancy network across the 52-country Commonwealth. Visit NParks' website at [nparks.gov.sg](http://nparks.gov.sg) to find out more about the nature trails and programmes held at the reserve.

## WALLACE IN BUKIT TIMAH

Credited with formulating the theory of evolution which was published in his book *On the Origin of Species* in 1859, Charles Darwin is rightly acknowledged as a pioneer in science. Halfway around the world, however, a contemporary of Darwin had also arrived at the theory of evolution independently. This was Alfred Russel Wallace, whose work in the field stemmed partly from his sojourns in Singapore.

Wallace spent a total of 228 days in Singapore, which were spread across several visits. He had first arrived in 1854 as a naturalist seeking to collect birds, insects and other animals that could sell well in London as exotic specimens. He observed, collected and recorded plant and animal life meticulously in Singapore as well as at other locations in Southeast Asia - and his work yielded insights that were instrumental in the advancement of his theory of evolution.

Aided by his assistant Charles Allen in 1854, Wallace determined that the areas beyond town would be more fruitful for his investigations. He



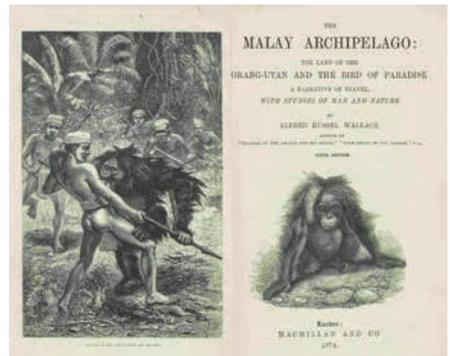
The Wallace Education Centre, 2016  
Courtesy of National Heritage Board

headed for Bukit Timah, obtaining permission to stay with Father Anatole Mauduit of St Joseph's Church, built near the 9½ milestone of Bukit Timah Road (where the church still stands today). With an eye for detail, Wallace noted the landscape of the relatively undisturbed area near Bukit Timah Hill in his book, *The Malay Archipelago*, in 1869:

*"The vegetation was most luxuriant, comprising enormous forest trees, as well as a variety of ferns, caladiums and other undergrowth, and abundance of climbing rattan palms. The mission house at Bukit-tima [sic] was surrounded by several of these wood-topped hills, which were much frequented by wood-cutters and sawyers, and offered me an excellent collecting ground for insects.*

*"Insects were exceedingly abundant and very interesting, and every day furnished scores of new and curious forms. In about two months, I obtained no less than 700 species of beetles, a large proportion of which were quite new, and among them were 130 distinct kinds of the elegant Longicorns (Cerambycidae), so much esteemed by collectors.*

*"Almost all these were collected in one patch of jungle, not more than a square mile in extent, and all my subsequent travels in the East I rarely if ever met with so productive a spot."*



*The Malay Archipelago* written by Alfred Russel Wallace following his observations in Southeast Asia, 1869

© Title - *The Malay Archipelago, the land of the orang-utan and the bird of paradise: a narrative of travel, with studies of man and nature*; Author - Alfred Russel Wallace, 1823-1913; Publisher - MacMillan, London 1874, Courtesy of the National Library Board, Singapore 2016

Wallace was delighted by the diversity of life around him, extolling in his book "my Singapore friends - beautiful Longicorns of the genera *Astathes*, *Glenea* and *Clytus*, the elegant *Anthribidae*, the pretty little *Pericallus* and *Colliuris*." Beyond beetles, he also noted lemurs gliding in the treetops, the "beautiful, varied" birdsong of the Oriental Magpie Robin (*Copsychus saularis*) and the colours of the Blue-throated Bee-eater (*Merops viridis*).

After just over a month in Bukit Timah, Wallace returned to town to consign his first batch of 1,087 insects for shipping to his agent in London. Back home, his specimens were sold to museums and private collectors.

Today, Wallace's legacy is celebrated in a learning centre established in the very area in which he worked more than 160 years ago. Located in the Dairy Farm Nature Park, the Wallace Education Centre houses an information gallery and the Wallace Environmental Learning Laboratory (WELL).

Through field studies and hands-on activities, students and other visitors to WELL can engage with and learn about the natural world. As one of several green buffers surrounding the Bukit Timah Nature Reserve, the Dairy Farm Nature Park offers visitors a rustic area for outdoor recreation (more details about the Dairy Farm Nature Park can be found on page 57).

### SINGAPORE BOTANIC GARDENS

1 Cluny Road; the Bukit Timah Gate is next to the Botanic Gardens MRT (exit A)

For many Singaporeans, the Singapore Botanic Gardens is a much-loved green space, a verdant setting for strolls, dates, music and a respite from the pressures of urban life. Beyond being a leisure destination, however, the Gardens has played a significant role in the history of Singapore, the region and the world.

Prior to the founding of the Singapore Botanic Gardens at its current site, there were two earlier attempts at establishing botanical

gardens in Singapore. One of this was a 19-hectare garden set up by Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles at Fort Canning. After his departure from the island, the garden was abandoned due to a lack of resources and attention. The former National Library, as well as the present-day National Museum of Singapore, were later built on the site.

In 1859, the former Agri-Horticultural Society acquired 23 hectares of land at the site of the present-day Gardens, establishing a botanical garden in the tradition of colonial gardens such as the Pamplemousses in Mauritius, the Royal Botanical Garden in London and the Peradeniya in Sri Lanka.

The original area of the Gardens was bounded by Napier Road (now Holland Road) to the south, by Cluny Road to the east and north, and by Tyersall to the west, which was the then Temenggong of Johor's estate. Most of the land was *belukar* ("secondary forest" in Malay), with a small patch of freshwater swamp forest and six hectares of primary rainforest. This rainforest harbours more than 300 tree species and over 500 plant species, and remains an important scientific and natural resource today.

In 1860, the Agri-Horticultural Society hired Lawrence Niven, a Scotsman overseeing a local nutmeg plantation to manage the Gardens. He laid out the Gardens in the English landscape style, with features such as rolling hills, open lawns, winding paths, and panoramic views still observable today.



A panoramic view of the Singapore Botanic Gardens, 1900s  
National Museum of Singapore Collection, Courtesy of National Heritage Board

Unlike its present-day incarnation, the Gardens initially catered mainly to members of the Agri-Horticultural Society, who paid entrance fees and monthly subscriptions for daily access and the privilege of obtaining cut flowers. Until 1863, members of the public were given free access only on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays.

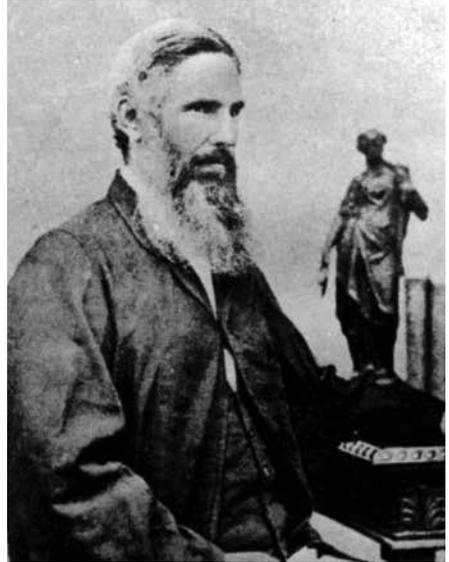
By 1874, however, the Society found itself in financial difficulties. The responsibility for the Gardens was then transferred to the colonial government, which appointed Henry James Murton from the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew to be the Superintendent of the Gardens in 1875.

In the tradition of colonial botanic gardens, Murton trawled Malaya for plants, established a herbarium and botanical library, and experimented with plants that had economic potential such as timber, coffee, tea, cacao, sugar cane, avocado, cardamom and gutta-percha.

Some of these plants were first grown in a converted forest reserve, which later became known as the Economic Gardens. In 1877, 22 Brazilian rubber seedlings obtained from Kew were planted at the Gardens. Murton's concerted efforts were the first steps towards establishing the Gardens as a centre of research and scientific scholarship.

Under subsequent superintendents and directors such as Nathaniel Cantley and Henry Nicholas Ridley, the Gardens grew into a hub for research on the flora of Southeast Asia, forestry, economic botany and plantation agriculture. It was also simply a space to enjoy nature, and a short-lived zoo existed at the Gardens between the 1870s and 1903.

Ridley, appointed as Director in 1888, has been hailed as one of the greatest botanists in history. At the Gardens, he experimented with and perfected methods of cultivating rubber, developing the technique of tapping and curing its latex without killing the trees itself. Acquiring the nicknames "Rubber Ridley" and "Mad Ridley", he visited the plantations of Malaya, seeking to promote the cultivation of rubber regionally and also provide the Gardens with a new source of revenue.



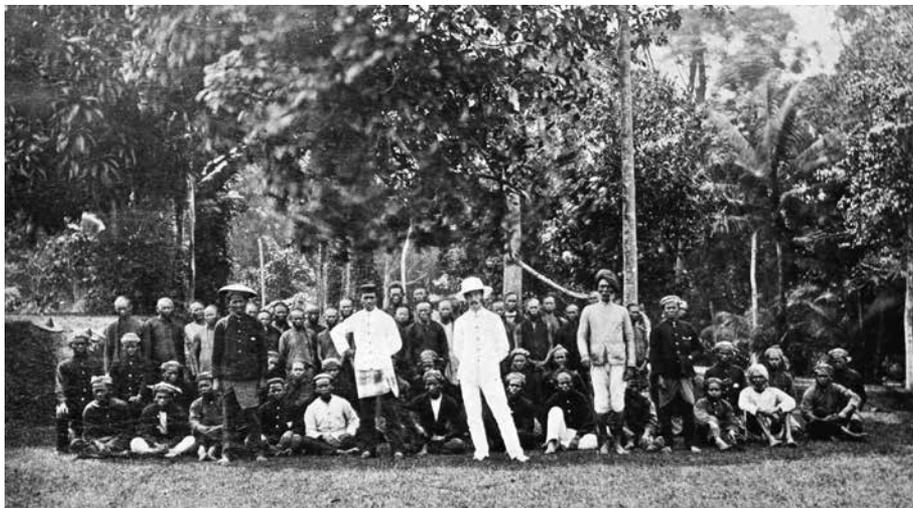
*The Gardens' former Director Lawrence Niven, undated*  
Courtesy of Singapore Botanic Gardens

For years, Ridley's efforts proved futile, until businessman and plantation owner Tan Chay Yan agreed to plant a small 16-hectare crop of rubber at Bukit Lintang in Malacca in 1896. The crop proved so successful that by 1901, rubber cultivation at Tan's estate had expanded to encompass 1,200 hectares.

Fueled by the worldwide demand for rubber, the Gardens sold more than seven million rubber seeds to various plantations by 1917. By 1920, Malaya was supplying half of the world's trade in rubber, much of it passing through the port of Singapore.

Ridley also capitalised on the economic potential of oil palm, previously planted only for ornamentation, which continues to be an important economic crop in Southeast Asia. However, the proliferation of vast oil palm plantations has led to widespread forest clearance and environmental degradation.

Besides rubber, orchids are another signature plant group closely associated with the Singapore Botanic Gardens. They are a product of the Gardens' horticultural tradition, with the first orchid breeding and



The Gardens' former Superintendent Henry James Murton (pictured in white with bowler hat) and his workers, many of whom were coolies, 1877  
 Courtesy of Singapore Botanic Gardens

hybridisation programmes beginning in the late 1920s under the watch of then Director, Richard Eric Holttum.

The *in-vitro* technique for hybridising orchids was invented in the United States, but perfected here with the *Spathoglottis Primrose* in 1932. This laid the ground for Singapore's orchid industry, and today, locally grown orchids are exported around the world. The Gardens is also known for its programme of naming orchids after visiting VIPs, a practice which started in 1956.

During World War II, the occupying Japanese administration agreed to a request from the former British colonial governor Sir Shenton Thomas to continue the Garden's scientific activities and to preserve its natural heritage. The Gardens' former Director Richard Eric Holttum and Assistant Director Edred John Henry Corner continued to work at the institution under the direction of botanist Kwan Koriba, a professor from the Imperial University of Kyoto. The efforts of Corner and his team were crucial in preserving the Gardens and its invaluable research programmes during the upheaval of the Japanese Occupation.



Singapore Botanic Gardens, late 1800s  
 National Museum of Singapore Collection, Courtesy of National Heritage Board

The 1950s saw increasing numbers of local staff hired and trained in preparation for the end of British colonial rule. Singapore adopted its first nation-wide tree planting programme in 1963, and then Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew called for the transformation of Singapore into a Garden City in 1967. During this period, much of the Gardens' focus was directed towards growing the millions of trees and plants to green Singapore. The Gardens was also responsible for advising other institutions on the development and layout of smaller-scale garden projects.

After the pioneering work of the early Garden City years, the Singapore Botanic Gardens returned to its focus on botanical research in the mid-1970s under the direction of Wong Yew Kwan, Singapore's first Commissioner of the former Parks and Recreation division in the Ministry of National Development. Laboratories, nurseries and pathology facilities were expanded, while the new Plant Introduction Unit at the Gardens sought out and experimented with vivid plants that would add colour to the island's greenery.

The 1990s and early 21st century were a period of rejuvenation for the Gardens. At its helm was Dr Kiat W. Tan, who envisioned the Gardens as a go-to recreational spot for Singaporeans as well as a global leader in research and conservation. A visitor complex was constructed and colonial-era houses including the E. J. H. Corner House were restored.

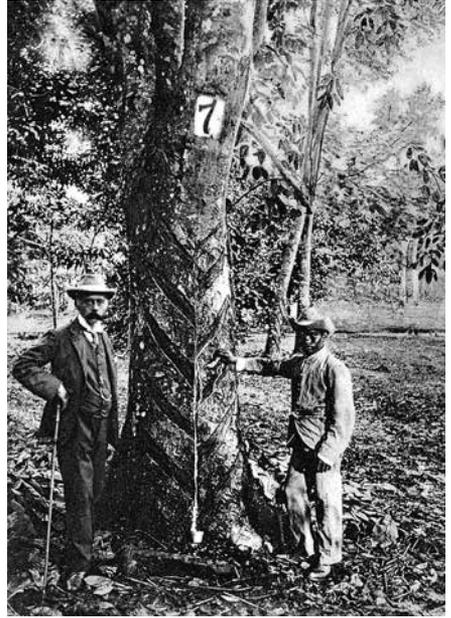
To allow for better management, the Gardens was divided into three distinct zones: the Tanglin, Central and Bukit Timah Cores. A wider variety of trees and plants was also introduced, and the Herbarium and Library were upgraded to accommodate an expanded array of research and educational programmes.

This period also witnessed the introduction of a Plant Resource Centre to propagate and condition introduced plants, in addition to new sites such as the Eco-Garden, the Eco-Lake as well as the National Orchid Garden. The Palm Valley was also developed as a venue to host musical performances, and features the Shaw Foundation Symphony Stage which sits on an islet in the middle of a lake.

In 2015, the Singapore Botanic Gardens was inscribed as the nation's first United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) World Heritage Site. The inscription recognises the Gardens' outstanding universal cultural, social and economic value as a well-preserved British tropical botanic garden which has contributed

to important advances in scientific knowledge, particularly in the fields of tropical botany and horticulture, including the development of plantation rubber.

The Gardens was also acknowledged for its role in plant research, including the seeding of the rubber industry in the early 20th century as well as its current "leading role in the exchange of ideas, knowledge and expertise in tropical botany and horticultural sciences."



*The Gardens' former Director Henry Nicholas Ridley (left), 1905*  
Collection of Singapore Philatelic Museum. Postcard donated by Prof Cheah Jin Seng



*The Gardens' former Director R. E. Holttum (second from the right) and Assistant Director E. J. H. Corner (third from the right) with several Japanese officials, 1942*  
Courtesy of Singapore Botanic Gardens



*Swan Lake, 2013*  
Courtesy of Singapore Botanic Gardens



*The Bukit Timah Gate of the Singapore Botanic Gardens, 2017*  
Courtesy of National Heritage Board

## SITES OF INTEREST IN THE SINGAPORE BOTANIC GARDENS

### Swan Lake

Located in the Tanglin Core, the 1.5-hectare Swan Lake was constructed in 1866. It takes its current name from a pair of swans originally from Amsterdam. Today, ducks, koi fish and blue-plumed Common Kingfishers (*Alcedo atthis*) can also be sighted around the lake.

Nibong Palms (*Oncosperma tigillarum*), a species of mangrove tree used in the past for fishing stakes, stand on an islet along with Simpoh Air shrubs (*Dillenia suffruticosa*), the leaves of which are used to wrap *rojak* (a local traditional fruit and vegetable dish). A 19th-century Victorian cast-iron gazebo, originally located at the old Admiralty House on Grange Road, was relocated next to Swan Lake in 1969.

Near the lake is a Tembusu tree (*Fagraea fragrans*) that is believed to pre-date the establishment of the Gardens. With a long limb extending horizontally, the iconic tree is featured on the back of the five dollar Singapore note. Writing in *Wayside Trees of Malaya*, E. J. H. Corner, Assistant Director of Gardens from 1929 to 1945, was of the opinion that:

*“If it were asked what trees were distinctive of Singapore, we would point to the Tembusu trees of Tanglin (including the Gardens’ grounds and the former Bukit Timah Campus) for specimens as fine cannot be found on any part of the (Malayan) mainland.”*

### The Bandstand

A 33-metre hill stood on the site of the original Bandstand, before it was levelled for use as a performance ground in the 1860s. Members of colonial society often arrived here via horse-drawn carriages to watch concerts and military parades. In 1930, an octagonal gazebo was erected on the site, and it became a popular spot for wedding photographs.

Between Bandstand Hill and Plant House are several life-sized bronze sculptures by renowned British sculptor Sydney Harpley, including the sarong kebaya-clad *Girl on a Swing* and *Girl on a Bicycle*. These were donated to the Gardens in the 1980s by David Marshall, who served as Singapore’s first Chief Minister from 1955 to 1956.



*The Bandstand, 2010*  
Courtesy of Singapore Botanic Gardens

### The Rain Forest

This six-hectare patch of primary forest houses more than 300 tree species. The forest canopy rises up to 40 metres, and includes trees of the genus *Shorea* (giant emergent Dipterocarp trees) as well as Jelutong trees (*Dyera costulata*). Climbing rattan palms and a potpourri of shrubs, flowers, gingers, ferns and herbs flourish beneath the canopy, providing an enchanting kaleidoscope of colours.

### Heritage buildings, structures and trees

There are 17 buildings and structures within the Gardens that have been accorded conservation status by the Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA). These include the 1868 Burkill Hall, which is a two-storey Anglo-Malay plantation-style house named after two former directors of the Gardens, Isaac Henry Burkill, and his son Humphrey Morrison Burkill.

Anglo-Malay plantation-style houses, which are characterised by overhanging eaves supported by wooden pillars and brick or stones bases, feature upper-storey verandas designed to bring the breeze indoors. They

were constructed in Penang and Singapore from the early 1800, and Burkill Hall is the only remaining example of the Anglo-Malay plantation-style house left in the world.

Another conserved building is the Holttum Hall, which was completed in 1921 in the vernacular British style and now houses the Gardens' Heritage Museum that displays rare botanical books, photographs, plant



Burkill Hall, 2013  
Courtesy of Singapore Botanic Gardens



Holttum Hall, 2013  
Courtesy of Singapore Botanic Gardens



Corner House, 2016  
Courtesy of Singapore Botanic Gardens

specimens and paintings. It was the office and laboratory of Richard Eric Holttum, Director of the Gardens from 1925 to 1949, who subsequently became the first Professor of Botany at the University of Malaya.

The 1910 E. J. H. Corner House, a Black and White bungalow was also accorded conservation status. The building was named after its famous occupant, Edred John Henry Corner, the Gardens' former Assistant Director and Holttum's contemporary.

The Gardens is also home to the largest cluster of Heritage Trees in Singapore. Nominated by the public and accorded protection by NParks, these trees reflect diverse aspects of Singapore's natural, social and economic history.

The 64 Heritage Trees in the Gardens include Kapok (*Ceiba pentandra*), Tembusu (*Fagraea fragrans*) and Saga (*Adenanthera pavonina*) trees, as well as a 150-year-old, 47-metre tall Jelawai tree (*Terminalia calamansanai*). A full listing of the Gardens' Heritage Trees and a walking trail is available on the NParks website.

### Atbara and Inverturret

Black and White bungalows, which feature European architectural styles adapted to Singapore's tropical climate and lifestyle, are one of the most visible aspects of Singapore's colonial heritage that have survived till today.

Situated on 5 Gallop Road in the grounds of the Botanic Gardens is Atbara, the first Black and White bungalow in Singapore constructed in 1898. Named after the 1898 Battle of Atbara in Sudan, Atbara was owned by lawyer John Burkinshaw and designed by Regent Alfred John Bidwell, an architect who also designed Raffles Hotel and the Victoria Memorial Hall.

Atbara was purchased in 1903 by Charles MacArthur, chairman of the Straits Trading Company, who then built the neighbouring Black and White bungalow, Inverturret, at 7 Gallop Road. The French embassy and its ambassador then occupied the houses from 1939 to 1999.

With Gallop Road now an extension of the Botanic Gardens' Learning Forest, Atbara

will be converted to house the future Forest Conservation Interpretive Centre in the Gallop Arboretum, while Inverturret will be turned into the Natural History Art Gallery. Scheduled to open in 2018, the Gallop Arboretum will showcase rare and endangered regional trees, with the Interpretive Centre acting as an educational resource for forest ecology and biodiversity.

## HINDHEDE NATURE PARK

Hindhede Dr

Established in 1922 by Danish engineer Jens Hindhede, Hindhede and Company Limited operated a granite quarry on Bukit Timah Hill. Some residents can still recall the booming sounds of the dynamite used to blast granite out of the hill prior to the cessation of quarrying operations in the area in 1990.

The Hindhede Nature Park was opened in 2001, and serves as a buffer space to protect

the fragile ecosystem of the Bukit Timah Nature Reserve. It plays host to a variety of recreational activities such as hiking and bird watching, and helps to reduce the flow of visitors to the Bukit Timah Nature Reserve while shielding the reserve from the deleterious effects of urbanisation.

Hindhede Nature Park is also a well-known haven for wildlife such as the Banded Woodpecker (*Chrysophlegma miniaceum*), Common Sun Skink (*Eutropis multifasciata*) and Clouded Monitor (*Varanus nebulosus*).



The former quarry at Hindhede Nature Park, 2016  
Courtesy of National Heritage Board

## HERITAGE TREES IN BUKIT TIMAH

The Heritage Tree Scheme celebrates and protects Singapore's mature trees as green landmarks that play significant roles in community and cultural life. The scheme is managed by NParks and any member of the public may nominate a tree. The Bukit Timah area contains a large number of Heritage Trees, and the following list provides some examples of such trees.

### Mentulang Daun Lebar (*Alangium ridleyi*)

Singapore Botanic Gardens, Lawn H

This Mentulang Daun Lebar tree is thought to be part of the native population described by Ridley during his term as the Gardens' Director. During Ridley's tenure, this species was already rare and this tree is believed to be the only one of its kind left in mainland Singapore.



### Buah Keluak (*Pangium edule*)

Singapore Botanic Gardens, Lawn H

The Buah Keluak tree is native to this region and its swollen-looking fruits contain hydrogen cyanide (a poison). The poison can be removed through washing or burying the seed in ash. Buah Keluak seeds are used in Peranakan, Malay and Indonesian cuisine.



### Kayu Pontianak (*Parishia insignis*)

Bukit Timah Nature Reserve,  
along South View Path

The Kayu Pontianak is a deciduous tree and its wood can be harvested as light timber. This tree species can be found in the Andaman Islands, Thailand, the Malay Peninsula, Sumatra and Borneo. The tree usually produces flowers before its leaves appear.

### Pulai Basong or Marsh Pulai

(*Alstonia pneumatophora*)

Singapore Botanic Gardens, Lawn H



A tall emergent tree that can reach a height of 50 metres in the forest, this native species is critically endangered in Singapore, although some wild specimens can still be found in the Central Catchment and Bukit Timah nature reserves. This particular Pulai Basong is believed to be more than 160 years old.



# COMMUNITY

## KAMPONGS IN BUKIT TIMAH

The earliest known kampongs in Bukit Timah were likely to have evolved from the *bangsals* (living quarters and other facilities) of gambier plantations that were established here in the 19th century. By the late 1940s, there were numerous village clusters in this area, with some located alongside terraced houses, bungalows and apartments until the late 1980s. These are some of the kampongs that existed in Bukit Timah.

### 6th Milestone: Kampong Tempe, Kampong Racecourse and Kampong Chantek Bahru

During the 19th century, the land around present-day Jalan Haji Alias and Coronation Road West was part of the Choa Lam plantation estate owned by the Hokkien ship merchant Choa Lam Tiong. By the early 1900s, much of this land had been bought by Chettiar, a Tamil community traditionally associated with moneylending and real estate.



A Hari Raya gathering of the Malay community in Kampong Tempe, 1958  
Courtesy of Masjid Al-Huda



The villagers of Kampong Chantek Bahru, 1952  
Ministry of Information and the Arts Collection, Courtesy of National Archives of Singapore

Around 1905, a number of Javanese families began buying or renting land from the Chettiar, and set up residences in the area between Coronation Road and Annamalai Avenue. This would form the nucleus of the settlement that would later become known as Kampong Tempe. By the end of 1905, there were 12 Javanese families living here, most of whom hailed from the village of Kendal in Central Java.

Kampong Tempe was named after the fermented soybean cake known as *tempe*, after a number of families there began producing the delicacy. Rich in protein, *tempe* is a delicacy enjoyed by many in Asia. In Kampong Tempe, villagers would use the leaves of banana or teak trees to wrap packs of de-hulled soybeans sprinkled with *ragi* (a fermentation starter containing the spores of the fungus *Rhizopus oligosporus*). On festive occasions, production of this food could rise as high as 5,000 pieces a day. The village was also known as Kampong Coronation, after the nearby road.

One of Kampong Tempe's earliest settlers was Haji Alias bin Ali, after whom today's Jalan Haji Alias is named. Then a gardener at the Singapore Botanic Gardens, Haji Alias worked with Director Henry Nicholas Ridley to develop ground breaking tapping methods for the Garden's *pokok getah* ("rubber trees" in Malay). In May 1905, he bought a 14,000-square-foot plot of land from Tamil surveyor Navena Choona Narainan Chetty, who also gifted the plot of land on which Masjid Al-Huda stands today (more details about Masjid Al-Huda can be found on page 41).

Around Kampong Tempe were other settlements including the Chinese village at Jalan Lim Tai See and Kampong Banjar, near where Duchess Avenue is today. The latter village was named for its frequent floods (*banjir* means "flood" in Malay).

Azman Kassim (b. 1961), a former resident of Kampong Tempe and chairman of the Masjid Al-Huda, remembered:

*“In the 1960s and 1970s, most of the children around here would go to either Duchess Primary School or Farrer Primary School. We walked to school, so you would go past other villages like Kampong Banjir or meet people from the other kampongs at school.*

*“The Chinese temple at Jalan Lim Tai See (Hoon San Temple) had opera shows during festivals, and after prayers at the mosque, we Malays liked to go watch these operas even though we didn’t understand them! The actors would be flying across the stage and we would shine our torchlights at them. When they sold cheng tng (‘clear soup’ in Hokkien, a sweet dessert with gingko, longan, barley and other ingredients), the Malays would be lining up as well.”*

The community in Kampong Tempe also came together to build the former Madrasah Bustanul Arifin in 1945. Students at this now-defunct religious school were trained in Islamic studies, Arabic, Malay, Mathematics and English.



*Kampong Chantek Bahru, 1986*  
Courtesy of National Archives of Singapore



*Halfway House night club and restaurant, 1975*  
Courtesy of Urban Redevelopment Authority



*Bukit Timah Village, 1912*  
Courtesy of National Archives of Singapore

Kampong Racecourse was located at the junction of Annamalai Avenue and Bukit Timah Road. While many of the residents of Kampong Tempe were Javanese, Kampong Racecourse was mainly peopled by Baweanese from the Indonesian island of Pulau Bawean. The village took its name from the Singapore Turf Club's racecourse across the road, and many of its habitants worked there as well.

Situated next to the Murnane Reservoir, Kampong Chantek Bahru was accessed via the still existing road of Jalan Kampong Chantek. The village was established in 1952 for former residents of Kampong Chantek, which previously stood on the fringes of the Bukit Brown cemetery before the land was acquired by a developer.

In Malay, *chantek* means "beautiful", and this village was said to have gotten its name after then Governor Sir Laurence Guillemard made a remark about its beauty. However, Kampong Chantek was plagued by fires caused by the flammable *lalang* grass (*Imperata cylindrica*), and the village was almost destroyed by a large fire in the 1940s.

### 7½ milestone: Bukit Timah Village

A map from 1873 shows a cluster of residences near the 7½ milestone, which later became known as Bukit Timah Village. Today, the Bukit Timah Market and the Beauty World MRT station stand in this area.

Bukit Timah Village was the most populous settlement in the area. It was also known to local Chinese residents as "Chin Huat", with the name originating from a plaque which adorned the main entrance of a nearby mansion. Owned by the Chia family, the mansion was particularly grand and had three halls built on different levels.

The Chia patriarch himself was said to have been a mandarin from the court of Qing China who married a *nyonya* (Peranakan lady) and settled here. Destroyed during World War II, the mansion was later replaced by the Halfway House night club and restaurant.

### 8th milestone: Kampong Quarry

This village, named after the nearby Hindhede Quarry, was located next to the Amoy Canning Factory and the Bin Seng Rubber Factory. The kampong stretched from Bukit Timah Road to the fringes of the Bukit Timah Nature Reserve.

Living at the edge of the nature reserve offered the residents of Kampong Quarry a number of benefits. Ros Nimi Binti Saidin (b. 1970), a former resident of Kampong Quarry, remembered:

*"Water from Bukit Timah Hill would flow down in a stream, and the water was very fresh, very cold and very nice. There was an area (to collect) this water for washing and bathing, and you would always have people washing their clothes and children playing there."*

Villagers, like Ros' brother Abdul Ghani Bin Saidin (b. 1957), also ventured into the



Kampong Quarry, 1980s  
Courtesy of Ros Nimi Binti Saidin and Abdul Ghani Bin Saidin



Kampong Quarry villagers like Abdul Ghani (pictured here) used water from Bukit Timah Hill for washing and bathing, 1970s  
Courtesy of Ros Nimi Binti Saidin and Abdul Ghani Bin Saidin



A wedding procession along the railway track, 1970s  
Courtesy of Ros Nimi Binti Saidin and Abdul Ghani Bin Saidin

nature reserve to pick fallen tree branches for firewood, catch spiders, collect honey from bee hives as well as pick coconuts.

Alongside Kampong Quarry was the railway track and it featured prominently in the daily lives of the villagers. The residents of the kampong often walked along the track to get to other places in Bukit Timah, as Abdul Ghani recalled:

*“Everyday after school, I would do marketing for my mother at the 7th milestone Beauty World market. Then, I will usually walk back home along the railway track.”*

## FLOODS

With a number of valleys sandwiched between hills such as Bukit Timah, Bukit Batok and Bukit Panjang, the Bukit Timah area is naturally flood-prone. In the past, heavy rainfall would see areas including the present-day Sixth Avenue inundated. Tellingly, a village near the 5th milestone was named Kampong Banjir (“Flooding Village” in Malay).

A canal, known as the Bukit Timah Canal, was built in the 1830s, but it often overflowed after strong downpours in the 1950s and 1960s, with floodwater levels sometimes rising to nearly one metre along Bukit Timah Road. These floods caused major problems, as schools and shops had to close and residents had to wait on high ground for waters to subside before going about their daily routines. On a lighter note, the floods created a break for enterprising opportunists who offered services to help push stalled cars on Bukit Timah Road while charging up to \$10 for their assistance.

The situation was serious enough for the government to commence the Bukit Timah Flood Alleviation Scheme in 1966 to divert stormwater to Sungei Ulu Pandan via a new canal. This scheme helped mitigate the floods,

but installing flood prevention measures along a densely developed road proved to be a complex task even up to the 1980s.

Moreover, resources were also stretched by the need to fund other forms of infrastructure during Singapore’s early post-Independence years. As Yap Kheng Guan, a former Senior Director at the Public Utilities Board recalled:

*“In the 1960s, Bukit Timah Road and Dunearn Road were the primary trunk roads - the expressways had not been built yet - and there were schools all along the area. Each time it flooded, everything was disrupted. Something had to be done, but there was not enough money at the time. Singapore was just too poor.”*

A second phase of the Flood Alleviation Scheme was implemented in the 1980s, with the main Bukit Timah Canal widened and deepened. A second diversion canal was also constructed to carry stormwater from the Swiss Cottage area to the Kallang River. While floods still occasionally occur today, the scheme has greatly reduced their frequency and impact. The islandwide drainage system is also continually monitored and managed through regular upgrading projects.

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## ROAD NAMES

### Adam Road

This road was named in 1922 after Frank Adam, the former Managing Director of the Pulau Brani Tin Smelting Works and President of St Andrew's Society.

### Namly Avenue

This avenue was named after former Tamil landowner and philanthropist Arumugam Annamalai, who owned much of the land around the present-day Sixth Avenue.

### Rifle Range Road

This road was named after a range established in this area by the Singapore Gun Club in the 1950s. The Gun Club later moved to the National Shooting Centre in Choa Chu Kang.

### Kheam Hock Road

This road was named in 1923 after Tan Kheam Hock, who worked in banking, labour contracting,

as well as licensed opium and alcohol syndicates. Tan also served as a Municipal Commissioner and Justice of the Peace.

### Tyersall Road

This road marks the western boundary of the Singapore Botanic Gardens and was named after the former residence of William Napier, who was a co-founder of The Singapore Free Press newspaper.

### Vanda Road

This road took its name from Singapore's National Flower, the Vanda Miss Joaquim. This orchid was first bred by Agnes Joaquim in her garden at Tanjong Pagar in 1893.

### King Albert Park

The area was named after King Albert I of Belgium, after a French-Belgian bank, Credit Foncier, developed a residential estate here between 1939 and 1940.

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## FUYONG ESTATE

Developed by entrepreneur and philanthropist Lee Kong Chian in the 1950s, this 142-household estate was designed to provide affordable modern housing at a time when many in Singapore lived in overcrowded dwellings in town or in rural kampongs.

Fuyong Estate, named after Lee's hometown village of Fu Rong in Fujian, China, sat next to the neighbouring kampongs of Lorong Chamar and Chia Eng Say Road. The latter kampongs have been cleared, although the building foundations of some former kampong houses can still be seen behind Fuyong Estate today.

The streets in Fuyong Estate are named in Malay and express an ethos of progress and development that are reflective of Singapore's aspirations for self-governance

in the 1950s. Street names include Jalan Asas ("foundation"), Jalan Tumpu ("focus"), Jalan Siap ("readiness"), Jalan Tekad ("willpower") and Jalan Uji ("challenge").

The former KTM railway ran close to Fuyong, and neighbourhood children would sometimes incorporate passing trains as part of their games. Jasbir Singh (b. 1962) remembered:

*"We used to 'shoot' at the train passengers. For bullets, we used seeds with a very hard exterior. To power the wooden gun, you used rolls of rubber band."*

There were also a number of prominent residents who resided in Fuyong through the years, including former Singapore President S. R. Nathan, as well as Malay rock music icon Ramli Sarip who lived in the nearby Kampong Lorong Chamar.



*An aerial view of Upper Bukit Timah, showing National Carbon (Eastern) in the foreground and Fuyong Estate in the background, 1958*  
 Aerial photographs by the British Royal Air Force between 1940 to 1970s, from a collection held by the National Archives of Singapore. Crown copyright.



*An aerial view of Fuyong Estate, 2017*  
 Courtesy of National Heritage Board

## FORMER PRINCESS ELIZABETH ESTATE

The former Princess Elizabeth Estate stood across the road from Fuyong Estate. Completed by the Singapore Improvement Trust (SIT) in 1952, the estate was built to commemorate the 1947 marriage of the United Kingdom's Princess Elizabeth (subsequently Queen Elizabeth II) to Phillip, the Duke of Edinburgh.

The estate was funded via public donations to the Princess Elizabeth Wedding Fund, and land for the development was donated by a French-Belgian bank, Credit Foncier d'Extreme-Orient. The same fund was also used to build flats at Farrer Park.

Princess Elizabeth Estate was envisaged as a satellite town, housing workers of the many factories in Bukit Timah and their families. The first residences in the estate were single-storey Artisan Quarters, rented out from 1951 to low-wage workers including refuse collectors and road sweepers working for the municipal authorities.

There were 84 of these quarters and they were let out at an initial monthly rent of \$11, which was cheaper than the rate for other SIT quarters elsewhere. The SIT also built more than 80 two- and three-bedroom flats in the estate, which were not financed through the Princess Elizabeth Wedding Fund.

The estate provided electricity, running water and modern sanitation - amenities which were not always available in the rural kampongs of Singapore in the 1950s. There was also a community centre, a market and the Princess Elizabeth Estate School. As with most rural areas then, residents were served by private bus companies, such as the Green Bus Company (more details about early transport in Bukit Timah can be found on p. 60).

A number of companies including Castrol, Malayan Textiles, National Carbon and the Hong Kong Rope Factory established factories in the estate from the late 1950s. A factory run by Union Carbide was located between the estate

and Bukit Timah Road, with the result being that the estate was known colloquially to some as Tien Tor Long, or "Battery Factory" in Hokkien.

The SIT's successor, the Housing & Development Board (HDB), added more blocks of flats to the estate from the 1970s. Private developers also built residences at the nearby Hillview, Bamboo Grove and Popular estates. Princess Elizabeth Estate was cleared in the mid-1990s, with many residents moving to nearby HDB towns such as Bukit Batok, and the land was subsequently redeveloped for private housing.



*A Green Bus passing through Princess Elizabeth Estate, 1956*  
F W York Collection, Courtesy of National Archives of Singapore

## FORMER BUKIT TIMAH FIRE STATION

260 Upper Bukit Timah Road

Built in 1956, the now defunct Bukit Timah Fire Station was Singapore's fourth fire station after the Central Fire Station and suburban stations located in Geylang and Alexandra. It included quarters for firemen, and its distinctive streamlined, Modernist design in tan brick made it a local landmark. A coat of arms dating from the period when Singapore was a Crown Colony is still displayed on the building, which ceased operations in 2005. The site is currently leased for dining and community uses.



*Bukit Timah Fire Station, 1995*  
From the Lee Kip Lin Collection. All rights reserved. Lee Kip Lin and National Library Board, Singapore 2016.

# BUKIT TIMAH IN WORLD WAR II

## BUKIT TIMAH IN WORLD WAR II

Situated at the heart of the island, Bukit Timah was a crucial target for the invading Japanese military during World War II. The area was of strategic importance, as whoever occupied Bukit Timah would control Singapore's main water catchment areas including the Peirce and MacRitchie reservoirs as well as Bukit Timah Road, which is the main arterial road leading into the city.

In addition, the British had also installed a number of key installations such as ammunition, fuel and food depots in Bukit Timah and Bukit Panjang, and the headquarters of Malaya Command was located at Sime Road before it was relocated to Fort Canning.

Tsuji Masanobu, the Imperial Japanese Army officer who planned the invasion of Malaya

and Singapore, underscored the strategic significance of the area. In his book *Japan's Greatest Victory, Britain's Worst Defeat*, he wrote: "The last line of resistance of the city (Singapore) would be the heights of Bukit Timah. Loss of the reservoir would be fatal." Tsuji's battle plan hence called for Japanese troops to advance straight to Bukit Timah after making the crossing from Johor.

On 8 February 1942, Japanese troops landed on Singapore's north-western coast and established a beachhead. They then broke through the poorly reinforced Jurong-Kranji Defence Line, allowing the Japanese 5th and 18th Divisions to move rapidly down Choa Chu Kang Road and Jurong Road. After securing the Bukit Panjang area, the Japanese troops advanced swiftly to Bukit Timah.



Lieutenant-General Percival (first from the right) and other British officers on the way to the Ford Factory for the surrender ceremony, 15 February 1942

Quah We Ho Collection, Courtesy of National Archives of Singapore

Leading with some 50 tanks, the Japanese captured Bukit Timah Village and took over British supply depots, leaving the Allied troops with a fraction of their ammunition, fuel and food. Near Reformatory Road (now Clementi Road), a reorganised Allied defensive line managed to stem the Japanese advance. However, by dawn, the area around Bukit Timah Hill was already in the hands of the invading forces. The Japanese could have continued to advance towards the city, but their supply line was stretched and they were hindered by a roadblock near the 7th milestone (today's King Albert Park).

On 11 February, the Allied commander Lieutenant-General Arthur Percival ordered an evacuation of Malaya Command's headquarters on Sime Road at 7.45am, with the military leadership moving to a bunker complex at Fort Canning. Demoralised and disorganised, some Allied troops at Bukit Timah deserted and made their way towards the city. In their retreat, the Allied forces had set some of their fuel depots alight and clouds of black smoke hung over Bukit Timah on 11 February. Tsuji later wrote in his memoir about the Japanese takeover of Bukit Timah: "We felt assured that we had occupied Singapore for the first time when Bukit Timah was taken."

Nevertheless, an Allied counter-attack to retake Bukit Timah Village and Bukit Timah Hill was being planned, and the three artillery guns of the Johore Battery at Changi were turned 180 degrees to fire their 900-kilogram shells at Japanese troops in Bukit Timah. Tomforce, a three-battalion group, was the vanguard of this counter-attack.

Infantry units pushed towards the railway line but were repelled by Japanese troops firing from the forested areas near Bukit Timah Railway Station. Japanese aircraft were also diverted from their attacks on the city to bomb the Tomforce troops, and the air support proved critical in determining the outcomes of the battles in this area.

An Allied group with armoured cars also sought to defend Bukit Timah Road and even advanced within 360 metres of Bukit Timah Village, but were eventually forced back by heavy fire. The fighting around the junction near Bukit Timah Village along Bukit Timah Road was so fierce that the Japanese referred to the junction as *mano san saro*, loosely translated as "evil T-junction".

The 4th Battalion of the Royal Norfolk Regiment attacked the Japanese 5th Division on Bukit Timah Hill, gaining some ground before being turned back by enemy troops, aerial bombardment and artillery fire.

There was also fighting at Jurong Road, Lorong Sesuai (located within Bukit Batok Nature Park today) and Reformatory Road. The Australian 27th Brigade led an attack from the north to try to recapture Bukit Panjang, but were beaten back by the Japanese Imperial Guards and dispersed to the south and east of Bukit Timah Road. Tsuji later recollected the Allied counter-attack at Bukit Timah in his book:

*"It appeared as if the British were staking everything on [this] counter-attack. 'This is gallantry, is it not?', I said to myself, and involuntarily I was lost in admiration."*

By the late afternoon of 11 February, in an indication that the planned counter-attack had failed, Tomforce retreated towards The Chinese High School. The following day saw the Japanese take control of Kampong Racecourse and the reservoir area. Bukit Timah resident Lim Chok Fui described the aftermath of battle:

*"After we had passed the railway station (at the 7th milestone or today's King Albert Park) ... we saw the British soldiers being killed while retreating into Holland Road. Their heads and legs were cut off, leaving only the torsos which were thrown into a drain. Some of the soldiers' hands were pierced through with wires and their bodies were slashed with swords into many linear wounds. They were stripped naked and with both their hands tied, were hung on trees by the Japanese."*

*“(On 15 February 1942) On our way home to 7th milestone, we saw many dead bodies, mostly Indian soldiers, lying all over the place. Those soldiers might have been dead for two days. Their dead bodies were so swollen that they looked like water buffaloes.”*



*Gold teeth belonging to victims of the Japanese Occupation found at the 6th milestone along Bukit Timah Road, 1942*  
National Museum of Singapore Collection, Courtesy of National Heritage Board

## DALFORCE AT BUKIT TIMAH

Known as the Overseas Chinese Anti-Japanese Army by the Chinese and as Dalforce by the Allied forces, this force consisted of five companies of mainly Chinese volunteer soldiers led by Allied officers under the overall command of Colonel J. D. Dalley. Assembled just days before the Japanese landed on Singapore, the force was initially meant to be a screening group deployed mainly for reconnaissance, but was roped in for combat as the Japanese troops advanced.

One Dalforce company saw action when the Japanese landed at Kranji, while another fought alongside regular Allied troops at Bukit Timah from 10 to 11 February. Among the Dalforce troops at Bukit Timah stood Madam Cheng Seang Ho, who was in her 60s when she joined Dalforce with her husband.

Madam Cheng survived the fighting and the Japanese Occupation, while her husband was reported to have been killed by the Kempeitai (Japanese military police). After the war, Madam Cheng received a letter signed by Colonel Dalley, stating that she “fought gallantly and risked her life at the battle of Bukit Timah where her comrades died one after the other.”

## FORMER COMMAND HOUSE

17 Kheam Hock Road

Completed in August 1938, the Former Command House served as the residence of the General Officer Commanding (GOC) of the British Army’s Malaya Command. Originally known as Flagstaff House, the building was constructed to replace the former GOC residence in the Novena area, where Mount Rosie Road and Chancery Lane are today.

Flagstaff House at 17 Kheam Hock Road stood on an 11.5-acre plot of land, and cost an estimated 100,000 Straits dollars. It was designed in the Arts and Crafts style with distinctive brick arches framing its entrances. This style emerged from the United Kingdom during the 1880s and took inspiration from traditional European craftsmanship and aesthetics.

During World War II, Flagstaff House was shared by the GOC, Lieutenant-General Arthur Percival, and the British Air Officer Commanding (AOC), Air Vice Marshall C. W. H. Pulford. When the Japanese invasion of Malaya began in December 1941, Percival established the Combined Operations Headquarters of the British Army and Air Force at the nearby Sime Road Camp.

Percival commanded the Malayan Campaign from Sime Road Camp until the morning of 11 February, when the camp was evacuated following the Japanese capture of Bukit Timah. The Malayan Command Headquarters was then re-established at a bunker complex at Fort Canning.

After the end of the war and the return of the British to Singapore, Flagstaff House was occupied by British military commanders including Lord Louis Mountbatten, then Supreme Allied Commander, South East Asia Command. Following the withdrawal of the British military from Singapore in 1971, the House passed into the possession of the Singapore government and became known as Command House.



*The Former Command House, 2013*  
Courtesy of National Heritage Board

In 1970, Command House was designated the official residence of the Speaker of Parliament, but Dr Yeoh Ghim Seng was the only Speaker to reside there during his tenure between 1970 and 1989. Between 1996 and 1998, Command House served as the official residence of the President while the Istana was being renovated. President Ong Teng Cheong, who held office between 1993 and 1999 and was a qualified architect, oversaw the restoration and expansion of Command House.

The government later leased out the Former Command House for private use, and the building currently houses an educational institution. In November 2009, the Former Command House was designated a National Monument.

### **ADAM PARK AND SIME ROAD**

During the battle for Singapore, the fighting between the 1st Battalion, Cambridgeshire Regiment, and the Japanese 41st (Fukuyama) Regiment at Adam Park was among the most intense. The Cambridgeshires had arrived on the island in January 1942. With the Japanese targeting a pumping station in Thomson that supplied water to the city, the Cambridgeshires

fought house-to-house in the nearby eight hectare Adam Park estate over four days in February.

With British Prime Minister Winston Churchill writing to his military officers that Singapore should be “defended to the death”, the fierce house-to-house battles at Adam Park could have been replicated in the city and other areas if Lieutenant-General Arthur Percival had not surrendered on 15 February.

During the Japanese Occupation, the Black and White colonial bungalows of Adam Park were turned into a prisoner-of-war (POW) camp for the British and Australians, with a canteen and a chapel built at 11 Adam Park. Some prisoners interned at the camp before being transported north to work under the treacherous conditions of the Thailand-Burma “Death Railway”. Other POWs were also mobilised to build the Syonan Jinja shrine at MacRitchie Reservoir that housed the remains of Japanese military casualties.

Archaeological excavations conducted at Adam Park since 2009 have uncovered trenches and

more than 1,200 artefacts, including bullets, ammunition cartridges, gas masks, foreign coins, military insignia and beer bottles. The beer contained in these bottles was one of the few sources of hydration available to British troops given the scarcity of water supplies.

Today, the pre-war colonial bungalows still stand within Adam Park residential estate. A heritage marker at the junction of Adam Park and Adam Road provides details of the fierce defence put up by the Cambridgeshires.

Another POW camp was located nearby at Sime Road, where the headquarters of Malaya Command had previously stood. A former rubber estate, the camp held POWs working on various projects embarked by the Japanese such as the former Syonan Chureito memorial for the war dead at Bukit Batok. It also served as a transit point for internees heading to work on the Thailand-Burma "Death Railway". Crowded into former Royal Air Force buildings, both military and civilian POWs constantly suffered from malaria and typhus.



*A King's Crown, a badge of rank for British officers, was found in the garden of 16 Adam Park, 2016*  
Reproduced with permission from *Tigers in the Park* by Jon Cooper



*A collar badge from the Royal Engineers found at 8 Adam Park, 2016*  
Reproduced with permission from *Tigers in the Park* by Jon Cooper



*A colonial bungalow at Adam Park, 2017*  
Courtesy of National Heritage Board

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## BUKIT BATOK MEMORIAL

Lorong Sesuai, entrance of Bukit Batok Nature Park

Bukit Batok Hill is the site where two memorials, the Syonan Chureito and the Allied Memorial, once stood. The Syonan Chureito was a Japanese memorial built to honour the Japanese war dead during the battle for Singapore. The Japanese ordered 500 British and Australian POWs from Sime Road Camp to build the Syonan Chureito in 1942. When the Allied POWs requested a memorial for their own war dead, the Japanese granted the request and a smaller POW monument was built behind the Chureito.

The Syonan Chureito was a 12-metre-high wooden obelisk crowned with a brass cone, and bore the words "*chu rei to*", which means "the sacrifice made by the fallen soldiers". Behind it stood a small hut that housed the ashes of those killed in the battle at Bukit Timah. The Allied Memorial was a three-metre-high cross where the ashes of some of the war dead were interred.

With the surrender of Japan, local Japanese forces destroyed the Syonan Chureito and removed the cross. They also transferred the ashes of the Japanese soldiers to the Japanese Cemetery Park at Chuan Hoe Avenue. The Chureito's foundation was subsequently destroyed by returning British forces.

A heritage marker at the Lorong Sesuai entrance to Bukit Batok Nature Park commemorates the two former memorials.

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## THE BRITISH SURRENDER AND THE FORMER FORD FACTORY

351 Upper Bukit Timah Road

Completed in late 1941, the Former Ford Factory was Ford Motor Company's first car assembly plant in Southeast Asia. It was designed by French engineer Emile Brizay in the Art Deco style.

Early in the Malayan Campaign, the Allied forces assembled aircraft parts at the factory, but a number were destroyed during Japanese bombing raids, while the aircraft that were successfully assembled were flown out of Singapore in January 1942. During the Japanese invasion of Singapore, Lieutenant-General Yamashita Tomoyuki, commander of the 25th Japanese Army, made the factory his headquarters on 13 February 1942.

After seven days of fighting at various locations across Singapore, the Allied troops fell back to a perimeter around the city. With their supplies running low and the reservoirs already in the hands of the Japanese, the British made the decision to surrender Singapore on 15 February.

Lieutenant-General Arthur Percival, leading a surrender party that carried a Union Jack and a white flag, arrived at the Ford Factory at 5.30pm. His counterpart Yamashita, wary that Percival was stalling to reorganise his defences, sought to intimidate the British with a heavy military presence and an aggressive stance at the negotiating table in the factory's boardroom. Percival eventually capitulated and signed the surrender document at around 6pm, which signalled the start of the Japanese Occupation in Singapore.

During the Japanese Occupation, the Ford Factory was designated a *butai* (semi-military units or facilities) and run by Nissan Motor Co. Ltd to assemble trucks and other military vehicles. After the end of World War II, the factory was used by the British Military Administration as a repair depot for two years, before Ford Motor Company reassumed car assembly operations.

In June 1980, the company closed the assembly plant, and the building was bought by the Hong Leong Group and turned into an office complex in 1983. The historical front portion of the building was later transferred to the state in 1997, while the rear portion was demolished for private development.

In 2004, the National Archives of Singapore took over the site and started restoration works. On 15 February 2006, the site was gazetted as a National Monument and housed a permanent exhibition on the battle for Singapore and the Japanese Occupation.

In remembrance of the 75th anniversary of the fall of Singapore, a new exhibition entitled *Surviving the Japanese Occupation: War and its Legacies* was launched on 15 February 2017. The exhibition showcases events and memories surrounding the British surrender, the Japanese Occupation, and the legacies of war, including archival materials that were contributed by members of the public.



*The surrender ceremony between the Japanese and British forces at the Ford Factory, 15 February 1942*

Lim Kheng Chye Collection from Shashin Shuho, Courtesy of National Archives of Singapore



*Vehicles outside the Ford Factory, 1950s*

National Museum of Singapore Collection, Courtesy of National Heritage Board

# BURIAL GROUNDS AND SACRED SPACES

Burial grounds and sacred places of worship are sombre and reflective sites integral to a community's sense of history. Bukit Timah is no different, with mosques, temples and burial grounds providing links to the area's past. Most of these places are open to the public, but be sure to follow any instructions on appropriate behaviour and clothing when visiting them.

## ST JOSEPH'S CHURCH

620 Upper Bukit Timah Road

St Joseph's Church is one of the oldest Catholic churches in Singapore. It was originally established as a wood and attap chapel in Kranji (formerly known as "Boo Koo Kang") in 1846, and was under the charge of French missionaries from the Missions Etrangères de Paris (MEP; "Paris Foreign Missions Society" in French).



*St Joseph's Church, 2016*  
Courtesy of National Heritage Board

Its founder, Father Anatole Mauduit, moved his outpost to the present site at the 9½ milestone of Bukit Timah Road in 1852, and the church building was constructed in the following year. In 1857, he applied for and obtained permission to fully occupy the grounds on which the church currently stands.

When Father Mauduit passed on in 1858, he was buried within the church. A large granite stone was placed above his grave, which was located along the church's aisle. He was later reinterred within the burial grounds at the back of the church.

Starting from 1862, the MEP missionaries at St Joseph's returned to Kranji to re-establish a chapel, which also served as a base for the founding of a new mission station in Pontian, Johor. In later decades, the missionaries went on to establish stations in Mandai, Tuas and Yishun, all of which eventually became full churches.

Over in Bukit Timah, the grounds that Father Mauduit acquired included a sprawling rubber plantation. From the early 20th century, around 40,000 trees were planted to provide employment for parishioners living in the area.



*The burial grounds of St Joseph's Church, 2016*  
Courtesy of National Heritage Board

From the 1930s to 1960s, most of the grounds were cleared in order to establish a host of schools: the Boys' Town, St Joseph's Sino-English School (later replaced by the present-day St Joseph Church's Kindergarten), Assumption English School, Girls' Town and a convent school at Chestnut Drive (currently CHIJ Queen of Peace).

The present church building was built in the early 1960s under Father Joachim Teng, with a distinctive tower capped by a Chinese-style roof. The annual feast day to commemorate St Joseph, a tradition started in the 1870s, continues to draw thousands from Singapore and Malaysia to the church.



*A photograph of the Catholic community at St Joseph's Church, 1950*  
David Ng Collection, Courtesy of National Archives of Singapore



*St Joseph's Church and Boy's Town (on the left), 1954*  
Courtesy of St Joseph's Church

## MASJID AL-HUDA

34 Jalan Haji Alias

Masjid Al-Huda, formerly known as Masjid Kampong Coronation after the nearby kampong on Coronation Road, was constructed in 1925 to serve Muslims living around the Sixth Avenue area, including the former Kampong Tempe (also known as Kampong Coronation), Kampong Chantek and Kampong Holland. The mosque was built on land donated by Hindu landowner Navena Choona Narainan Chitty in 1905.

The mosque was originally constructed using wood and featured a multi-tiered roof similar to traditional mosques found in Java, Indonesia, thereby reflecting the Javanese heritage of the villagers of Kampong Tempe. During the early 1960s, the Muslim community in the area, including those living around Jalan Haji Alias, Jalan Siantan and Jalan Lim Tai See, raised funds for a new mosque to be built in brick and concrete.

Azman Kassim, chairman of the mosque, who was a young boy when the community in Kampong Tempe carried out a number of fundraising initiatives, remembered:

*“Those who had small businesses selling mee rebus (‘boiled noodles’ in Malay, a dish of noodles in gravy), satay (grilled meat skewers) or mee siam (‘Siamese noodles’ in Malay, a dish of thin noodles in gravy) volunteered to collect donations, and they brought collection tins as they went around selling their goods.”*



The prayer hall of Masjid Al-Huda, 2016  
Courtesy of National Heritage Board



The minbar where the imam stands and gives his sermons, 2016  
Courtesy of National Heritage Board



The original kentong used for the call to prayer is displayed in the mosque's heritage gallery, 2016  
Courtesy of National Heritage Board



Members and volunteers of Masjid Al-Huda, 1990s  
Courtesy of Masjid Al-Huda

The reconstructed mosque was completed in 1966. Later renamed Masjid Al-Huda in the 1970s, the mosque underwent renovation works in 2015 to expand its prayer hall. A heritage gallery was also installed and showcases photographs and artefacts including a *kentong* (a cylindrical drum traditionally used for the call to prayer).

Reflecting on the role of the mosque today, Azman, whose family has been involved in the management of the mosque for multiple generations, shared:

*“These days, during Ramadan, the mosque prepares the food and people come to break their fast here. In the past, however, the families would be the ones bringing their food to the mosque in the evenings. Everybody would bring different dishes and there would be a great variety of food, and it was a wonderful atmosphere.”*

*“Even though many of the former kampong residents have now moved away, they will return to Masjid Al-Huda during Hari Raya Puasa and Hari Raya Haji. We are known for our lontong (rice cakes) these days and the old kampong residents (will) come back to sit around the mosque, break fast and tell their stories.”*

### HOON SAN TEMPLE

27 Jalan Lim Tai See

Hoon San Temple (云山宫) is dedicated to the deity Lim Tai See, who was born Lin Xie Chun (1537-1604). A scholar and author who attained the high post of Tai Shi (太师) in the imperial court of Ming China, Lim was respected for his stance against corruption and

commitment to social justice. After his death, Lim was deified and Hokkien communities in Fujian, China, Taiwan and Southeast Asia built temples in his name.

The temple was built at its current location in 1902 by immigrants from Jiazhou village in Fujian. They had settled around Jalan Lim Tai See, then known to local Chinese as Ma Shan Xi (马山溪). In Mandarin, the temple’s name is Yun Shan Gong, an honorific title accorded to Lim Tai See.

Originally built in wood, Hoon San Temple was reconstructed in brick, masonry and wood in 1920. The temple was then expanded between 2008 and 2011, with its intricate frescos and painted pillar carvings restored by craftsmen from China in the *qian ci* (嵌瓷) style. This is a form of traditional architecture from south-eastern China using porcelain shards of broken bowls and vases as decorative elements.



Motifs of dragons sculpted in the *qian ci* style wrapped around the temple’s pillars, 2016  
Courtesy of National Heritage Board

Other notable features include interlocking wooden beams in the Hokkien style, as well as a set of wall murals depicting the 24 stories of filial piety that were written during the Yuan Dynasty.

Hoon San Temple was a focal point of social life for the former kampong residents living in the area. While the temple drew worshippers from the Chinese-populated villages around Jalan Lim Tai See, the frequent Chinese opera shows held on a permanent stage near the temple also attracted Malay residents from the neighbouring kampongs at Jalan Haji Alias, who enjoyed the entertainment despite language and cultural barriers.

Today, Hoon San Temple and the nearby Masjid Al-Huda continue to maintain good relations and often exchange gifts of food during special occasions such as the Lunar New Year and Hari Raya Puasa. The temple was awarded conservation status by the Urban Redevelopment Authority in 2009.



*A statue of the temple's deity Lim Tai See, 2016*  
Courtesy of National Heritage Board



*Hoon San Temple, 2016*  
Courtesy of National Heritage Board

## FONG YUN THAI ASSOCIATION COLUMBARIUM

33 Holland Link

The Fong Yun Thai Association brings together Hakkas from the Feng Shun, Yong Ding and Dabu counties in China. The association's earlier burial ground, Loke Yah Teng, was located in Tiong Bahru. In 1877, the association bought 60 hectares of land at Holland Link to establish the Yu Shan Ting burial ground. An ancestral temple was then built in 1882, and a school, Nan Tong, in 1945.

The temple is laid out in the form of a traditional Chinese courtyard and its roof is covered with traditional Chinese tile layout comprising *tong wa* (tiles with floral motifs) and *yang wa* ("drip tiles" that channel rainwater away from the building and feature the Chinese character for longevity). After the burial ground was acquired by the government in 1971, the exhumed remains were placed in the association's columbarium.



Fong Yun Thai Association Columbarium, 2017  
Courtesy of National Heritage Board

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## FORMER KERAMAT HABIB SYED ISMAIL

Previously located opposite the Former Ford Factory in the area known as Batu Lapan ("8th milestone" in Malay), Keramat Habib Syed Ismail was a folk shrine patronised by those seeking various blessings.

Devotees would sacrifice fowls, release pigeons or tie stones to the beams of the *keramat* ("shrine" in Malay) as well as donate funds to its caretaker for the upkeep of the structure. The *keramat* was significant enough

to be marked on maps in the 1950s and 1960s, and was also known as Keramat Batu Lapan to Malays and Chinese, and Eyam Malai Andavu ("ten hills" in Tamil) to Indians.

There are differing accounts about the interred occupant of the *keramat*. The speculations range from an Indian Muslim named Syed Ismail, who is said to have lived briefly in the nearby village of Kampong Merpati; to Nasoor, an Arab saint who died in the 1930s; and to Nagool, an Indian Muslim known for his virtue.

Other accounts claim that the shrine existed before Bukit Timah Road was extended to this area in 1843, and protected early settlers from roaming tigers. When interviewed by *The Straits Times* in 1938, the caretaker, a Bengali named S. Fareed, claimed that he was 142 years old and had 11 wives. It is likely, however, that the newspaper had failed to distinguish between the Gregorian and Islamic (Hijri) calendars.

During the Japanese invasion of Singapore, Keramat Habib Syed Ismail was not damaged during the barrage of Japanese bombing raids and the fierce artillery and infantry battles that raged. The fact that the shrine escaped unscathed was taken as confirmation of its sacred status by its devotees. However, the *keramat* later fell victim to redevelopment, and when exhumed in 1992, the grave was found to be empty.

Urban legends also conflate Keramat Habib Syed Ismail with a large rock, a well and a "waterfall" nearby, where Syed Ismail is said to have meditated. No natural waterfall is known to have existed in the area, but these stories may refer to a spring or water feature near the Singapore Quarry in the present-day Dairy Farm Nature Park.

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## BUKIT BROWN

Located near the 4th milestone of Bukit Timah Road, this area was named after George Henry Brown, a ship owner who settled in Singapore in the 1840s and whose place of residence was formerly located here.

In 1872, Hokkien businessmen Ong Kew Ho, Ong Ewe Hai and Ong Chong Chew purchased 211 acres of land at Bukit Brown, with the intention to establish a village, farms and a burial ground for the low-income members of the Ong clan. These plans did not materialise and the land was eventually used for the Seh Ong Cemetery. The Hokkien Huay Kuan's Lao Sua and Kopi Sua cemeteries ("Old Hill" and "Coffee Hill" respectively in Hokkien) were also located in this area.

In 1919, the colonial government acquired 213 acres at Bukit Brown from the Seh Ong Kongsi to establish a municipal cemetery as the lack of public burial grounds for the Chinese community had become a pressing issue. Among those who had petitioned for a Chinese public burial ground were community leader Dr Lim Boon Keng and Municipal Commissioners Tan Kheam Hock and See Tiong Wah. Under the colonial government, the cemetery catered to a wider segment of Chinese community regardless of one's clan or dialect group.

The rolling slopes of Bukit Brown provided a perfect setting for Chinese graves, as hills were preferred burial sites in accordance with geomancy principles. A number of the graves at Bukit Brown feature the throne-shaped Southern Chinese tomb that usually includes various inscriptions and ornamentations, with a "horseshoe"-shaped wall cut into a hillside at the rear.

Some of the ornamentations on these tombs include lions, phoenixes, dragons and deities such as the Door Gods and the Earth Deity. Auspicious symbols and sayings are commonly inscribed as well. A significant number of graves, including the well-known tomb of Ong Sam Leong, feature statues of Sikh guards.

Prominent individuals buried in Bukit Brown include towkays (respected Chinese businessmen) and community leaders such as Chia Ann Siang and Chew Boon Lay, after whom Ann Siang Hill and Boon Lay are named respectively, and Nanyang University founder Tan Lark Sye.

Members of the working class are also buried here, including Low Nong, a rickshaw puller who was killed during a clash between Hockchew rickshawmen and the police during a public demonstration in 1938. His funeral saw a procession of 3,000 mourners marching down Bukit Timah Road, and his tomb was paid for by fellow rickshaw pullers.

During World War II, members of the Chinese community killed during Japanese bombing raids were buried at Bukit Brown, although wartime conditions dictated their burial in communal trench graves. This practice of trench burials continued throughout the Japanese Occupation, but finally ceased in March 1946.

Some of the graves in Bukit Brown are arranged in family clusters, with husbands often buried together with their wives. During the annual Qing Ming Festival (a traditional Chinese festival known as "tomb sweeping day"), families visit the graves of their ancestors, clean the tombstones and lay offerings.

While Bukit Brown was almost void of trees in the 1950s, a secondary forest has since emerged, making the cemetery a verdant and peaceful green lung rich in biodiversity. The endangered Straw-headed Bulbul bird (*Pycnonotus zeylanicus*), as well as wood owls, parakeets, cuckoos, orioles and kingfishers are among the 85 resident and migrant birds spotted here.

The municipal cemetery closed in 1973 and was left relatively untouched until the 2010s. Since 2013, over 3,700 tombs were exhumed to make way for a new road linking MacRitchie Viaduct to Adam Road. The southern part of Bukit Brown, near the Old Police Academy, has also been slated for housing development.

Today, walking tours are often organised by various Bukit Brown enthusiasts, and a surge of public interest in the cemetery's heritage has given rise to a number of prominent graves highlighted by social historians.

# EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

**B**ukit Timah is distinguished by the presence of educational institutions that are integral to the history of the area as well as the wider history of Singapore. Early schools in the area trace their origins back to the 19th century when Christian missionaries sought converts among gambier planters, while village schools such as the former Seh Chuan High School (now Shuqun Primary and Secondary schools and relocated to Jurong) reflected the importance rural communities placed on education.

The Chinese High School, now Hwa Chong Institution, prides itself on its strong tradition of Chinese education. Its students, like those of other former Chinese middle schools, played a crucial role during Singapore's road to self-government in the 1950s. The former Raffles College was Singapore's second institution of higher learning and led to the establishment of today's National University of Singapore.

With the exception of tertiary institutions, please note that most schools are not open to the public for security reasons.

## PEI HWA PRESBYTERIAN PRIMARY SCHOOL

7 Pei Wah Ave

One of the oldest schools in the Bukit Timah area, Pei Hwa was established as the "free school at the end of the horse carriage road" in 1889. The road in the question was Bukit Timah Road, which was also known to local Chinese as *beh chia lor*, literally "horse carriage road" in Hokkien. The school was founded by the Chinese Christian Church (now Glory Presbyterian Church), and was located near the church's compound at the 7th milestone of Bukit Timah Road (present-day King Albert Park).

With the church's congregation comprising largely of Teochews living and working in the area's many plantations, the school's medium of instruction was naturally Teochew. This changed to Mandarin in 1918, following educational reforms in China in the early 20th century. The institution was renamed Pei Hwa School in 1922.

The school building at 7 Pei Wah Avenue was rebuilt in the late 1980s and early 2000s, while its present-day name, Pei Hwa Presbyterian Primary, was adopted in 1995 to reflect the school's affiliation with the neighbouring Glory Presbyterian Church.



Pei Hwa Presbyterian Primary, 2016  
Courtesy of National Heritage Board



Pei Hwa Presbyterian Primary, 1988  
Courtesy of Urban Redevelopment Authority

## THE CHINESE HIGH SCHOOL (NOW HWA CHONG INSTITUTION)

661 Bukit Timah Road

The Chinese High School was founded as the Nanyang Overseas Chinese Middle School (南洋华侨中学) on 21 March 1919. The school at 15 Niven Road was the first in Singapore to offer Chinese-medium education at the secondary level. It had an initial enrolment of 78 boys under the charge of four teachers.

The driving force behind the school's establishment was industrialist Tan Kah Kee. Having founded more than 30 schools in Singapore and China, Tan led the fundraising for Chinese High, obtaining a donation of 100,000 Straits dollars from "Sugar King" Oei Tiong Ham and a loan of 700,000 Straits dollars from the Chinese Commercial Bank. The school's operational costs were met by Tan and other leaders in the Chinese community, the Chinese Chamber of Commerce, as well as ongoing public donations.

In 1925, the school moved to its present location, then a former rubber estate near the 5th milestone of Bukit Timah Road. The

school building was designed by architectural firm Swan & Maclaren, Singapore's oldest architectural firm. It incorporated many Neo-Classical architectural elements, including a symmetrical layout, Ionic columns, and arched doorways and windows.

In 1934, businessman and philanthropist Lee Kong Chian took over the chairmanship of the school board from his father-in-law Tan Kah Kee. Under Lee's charge, which lasted until 1955, Chinese High became the first Chinese school in Malaya to have its own laboratories for science education. The Kuo Chuan Science Building, built in 1940, was named after Lee's father and still stands today alongside the school's original building with its clock tower.

During the Japanese Occupation, Chinese High was used by the Japanese army as its headquarters and as the Southern Regions Military College. After the close of World War II, the British Military Administration was headquartered in the school.

Chinese High reopened in October 1946 with an enrolment of about 800 students. In the aftermath of the war when resources



*The Chinese High School Clock Tower Building, 2016*  
Courtesy of National Heritage Board



*The Chinese High School, 1980s*  
National Museum of Singapore Collection, Courtesy of National Heritage Board



*Chinese High School students conducting experiments in the school's laboratory, 1940s*  
Courtesy of National Heritage Board and Hwa Chong Institution

were scarce, students relied on textbooks donated by universities from across the British Commonwealth and the United States. The students themselves also formed committees to oversee the daily functions of the school, such as the provision of meals and extra-curricular activities.

In the 1950s, the students of Chinese High emerged on Singapore's political stage together with those from other Chinese schools such as Chung Cheng High. Some turned to activism to address socio-economic inequalities within colonial society. This was because, compared to English schools, Chinese schools were under-funded and neglected

by the colonial government. One particularly strong grievance held by graduates of Chinese schools was the fact that their qualifications were not widely recognised, resulting in limited employment prospects.

Resentment towards the colonial government came to a head on 13 May 1954, when some 1,000 Chinese students headed to Fort Canning Hill to present a petition against military conscription to the governor. The legislation would have affected the students' preparations for their senior examinations, and would also have further delayed their expected date of graduation, which had already been disrupted by the Japanese Occupation. Midway, the march turned violent, leaving 26 people injured and 45 students arrested. Some 2,000 Chinese High students then staged a 22-day hunger strike to decry police violence. The incident also saw involvement from trade unionists and students from English-medium institutions including Raffles College who supported the Chinese students.

This incident was a stark manifestation of growing anti-colonial sentiment in 1950s Singapore. It was also significant for being the first violent public clash between Chinese school students and the police. Historically, this marked the emergence of an incipient political consciousness during a time when various conceptions of post-colonial Singapore were being debated.

Following the incident, the students sought legal representation and contacted with lawyer Lee Kuan Yew, one of the founders of the People's Action Party (PAP) and later Singapore's first Prime Minister. The alignment of the student and union movements helped the PAP garner popular support, and was a critical factor in propelling the party into government in 1959.

After the turmoil of the 1950s and 1960s, Chinese High forged ahead to cement its reputation as one of Singapore's leading educational institutions. In 1978, it was one of the first nine schools to operate under the

ambit of the Special Assistance Plan (SAP), a government programme designed to train students to be effectively bilingual. The schools were to teach in English (Chinese High had moved to English-medium instruction for science and mathematics some years earlier), but maintain their high standards of instruction in the Chinese language.

In 1988, Chinese High was amongst the first schools to attain independent status, which gave the institution greater control over its curriculum and administration. In 2005, the school merged with the neighbouring Hwa Chong Junior College to form Hwa Chong Institution (HCI). Today, as a premier SAP school, HCI's role is to develop bicultural leaders in Singapore, and also widen the local Chinese language talent pool.

Chinese High is also noted for having employed four of Singapore's pioneer artists - Liu Kang, Chen Wen Hsi, Cheong Soo Pieng and Chen Chong Swee. The four are among the artists closely associated with the Nanyang Style, an artistic movement that fused Chinese painting traditions with European art styles to depict local subject matter.

The Chinese High Clock Tower Building has been a landmark of Bukit Timah since its completion in 1925. Encompassing a large hall, classrooms and offices, the building's most prominent feature is its 36-metre clock tower, which has a cupola sitting on eight Ionic columns at its summit.



*The Chinese High School, 1960s*  
Courtesy of National Heritage Board and Hwa Chong Institution

The clock tower was used by the British as an artillery observation post during World War II, as it commanded a sweeping view of the surroundings. On each of the tower's four faces is a timepiece which was restored in later years as the original clock had been destroyed during the Japanese Occupation. In 1999, the school's Clock Tower Building was gazetted as a National Monument.

### **FORMER RAFFLES COLLEGE (NOW NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF SINGAPORE BUKIT TIMAH CAMPUS)**

469 Bukit Timah Road

Established in 1928 to commemorate the centenary of the founding of modern Singapore, the former Raffles College was Singapore's second institution of higher learning after the 1905 King Edward VII College of Medicine.

From 1919, funds for the establishment of the college were pledged by business leaders including sugar magnate Oei Tiong Ham, Jewish businessman Sir Manasseh Meyer, rubber and tin merchant Eu Tong Sen, the Sultan of Johor and the Straits Trading Company.

The colonial government also undertook to fund two million Straits dollars for the college's endowment fund, a million Straits dollars for its construction as well as 50,000 Straits dollars for its annual upkeep. The government also carved out land from the former Economic Gardens (now part of the Singapore Botanic Gardens) for the construction of the college.

An architectural competition for the design of the college was advertised throughout the British Empire, which was eventually won by Cyril Farey and Graham Dawbarn from London. Their design was inspired by early European universities, with campus buildings and their covered walkways opening out to quadrangles shaded by greenery.

The layout of Raffles College also reflected then-emerging design principles for buildings in the tropics. The complex was positioned towards the north-west to capture natural



*The former Raffles College, 2016*  
Courtesy of National Heritage Board

light and cross-ventilating breezes, while roofs were steeply pitched with deep eaves and water spouts to accommodate heavy rainfall.

The walkways were generously shaded, even as their monumental arches allowed sunlight into lecture rooms. The college also featured the use of then-modern reinforced concrete, with the domes of the lecture halls of the Arts and Science departments serving as early examples of large-span reinforced concrete structural design in Singapore and Malaya.

The college was completed in 1928 at an estimated cost of 1.5 million Straits dollars. Classes commenced on 21 June that year with the first cohort of 43 students. The first president of Raffles College was Sir Richard Olaf Winstedt, the Straits Settlements' Director of Education who was also a member of the former Legislative Council. The college offered three-year diplomas in the Arts or Science, with the top two graduates of each cohort earning positions in the Straits Settlements Civil Service from 1934.

During World War II, academic activities were disrupted and the college was used as a headquarters by the Medical Auxiliary Service, which treated casualties of Japanese bombing raids. After the fall of Singapore, the Japanese military occupied the college grounds, adding a two-storey building and extending the northern end of the Eu Tong Sen Building.



*Yang di-Pertuan Negara Yusof Ishak (second from the left), in his capacity as Chancellor, visiting the University of Singapore (now NUS), 1965*  
Ministry of Information and the Arts Collection, Courtesy of National Archives of Singapore

With the end of the war, Raffles College reopened on 10 October 1946. The following year, the Carr-Saunders Commission recommended the merger of Raffles College and the King Edward VII College of Medicine to form the University of Malaya on 8 October 1949.

The University of Malaya was a major component of the United Kingdom's decolonisation strategy in Malaya and Singapore, with the Carr-Saunders Commission recognising that the university could contribute towards ensuring "a higher standard of living, a broader culture, a closer integration of the people and a greater measure of self-government". Of the 643 students enrolled in the university in its first year, 237 were from Singapore with the rest coming from other parts of Malaya and Sarawak.

Some students lived in a nearby estate of 62 terraced houses, known as the Dunearn Road Hostels. Opened in 1952, the hostels provided a natural base for student political activism in the 1950s and 1960s. The University Socialist Club (USC) was formed in 1953 and included future political leaders such as James Puthukey, M. K. Rajakumar, Lim Hock Siew and poet Edwin Thumboo.

In 1954, the Dunearn Road Hostels were raided by colonial authorities after an article in the USC magazine *Fajar* was deemed to be seditious. Eight members of *Fajar's* editorial board were arrested, tried and eventually acquitted, having been defended by Queen's Counsel Denis Nowell Pritt and future Singapore Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew. The hostels were later rented out to the public, before being leased by the National University of Singapore's Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy as an accommodation complex for international graduate students.

Over at the University of Malaya, the university environment encouraged students to debate and exchange ideas. Professor Tommy Koh, Ambassador-at-Large at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, remembered:

*"I was a member of the pioneering class of law students who studied on the Bukit Timah Campus from 1957 to 1961. It was a period of intense study of the law, of interacting with, befriending and being challenged by teachers in law and other disciplines, of reading the great books, of making great friends, of debating the big issues of that time as well as the big issues of all time, of writing for, editing and selling the student newspaper, 'Fajar', and of long discussions with fellow students at the sarabat (a tea drink) stalls on Dunearn Road ..."*

*"I have very fond memories of the upper quadrangle and the trees surrounding it. The upper quad was the venue of some of most important political debates of the late 1950s and early 1960s. It was here that Lee Kuan Yew inspired the students to campaign for the People's Action Party (PAP) in 1959. The PAP's victory*



An aerial view of the former Raffles College, 1970s  
National Museum of Singapore Collection, Courtesy of National Heritage Board

*in that election was viewed by many of us on the left as a new dawn in Singapore. It was also here that the debates between the PAP and the other parties took place on the proposal to merge with Malaya to form Malaysia. On that issue, the students were split, with some favouring merger and others opposing it."*

The university, operating from campuses in Bukit Timah and Kuala Lumpur, grew swiftly during the post-war era. On 1 January 1962, the Singapore division of the University of Malaya became an autonomous institution known as the University of Singapore. Its successor, the National University of Singapore (NUS), continued to operate out of the Bukit Timah campus until it relocated to larger premises in Kent Ridge in 1986.

The Bukit Timah campus was subsequently used by the National Institute of Education and the Singapore Management University. In 2005, the NUS Faculty of Law and the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy as well as other research institutes relocated back to the old Raffles College grounds.

A number of new buildings were constructed over the years, including Block B, the Lecture Theatre, Science Tower and Raffles Hall. The aforementioned buildings are in the International Modern style. Standing in contrast to the earlier Neo-Classical buildings, they reflect a symbolic and historical departure from the colonial era. The distinctive elements here include Block B's geometric design, its gridded facade of concrete fins and a floor-to-ceiling wall of ventilation bricks as well as the modular structure of the Science Tower.

A total of six buildings have been collectively gazetted as a National Monument in 2009. They are Oei Tiong Ham Building, Mannaseh Meyer Building, Eu Tong Sen Building, Federal Building, C. J. Koh Law Library and Li Ka Shing Building (Old Arts Block). Five colonial bungalows from the 1920s that housed university staff, and the 1958 Raffles Hall, the first residential hall at the Bukit Timah campus, hold Urban Redevelopment Authority conservation status.

## FORMER SEH CHUAN HIGH SCHOOL

Before relocating to Jurong, Seh Chuan High School was sited in a building at the corner of Chun Tin Road and Jalan Seh Chuan. Established as Tuan Cheng Public School in 1925, the school sat on land donated by Cheong Chin Nam and family, descendants of Dr Cheong Chun Tin, after whom Chun Tin Road was named (more details about the Cheong family can be found on p. 73).

When it first opened, classrooms were constructed using wooden planks, zinc sheets and attap leaves, and the school even included a *wayang* stage as part of its compound. In 1958, the school was renamed Seh Chuan High School, and the school building was subsequently expanded over the decades.

In 1977, a six-storey school building was built to accommodate an increasing school population. Seh Chuan then came under the auspices of the Ministry of Education in 1982 and was reconstituted as the Shuqun Primary and Secondary schools, and relocated to Jurong in 1985. The old campus building has since been tenanted out.



*The wayang stage at Seh Chuan High School, undated*  
Courtesy of Shuqun Secondary School



*Seh Chuan High School, 1970s*  
Courtesy of Shuqun Secondary School

## NGEE ANN POLYTECHNIC

535 Clementi Road

Ngee Ann Polytechnic was founded in 1963 as Ngee Ann College. The independently-funded college was set up by Ngee Ann Kongsi to focus on technology and commerce. Temporarily located at the Teochew Building along Tank Road, the college had 311 full-time and 122 part-time students enrolled in 7 different courses.

In 1968, the college was designated a public educational institution and was renamed Ngee Ann Technical College. That same year, the college also relocated to a new campus at the 7th milestone of Bukit Timah Road, which Ngee Ann Kongsi had acquired in 1963.

The college was initially catered to the Chinese community but eventually admitted non-Chinese students in its 1971 cohort. On 19 March 1982, Ngee Ann Technical College changed its name to Ngee Ann Polytechnic. By 2014, Ngee Ann Polytechnic had expanded its campus to cater to over 16,000 students enrolled in 48 full-time courses.

## NANYANG GIRLS' HIGH SCHOOL

2 Linden Dr

Founded as Nanyang Girls' School in 1917, this institution originally occupied a shophouse at 7 Dhoby Ghaut with an inaugural cohort of about 100 students. It was established by a group of community leaders associated with the United

League of China. These leaders were inspired by China's first Provisional President Dr Sun Yat-Sen and his then-progressive views on empowering women through education.

After acquiring its present name in 1930, the school moved to King's Road in Bukit Timah the following year and established a kindergarten programme in 1934. When classes resumed



*A photograph of the "Nanyang Lake", which would sometimes form after a heavy downpour at the school's former campus at King's Road, 1980s  
Courtesy of Nanyang Girls' High School*



*Nanyang Girls' High School's school hall at King's Road, 1934  
Courtesy of Nanyang Girls' High School*



*Nanyang Girls' High School, 2016  
Courtesy of Nanyang Girls' High School*

after the Japanese Occupation, the school's cohort grew to about 1,400 students. In 1961, Nanyang Girls' adopted a system of four years of secondary schooling followed by two years of pre-university classes.

In 1978, Nanyang Primary School separated from the Nanyang Girls' High School and moved to Coronation Road. The high school became a SAP institution in 1979 and acquired independent school status in 1993, before moving to Linden Drive in 1999. This campus was designed by architect Ling Siew May, the wife of Singapore's fifth president Ong Teng Cheong and an alumnus of the school.

The school's culture is rooted in Chinese heritage and values, expressed in its motto of "Diligence, Prudence, Respectability and Simplicity", and an emphasis on moral education and community service. The Nanyang Girls' uniform of a white blouse and pleated skirt, with the school's name in Mandarin characters in red, is known informally as *hong zi* ("red words" in Mandarin) and is a key aspect of the school's heritage.

### NATIONAL JUNIOR COLLEGE

37 Hillcrest Road

In the 1960s, a number of secondary or middle schools offered pre-university classes. Established in 1969 at Linden Drive in Bukit Timah, National Junior College (NJC) was the first school to cater solely to pre-university students.

Singapore's junior colleges (JCs) were first conceptualised as "super secondary boarding schools" and announced in 1965 by then Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew. The concept was later fine-tuned and formalised in Parliament by then Minister for Education Ong Pang Boon. He envisioned JCs as institutions that would optimise teaching resources and facilities, and relieve space pressures at secondary schools. At the opening of NJC in 1969, Lee said:

*"Bright students, tutored by experienced and dedicated teachers in junior colleges should receive a rounded development. A robust constitution and*



*A flag raising ceremony at National Junior College, 1969*  
Courtesy of National Junior College



*National Junior College, 1997*  
Courtesy of National Junior College



*National Junior College, 2016*  
Courtesy of National Heritage Board

*a keen intellect are two qualities for a productive and worthwhile career. Given that extra strength of character which makes for leadership, the verve and dynamism of our society will surge upwards to new heights of achievement."*

The JCs took in students from schools of the Malay, Chinese, English and Tamil language streams, and play a part in the move towards national integration. A number of places at NJC were also reserved for students from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) countries under a government-sponsored scholarship scheme.

NJC's pioneering cohort of 572 students began classes on 20 January 1969. Unlike other pre-university students, they had the freedom to choose their subjects from a wide selection that included art, biology, chemistry, economics, English literature, geography, history, mathematics in addition to the compulsory General Paper. Lectures and tutorials were held in English and Mandarin, while NJC also offered extra-curricular activities like sports and civics and current affairs courses. The school also encouraged student participation in community and charity work.

Given that Singapore was then in its formative years as an independent nation, it was deemed critical that a strong sense of service was inculcated in students at NJC. Its first principal Lim Kim Woon articulated the institution's desire for students who were

"ready to serve the country, society and the community", who were "willing to fight for survival", and who were "ready to provide solutions to all kinds of problems" that the young country faced.

The NJC crest, a gold lion set against a red and white background was also modelled after the national flag. In 1997, NJC moved to its present campus on Hillcrest Road. Francis Lee, an NJC alumnus who studied at the institution from 1969 to 1970, remembered:

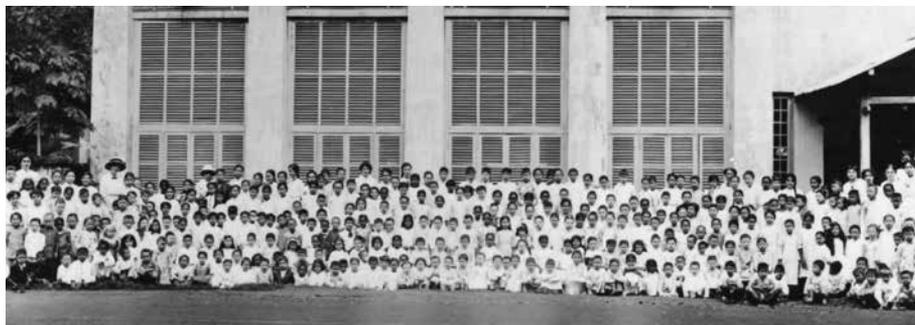
*"I left NJC filled with high hopes, great expectations, zest and passion for the future ahead. Not because of my results ... but because of what I learnt and was exposed to during my formative years."*

## **METHODIST GIRLS' SCHOOL**

11 Blackmore Dr

Methodist Girls' School was founded as the Tamil Girl's School in 1887. Established by Australian missionary Sophia Blackmore who had been assigned to Singapore by the Women's Foreign Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, the school's first classes were conducted in a shophouse on Short Street.

The school moved several times before settling at Mount Sophia in the 1930s. It subsequently relocated to its current location on Blackmore Drive in 1992, with the road leading to the school being named after its founder.



*Students of Methodist Girls' School outside the Short Street campus, 1900s*  
Courtesy of Methodist Girls' School

## ST MARGARET'S SECONDARY SCHOOL

111 Farrer Road



St Margaret's Secondary School, 2016  
Courtesy of National Heritage Board

St Margaret's School was founded in 1842 in a shophouse on North Bridge Road, and it is the oldest extant girls' school in Singapore and the region. The institution was originally named The Chinese Girls' School by its founder Maria Dyer of the London Missionary Society.

With the school, Dyer sought to rehabilitate teenage girls removed from the indentured servant system known as *mui tsai* ("little

sister" in Cantonese). The institution was renamed St Margaret's School after Queen Margaret of Scotland in 1949, and established as primary and secondary schools in 1960, with the secondary section shifting to its own campus on Farrer Road.

## RAFFLES GIRLS' PRIMARY SCHOOL

21 Hillcrest Road

Raffles Girls' Primary School was established after its separation from Raffles Girls' Secondary School in 1959. The school was established by a committee of women who dedicated themselves to protecting and providing education for orphans and girls in poverty.

After its founding in 1844, Raffles' Girls' School (RGS) was first sited within Raffles Institution. The institution then relocated to Queen Street in 1928, before being established as primary and secondary schools in 1959. The primary school subsequently moved to Holland Grove Road before settling at its current location in 1999.



Raffles Girls' Primary School, 2017  
Courtesy of National Heritage Board

# INDUSTRY

During the early 1900s, a number of different factories established themselves in Bukit Timah due to the proximity of the railway which facilitated the transport of goods and materials. For instance, a brickworks operated near the 6th milestone (near today's Sixth Avenue Centre), while the factory of the Australian Hume Pipe company was based in Bukit Timah in the 1920s.

Rubber processing factories also operated in the area and complemented the rubber plantations which had taken the place of Bukit Timah's early gambier industry. These plantations included the Khoo Chong Seng Estate near present-day Eng Neo Avenue, the Chasseriau Estate which stretched to Bukit Tinggi as well as Kilburn Estate near Dairy Farm.

## DAIRY FARM NATURE PARK

100 Dairy Farm Road

In 1929, the Cold Storage Company established a farm with pig and cattle sections at the 9¼ milestone of Bukit Timah Road, where the Dairy Farm Nature Park stands today. The 24-hectare farm was the company's second after its first farm venture down the road at the 6½ milestone in 1926, which housed pigs bred for the European palate.

Around 1930, Cold Storage redeveloped the 9¼ milestone farm into a dairy farm and focused on milk production. Named the Dairy Farm Estate, the farm was started to provide a regular supply of milk for Singapore's European community. During that time, the dairy industry in Singapore was dominated by Indian cattle farmers, and many Europeans regarded the quality of their milk as inferior.

The Dairy Farm Estate imported Friesian cattle from the Netherlands and Australia and later added Ayreshire Guernsey and Illawarra cows. These cows were kept clean with portable

vacuum cleaners and daily baths laced with disinfectant, and were milked thrice daily with an automated milker.

The company also experimented with housing cows in air-conditioned pens, and in 1938, the company bred, via artificial insemination, the first Friesian calf born in Singapore. A year earlier, Cold Storage entered a partnership with the San Miguel Corporation of the Philippines to introduce the Magnolia brand of milk and ice cream, which remains a household name in Singapore today. The Magnolia Dairies Complex at Dairy Farm also began producing butter in the 1960s.

By the 1970s, dairy farming in Singapore was no longer economically viable and Cold Storage thus sought to redevelop the area into a residential estate. However, these plans eventually fell through when the government acquired the land in 1976. Dairy Farm Estate subsequently closed in the following year.



*A farmer with his cattle at Dairy Farm Estate, 1962*  
Courtesy of National Archives of Singapore



*Dairy Farm Estate, 1962*  
Courtesy of National Archives of Singapore



*Dairy Farm Nature Park, 2016*  
Courtesy of National Heritage Board



*One of the jogging trails in the Dairy Farm Nature Park, 2016*  
Courtesy of National Heritage Board

In 2007, the site was developed into the Dairy Farm Nature Park by the National Parks Board (NParks). The park includes the Wallace Education Learning Laboratory, established in one of the farm's former cowsheds. A long, symmetrical building, the Dairy Farm cowshed is the only one of its kind known to be still standing in Singapore. A single-storey, black and white timber farmhouse raised on masonry piers also remains.

The two above-mentioned buildings have been accorded conservation status by the Urban Redevelopment Authority in recognition of their heritage. In addition to these conserved buildings, the park also includes forested areas, a former quarry turned into a wetland, a mountain biking trail and high ground frequented by recreational climbers.

## FACTORIES

In the decades before World War II, a number of rubber processing factories were located in Bukit Timah. One of these, the Lam Choon Rubber Factory (located where Bukit Timah Plaza stands today), was converted into a soy sauce factory during the Japanese Occupation.

The above-mentioned factory was run by Noda Shoyu Kaisha, the predecessor of today's Kikkoman Corporation. It was managed by Japanese civilians and employed local Chinese, Malay and Indian workers. The soy sauce produced was sold only to Japanese military forces and civilians in the region, and not available in shops for the public.

Robert Chong (b. 1925), who worked in the factory's carpentry section earning 400 dollars in Japanese Occupation currency each month, recalled:

*"(Noda Shoyu) was the main supplier of (Japanese) soy sauce in Malaya in those days. It was a first class sauce, all produced and done by our people here ... the majority of the job was done by locals.*

*"Most of (the workers) lived nearby and we knew each other before the war. So they all go there to work because (Noda Shoyu had) better benefits - more rice ration, everything. You get plenty of*

*rice, double the ration I used to get at (my previous company). Fortnightly you get two bottles of soy sauce, first class quality ... if we don't need it, we can sell it off in the black market.*

*"They also (gave workers) cooked rice in addition to your monthly rice ration... so you can take home and eat. Rice was a very important thing to everybody during the Occupation.*

*"(The Japanese management were) vastly different from military personnel. There's no slapping, no yelling and cursing or using vulgar language. Most of them could speak English and Malay ... they treated us well and gave good rations, food, everything."*

From the 1950s, the Bukit Timah area became one of Singapore's industrial hubs, with factories manufacturing a variety of industrial and consumer goods being established. Alongside rubber processing mills, there were factories producing bitumen and asphalt products, processing gases such as acetylene, nitrogen, compressed air and oxygen for industrial use; manufacturing wires and metalwork products; and churning out chewing gum, batteries, ropes and pipes.

The Yeo Hiap Seng and Amoy Canning factories turned out canned meat, fruit and vegetables as well as soft drinks including the once popular Green Spot. Other notable companies that



*An aerial view Bukit Timah Road, showing the 7th milestone where the former Yeo Hiap Seng factory was located (on the left), 1957 Aerial photographs by the British Royal Air Force between 1940 to 1970s, from a collection held by the National Archives of Singapore. Crown copyright*



Then Minister for Finance Goh Keng Swee and then Malaysian Minister for Commerce and Industry Lim Swee Aun touring the Ford Factory at Bukit Timah, 1964  
Ministry of Information and the Arts Collection, Courtesy of National Archives of Singapore

established factories in the area included the General Electric Company, Ford Factory, Hume Industries and Lam Soon Rubber.

These factories served as landmarks of Bukit Timah Road, especially the Yeo Hiap Seng factory which was sited at the 7th milestone where King Albert Park stands today. Naval architect and heritage blogger Jerome Lim (b. 1964) remembered:

*"The 7th mile marker was where the Yeo Hiap Seng drink manufacturer's factory once stood, and it was where a passenger (of the then-KTM trains) could see right through the squatter shacks which were very close to the (railway) tracks by the factory."*

The concentration of factories and their population of workers meant that Bukit Timah was often the scene of industrial unrest in the 1950s and 1960s when workers expressed their discontent with employment conditions and remuneration.

Many workers allied themselves with left-leaning trade unions harbouring political ambitions, although others were mainly concerned with industrial-labour relations. There were frequent strikes and protests, with demonstrations in the Bukit Timah area often drawing thousands of workers and students.

Union leader Eric Cheong, who later became a Member of Parliament, recalled participating in strikes in Bukit Timah in the 1960s:

*"(Bukit Timah) was a hotbed (of union activism). The whole row in Bukit Timah starting from (General Electric Company), William Jacks, Jardine, Industrial Gases, Hume, Yeo Hiap Seng, Green Spot ... and there was a rubber factory also and Rothmans, the cigarettes factory... (The factory workers) were all agitating to join unions."*

Following a period of frequent industrial strife and intense negotiations behind the scenes, labour relations eventually eased once workers felt that their demands were met and more equitable working conditions were instituted.

Over the years, as Bukit Timah evolved into a residential area, many of the area's factories relocated to other parts of the island, or were simply shuttered as labour-intensive and lower-value added industries were gradually phased out.

## TRANSPORT

With the completion of the Singapore-Johor Railway in the early 20th century, goods and materials were easily transported northwards towards Malaya as well as southwards towards Singapore's town centre. The railway was thus an important factor in the development of Bukit Timah as an industrial hub, as earlier means of transport, such as the bullock cart, were not economically viable (more details about the railway can be found on page 7).

Bukit Timah also developed into a transport hub offering passengers a variety of transport options. The Green Bus Company (established in 1935 as the Rochor Bus Company) was one of several local bus companies providing transport into Singapore's rural interior, and had a depot and workshop at King Albert Park. In the 1950s, the company ran six routes, including five from its terminal

at Queen Street, that were traversed by a fleet of Vulcan buses imported from the United Kingdom.

The most profitable route, traversed by Bus No. 5, started from Queen Street in Rochor and wound through Bukit Timah before terminating at the former Princess Elizabeth Estate. Ong Bee Geok, a descendant of Green Bus founder Ong Chin Chuang, remembered:

*"Rides started at five cents. The most expensive ticket was priced at 50 cents, to Johor Baru."*

In April 1971, the government amalgamated the Green Bus Company, the British-owned Singapore Traction Company and other Chinese-owned bus companies into three public bus companies to allow for better route management. In a subsequent restructuring of the bus industry, all the companies were merged and became Singapore Bus Services (SBS, now SBS Transit) in 1973.



*A close-up of one of the buses owned and operated by the Green Bus Company, undated  
Courtesy of Patrick Ong*



*The Green Bus Company bus depot at King Albert Park, undated  
Courtesy of Patrick Ong*

## QUARRIES

In the 19th century, the colonial government was aware of the presence of granite at Bukit Timah. However, the costs of transporting the stone with carts pulled by hand or with bullocks proved prohibitive until the Singapore-Johor railway was completed in 1902.

The opening of the railway in Bukit Timah kick-started the quarrying industry in the area. Newspaper reports from *The Straits Times* indicated that the colonial government made arrangements to set up a municipal quarry at Bukit Timah Hill by March 1902. Quarries at Bukit Batok, Bukit Gombak, Bukit Panjang and Mandai, which were mostly owned by Chinese and European entrepreneurs, were also established.

In the early 1900s, the English public works contractor Topham, Jones & Railton, known for constructing harbours and docks across the British Empire, operated a quarry at Bukit Timah. The stone mined from the quarry was used in the construction of the King's Dock at Keppel Harbour, where wooden wharves were replaced with concrete. Other infrastructural projects that used granite from Bukit Timah included the Causeway, the Singapore-Johor railway and other roadworks.

The demand for granite grew over the following decades, and private companies and the former Rural Board continued to open quarries in the area well into the 1950s. A number of roads in Bukit Timah were in fact named after quarry owners such as construction businessman Chia Eng Say and Danish engineer Jens Hindhede.

The environmental effects of quarrying quickly became evident even in the early years of granite quarrying. In his 1909 report, the Straits Settlements Conservator of Forests A. M. Burn-Murdoch noted that "the Bukit Timah reserve has sustained great damage owing (to) the opening of granite quarries". The deleterious effects of the quarries included

the destruction of natural habitats, soil erosion, changes in the area's hydrology and alterations to the climate of the Bukit Timah Nature Reserve.

Today, there are three former quarry sites that can still be found in Bukit Timah: the Hindhede Quarry in the nature reserve, and the Singapore Quarry and Dairy Farm Quarry in Dairy Farm Nature Park. The Dairy Farm Quarry ceased operations in the 1970s, while the Hindhede Quarry closed in 1990, some 40 years after its closure was recommended by a commission established to protect the reserve.

The quarries have since been rehabilitated by NParks and integrated with the respective parks and reserves in which they are situated. The Hindhede Quarry and Singapore Quarry have been filled with rainwater, and are now



*Workers at a granite quarry in Bukit Timah, 1957*  
Wong Kwan Collection, Courtesy of National Archives of Singapore

functioning as wetland habitats. The Dairy Farm Quarry was filled in and is now used by recreational rock climbers while supporting mountain biking and hiking trails.



*The former Singapore Quarry at Dairy Farm Nature Park, 2016*  
Courtesy of National Heritage Board

# LEISURE

Places of recreation in Bukit Timah range from recreational clubs to shopping centres, and reflect the diversity of people that have made this area home. The leisure pursuits of expatriates during the colonial era are reflected in the presence of European clubs such as the Swiss Club, while the Singapore Racecourse hosted the sport of kings – horse racing.

The former Beauty World offered a plethora of goods which attracted patrons from a wide cross-section of society, while later shopping centres and eating destinations such as Coronation Plaza and Serene Centre continue to remain focal points for commerce and social life.

## SWISS CLUB

36 Swiss Club Road; please note that only Swiss Club Members and accompanying guests have entry into the club

The Swiss Club is one of the oldest recreational clubs in Bukit Timah. Established as the Swiss Rifle Shooting Club of Singapore in 1871, the club initially held its shooting activities in forested areas in Balestier. After purchasing a plot of

land near the coffee and tapioca plantations of the Chasseriau Estate, the club established a new clubhouse at Bukit Tinggi along with a 300-metre-long shooting range in 1902.

In 1909, the building was destroyed in a fire, and a new clubhouse was constructed in the same location in 1926. Besides a new range, the reconstructed club also featured a swimming pool, a bowling alley and facilities for members to socialise.

During the early 1900s, club members petitioned for a railway station, and the former Holland Road Station was eventually built near Swiss Club Road. From the railway station, members could proceed to the club via bullock cart or on foot. The station closed in the 1930s when the original Singapore-Johor Railway line was diverted.

The grounds on which the Swiss Club is sited has since grown to encompass the Swiss, German, Dutch and Korean international schools, the British Club, the Institute of Engineers as well as the Swiss Embassy.



*The entrance to the Swiss Rifle Shooting Club, 1910s*  
National Museum of Singapore Collection, Courtesy of National Archives of Singapore

## FORMER RACECOURSE AT BUKIT TIMAH

Turf Club Road

Bukit Timah figures prominently in the history of horse racing in Singapore as it hosted the Singapore Turf Club Racecourse from 1933 to 1999. In the late 1920s, the Turf Club purchased land that was part of the then Bukit Timah Rubber Estate and relocated from its Farrer Park racecourse.

With 244 acres of land purchased for nearly three million Straits dollars, some 30,000 rubber trees were cleared and hilly areas flattened for a main track, a secondary fast-work track and practice tracks, stables, a grandstand, a betting house, luncheon rooms and bungalows for club officials. The grandstand stood three stories tall, 111 metres long and 22 metres wide, with a clock tower and boxes for royalty, horse owners, the press and stewards. Two thousand teak armchairs were ordered from the United Kingdom, with the manufacturer calling it "the single largest order East of Suez".

Designed by Swan & Maclaren, Singapore's oldest architectural firm, the racecourse was opened on 15 April 1933 by then Governor Sir Cecil Clementi Smith. The governor was a racing enthusiast who rode in full regalia around the track and spoke in front of a crowd of 5,000.

The popularity of the races was evident as the Turf Club had to add 48 stables and additional tote betting machines just a year after its opening. Douglas Graham, a tourist who visited the course in 1934, wrote:

*"They took us to a meeting at the racecourse which, it is claimed, is the finest in the world. This statement I took with a grain of salt, but after seeing it I felt sure the claim was justified. The grandstand is of noble proportion, three-tiered with lifts. All the seats are cane-bottomed and most comfortable.*

*"All the betting is done on the tote on a four dollar basis. There are 24,000 members, and no one is allowed to bet unless he or she is a*



*The former racecourse at Bukit Timah, 2016*  
Courtesy of National Heritage Board



*The former racecourse at Bukit Timah, 1935*  
Courtesy of National Archives of Singapore

*member. We were made members for the day. Horses, as far as I could judge, were really first class. The crowds were practically all in the grandstand, and what a pretty picture they made - so cosmopolitan - the well-turned out European lady contrasting with the Asiatic Chinese lady with her slashed skirts, showing one leg at times quite freely, and the dainty Japanese in her best kimono."*

With World War II approaching, the racecourse was taken over by the British military in October 1941 and turned into a convalescent hospital. Obstacles were also set up on the tracks to stop enemy Japanese planes from landing. During the Japanese Occupation, the racecourse was used as a POW camp and open grounds on the site were planted with banana, papaya, tapioca and vegetables to counter the effects of food shortages.



*Queen Elizabeth II and Duke of Edinburgh Prince Philip visiting the Singapore Turf Club Racecourse during their three-day state visit to Singapore, 1972*

Ministry of Information and the Arts Collection, Courtesy of National Archives of Singapore

After the war, the Turf Club undertook restoration works and reopened the course in November 1947. The post-war race days drew crowds from Singapore and Malaya so severe that traffic jams regularly developed along Bukit Timah Road.

With admission to races and betting previously restricted to club members, the club lobbied the government to allow members of the public ticketed entry and betting. Legislation was subsequently amended to this effect in July 1960. An Apprentice Jockey Training School was established at the course by the Malayan Racing Association in 1961, and the Bukit Timah Saddle Club constructed a clubhouse, stables and other facilities on the course in 1964.

An \$18 million North Stand was opened in 1981, expanding the course's spectator capacity to 8,000 seats with additional standing room for 50,000. Betting facilities progressively



*Queen Elizabeth II and the Duke of Edinburgh Prince Philip watching a race at the Singapore Turf Club Racecourse, 1972*

Ministry of Information and the Arts Collection, Courtesy of National Archives of Singapore

became more sophisticated with a variety of bet types, and these facilities also offered live broadcasts and betting on races in Ipoh and Kuala Lumpur. With more than 3,500 workers employed by the club and living on its grounds in the 1990s, the racecourse included residential areas, a mosque and Hindu temple as well as recreational and social facilities.



*A horse race at the Singapore Turf Club Racecourse, 1972*  
Ministry of Information and the Arts Collection, Courtesy of  
National Archives of Singapore

Prominent faces on race days included the Sultan of Johor and royalty from other Malaysian states, as well as members of the colonial elite. Also present were film tycoon Runme Shaw, the first Asian chairman of the Turf Club who also ran the Shaw Stable of more than 70 horses, as well as plantation king Lim Nee Soon and his son Lim Chong Pang.

Major events hosted at the course included the Singapore Gold Cup, the Singapore Derby, the Singapore Pesta Sukan Cup and the Lion City Cup for sprinters. Another significant event, the Queen Elizabeth II Cup, was first held in 1972 to commemorate the visit of the British monarch to the Turf Club, and continues to be held to this day.

In 1999, the Turf Club moved to Kranji and the racecourse was converted into a dining and recreational complex first known as Turf City and later as The Grandstand. The Bukit Timah Saddle Club remains at Fairways Drive off Eng Neo Avenue, and offers recreational horse riding activities.

### FORMER BEAUTY WORLD

During the Japanese Occupation, food and other necessities were in short supply. Combined with rampant inflation, the public had to pay for daily necessities with stacks of Japanese-issued “banana notes”. The authorities were unable to keep up with the printing of the banana notes, and sought to combat inflation by encouraging gambling at amusement parks.

Opened in 1944, the Tai Tong Ah Sai Kai amusement park was one of the largest gambling halls in Singapore during the Japanese Occupation. The name of this amusement park means “Greater East Asia World” in Cantonese, and referenced Imperial Japan’s concept of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere.

Built on a site near the 7th milestone of Bukit Timah Road which had been cleared of attap houses bombed during the Japanese invasion,



*Sundry shops and the Tiong Hwa cinema (center) at the former Beauty World, 1972*  
Courtesy of Urban Redevelopment Authority



Stalls at the former Beauty World, 1982  
Courtesy of Urban Redevelopment Authority



A patchwork of zinc and canvas roofs covering the stalls at the former Beauty World, 1972  
Courtesy of Urban Redevelopment Authority

Tai Tong Ah took inspiration from pre-war amusement parks such as Great World and Gay World. The main attraction at Tai Tong Ah however was gambling, with *tikam* (loosely translated as “taking a chance” in Malay), *pai gow* (loosely translated as “making nine” in Cantonese), *fan tan* (“repeated divisions” in Mandarin) and other games offered at about 20 stalls.

Kartar Singh, who lived opposite the amusement park in the 1940s, remembered:

*“Crimes were rare during (the) Japanese Occupation. They chopped off heads for the smallest crime. If you won a lot of money, you just walked home in the dark with all that money. Of course, it would not have the same value the next day (due to inflation) and gamblers carried bigger or more sacks.”*

There were also a dozen coffee shops with “coffee girls” that socialised with paying customers, stalls selling consumer goods,

a photo studio, a Chinese medicine shop, *wayang* stages and the Tiong Hwa cinema. Situated in a rural area which was heavily damaged during the Japanese invasion, the amusement park shone brightly in the Bukit Timah night. Singh recalled how the place appeared after dark:

*“They didn’t call it Beauty World for nothing. It was the most beautiful sight in Bukit Timah. All around was total darkness, but this place had its own generator and every stall was brightly lit and packed with people.”*

For all of Beauty World’s glamour, however, the gambling stalls served an insidious purpose. They were not just as an anti-inflation measure, but also sought to keep the population hooked on games of chance and divert potential opposition against Japanese rule.

After the war ended, gambling was once again prohibited under the British government. The amusement park was renamed Beauty World and a market was added in July 1947, with stalls offering a dizzying array of goods under a patchwork of corrugated zinc roofs and canvas sheets.

In 1962, the facilities were extended and shophouses replete with coffee shops, provision shops and textile dealers were constructed. Other new additions included barbers, clinics and a Chinese temple. By 1976, Bee Seh Kai, as Beauty World was known in Hokkien, grew from 34 stalls in 1950 to 166 by 1976.

However, it was more than shopping that drew the crowds to Beauty World. The bars inside the amusement park lured British soldiers from their camps and bases nearby, and shopkeepers consistently faced the prospect of having their stalls wrecked either by gangsters seeking “protection money” or by brawling, drunken soldiers.

Following the withdrawal of the British military from Singapore in the 1970s, Beauty World

continued to attract patrons from a growing expatriate community which now included Filipinos, Japanese and Thais.

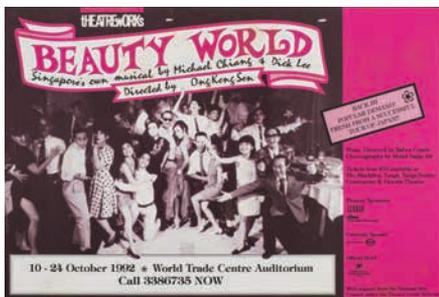
Writing in the *New Nation* newspaper in 1977, Sonny Yap described the atmosphere at Beauty World:

*“The brisk business-bustle of its congested and confusing interior could hardly be deduced from the outside where a fading signboard stands as the only clue to the first-timer. Makeshift food and market stalls camouflage its main entrance.*

*“The structural arrangement of the shops and stalls at improbable angles is an architectural marvel; metres of cloth billow above your head, over-spilling pots and pans reduce the footpath literally to a foot; and the smells, which I cannot convey through print, are hardly made more endurable by the boom-bang-boom from the record shops ... I am convinced that if I put any of the articles out of alignment, one of those structures may come tumbling down.”*



Beauty World Centre, 2016  
Courtesy of National Heritage Board



A flyer advertising TheatreWorks' production of the musical, "Beauty World", 1992  
National Museum of Singapore Collection, Courtesy of National Heritage Board

By the early 1980s, Beauty World had been ravaged by fire on five occasions and painstakingly reconstructed after each fire. The government eventually acquired the property in 1975, and the old Beauty World closed down in December 1983. The Beauty World Centre shopping mall was completed the following year to house shop owners and hawkers from the old market.

Beauty World also served as a source of inspiration for singer-songwriter Dick Lee, who lived near the area in his youth and was first exposed to pop music by the likes of Sakura Teng, Rita Chao and Dionne Warwick through the record shops in the amusement park. The vivid aesthetics of the varied shops and the goods purveyed also influenced Lee's early work in fashion.

Lee's 1985 album was titled *Return to Beauty World*, and he also wrote the lyrics and music for the 1988 musical *Beauty World*, directed by Michael Chiang. The musical was one of the first two musical productions in Singapore, and has been adapted multiple times since its first staging over the years.

## CORONATION PLAZA

569 Bukit Timah Road

Built in 1979, this shopping centre takes its name from the nearby Coronation Road. In the early 20th century, this area was part of an estate owned by Hokkien merchant Choa Lam Tiong. In 1912, the roads here, including Empress Road and King's Road, were named to commemorate the coronation of King George V of the United Kingdom the year before.

Coronation Plaza replaced an earlier row of shophouses and has three floors of shops and 20 apartments on the top level. Its location has made it a retail hub popular with students and teachers from nearby schools including Hwa Chong Institution, Nanyang Girls' High School and National Junior College. Leoel Chea (b. 1982), who attended schools in the area, shared:



Coronation Plaza, 2016  
Courtesy of National Heritage Board

*“Coronation Shopping Plaza was the landmark that signalled to me that this was the bus stop to get off to go to school. It was where I learned to play Magic: The Gathering card game and enjoyed arcade video games. It was also where my primary school math teacher brought us to learn how to compare prices in the supermarket, where I bought storybooks from the second-hand bookstore on level two, and where I looked on enviously at people eating inside Prince Coffee House as a poor student.”*

Jensrani Thangavel (b. 1956), who frequented Coronation Plaza, recalled:

*“I frequented Coronation Plaza because of the POSB bank branch there. The place was very convenient when I was a trainee teacher in 1982 at the Institute of Education (now National Institute of Education), which was located at Bukit Timah (now NUS Bukit Timah campus). Even after my posting to Dunearn Secondary School, I continued visiting Coronation Plaza for*

*my banking needs. We teachers and students also visited the supermarket to get food items for class parties. I remembered there was a flood in 1980s that destroyed the cars parked in the basement!”*

During the 1980s, some referred to the mall as “Silo”, in reference to the SILO Supermarket set up by the Singapore Industrial Labour Organisation. Resident Toddi Suhaimi (b. 1973) remembered:

*“During the flood days in Bukit Timah, there was a huge drain between my school and ‘Silo’, where most boys would catch fish or tadpoles. I remember the mall had video rental stores, computer shops, a comic store and a book store. Those were the shops we frequented the most.”*

Toddi also recalled a *kacang puteh* (nuts and snacks) seller and *mamak* (Indian-owned) shops offering ten-cent satay sticks and ice cream being located there.

## SERENE CENTRE AND CLUNY COURT

10 Jalan Serene



*Serene Centre, 2017*  
Courtesy of National Heritage Board

Today, Serene Centre stands as a typical suburban shopping mall although there was a period during the 1990s when it was best known for its comics and games shops. The area around Serene Centre and Jalan Serene, however, has a more salacious history.

During the Vietnam War, which lasted from 1959 to 1975, this area housed a “rest and recreation” (R&R) centre for American soldiers on leave from duty. The centre was

known as Serene House and included social and recreational facilities such as a pool and a nightclub where singer and actress Anita Sarawak performed in her early years.

More infamously, residents living in neighbouring houses also witnessed a flow of sex workers entering and leaving Serene House. Its notoriety earned Serene House a mention in American writer Paul Theroux’s 1973 novel *Saint Jack*, which was made into a film of the same name in 1979.

The R&R centre operated until 1970, along with other similar centres at Newton Road and Shelford Road, the latter being situated just across the road from Coronation Plaza. Serene House was subsequently converted into an apartment complex.

Next to Serene Centre lies a cluster of shophouses known as Cluny Court. Constructed in 1928, these shophouses are conserved by the Urban Redevelopment Authority and feature ornate decorative elements, including fluted columns, bas-relief and patterned tiles which are distinctive of shophouses from 1900 to 1940.



*Cluny Court shophouses, 2016*  
Courtesy of National Heritage Board

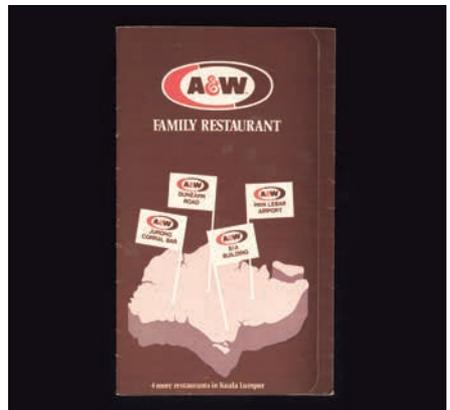


Cluny Court shophouses, 1988  
Courtesy of Urban Redevelopment Authority

### A&W ON DUNEARN ROAD

During the 1960s and 1970s, the A&W outlet located at Dunearn Road was a popular dining destination. The Dunearn Road outlet featured steeply-pitched roofs and a drive-in for takeaways. Located in close proximity to the then University of Singapore and other educational institutions, it was also often filled with students.

While Western food had long been available in Singapore, A&W brought hamburgers, hot dogs and fries to the mass market. Some of the A&W signature menu and promotional items that many remember fondly include root beer served in frosted glass mugs, and toy bears with A&W sashes.



A menu from the former A&W restaurant chain in Singapore, undated  
National Museum of Singapore Collection, Courtesy of National Heritage Board

## ADAM FOOD CENTRE

2 Adam Road

Opened in 1974, Adam Food Centre started as a gathering of open-air food stalls located by the Bukit Timah Canal next to the A&W restaurant. To facilitate the construction of a flyover, the hawkers were moved across the road to the food centre's present location, which was opened on 28 September 1974 by then Minister for Law Edmund W. Barker. In 2002, Adam Food Centre underwent upgrading and became the first hawker centre to utilise solar panels.

Today, Adam Food Centre is one of the most well-loved hawker centres in Singapore. Its most famous stall is arguably Selera Rasa, opened in 1998 by Hassan Abdul Kadir. Selera Rasa's *nasi lemak* ("coconut milk rice" in Malay), which includes *ikan bilis* ("anchovies" in Malay) and other ingredients such as chicken wings and fried fish has drawn many fans, including Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah of Brunei.

While working at Singapore's Grand Hyatt hotel, which is owned by the Brunei Investment Agency, Hassan gave the Sultan

a packet of nasi lemak to sample. The Sultan was impressed enough to suggest that he open a food stall. Selera Rasa's *nasi lemak* has also been served to Indonesian President Joko Widodo at the Istana, and the business has since expanded to include a chain of outlets.

Other popular dishes sold at Adam Food Centre include *sup tulang* ("bone marrow soup" in Malay), Indian *rojak* (a dish consisting of deep fried fritters and other ingredients), and prawn noodles, while other longstanding hawkers here include the Bahrakath Mutton Soup and Sathiyame Jeyam stalls.



Adam Food Centre, 2017  
Courtesy of National Heritage Board



Adam Food Centre, 2017  
Courtesy of National Heritage Board

## FORMER MCDONALD'S PLACE

Opened in 1991, this complex housed one of the largest McDonald's restaurants in Singapore. It also hosted McDonald's corporate headquarters and its staff training centre for Southeast Asia, known informally as "Hamburger University". The building also housed other eateries and a supermarket.

The 24-hour, 433-seat McDonald's outlet was a lure for students around the area, including those from National Junior College, Ngee Ann Polytechnic and Hwa Chong Institution. Teenagers went there to study, people-watch or meet friends. McDonald's Place closed down in 2014, and a condominium and commercial complex has since been built in its place.



*The former McDonald's Place at King Albert Park, 2007*  
Courtesy of National Heritage Board



*The former McDonald's Place at King Albert Park, 2007*  
Courtesy of National Heritage Board

## CHEONG CHIN NAM ROAD, CHUN TIN ROAD, YUK TONG AVENUE AND THAM SOONG AVENUE

In Bukit Timah, there are a number of the roads which are named after members of the Cheong family who owned land and developed residential properties in the area. These roads include Cheong Chin Nam Road and Chun Tin Road off Upper Bukit Timah Road, as well as the connecting Yuk Tong Avenue and Tham Soong Avenue.

The family patriarch, Cheong Chun Tin, was the first certified Chinese practitioner of dentistry in Singapore. Born in Hong Kong and trained in San Francisco, Cheong set up his dental practice named Cheong Chun Tin & Company on South Bridge Road in 1869. After his death in 1898, the practice was taken over by his sons, Chin Nam and Chin Heng, and re-named Cheong Brothers.

The Cheong family also owned businesses in property development and rubber plantations, and bought tracts of land in Bukit Timah. One of the major contributions the family made to the community was the donation of land for the building of Tuan Cheng Public School (now Shuqun Secondary School) in 1925. In 1964, the Cheong family started Corlison, a dental products distribution business, which later created the Pearlie White brand of toothpaste.

Adjacent to Chun Tin Road are Yuk Tong Avenue and Tham Soong Avenue, which were named after two of Cheong Chin Nam's wives. They passed away in 1952 and 1955 respectively, following Cheong Chin Nam's death in 1924.

Since the 1990s, Cheong Chin Nam Road has become known for its stretch of eateries, especially those that serve halal Malay, Indian, and Chinese dishes as well as Thai and Western cuisine. These restaurants include Al-Ameen and Al-Azhar, while Korean and Chinese eateries such as Boon Tong Kee have also opened here.

The last row of pre-World War II shophouses in the area sits on nearby Jalan Jurong Kechil. During the Japanese Occupation, the Japanese



Junction of Jalan Jurong Kechil with Upper Bukit Timah Road, late 1960s  
John C Young Collection, Courtesy of National Archives of Singapore



Chun Tin Road, 1982  
From the Lee Kip Lin Collection. All rights reserved. Lee Kip Lin and National Library Board, Singapore 2016.



Cheong Chin Nam Road, 2017  
Courtesy of National Heritage Board

military requisitioned a number of these shophouses, including 96, 98 and 100 Jalan Jurong Kechil, for use as “comfort houses”, a euphemism for a system of sexual slavery established by the Japanese across Asia during World War II.

In 2003, the even-numbered buildings on lots 76 to 100 Jalan Jurong Kechil were accorded conservation status by the Urban Redevelopment Authority, and comprise three single-storey Art Deco terrace houses and ten two-storey shophouses in the Transitional Style.

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# SUGGESTED SHORT TRAIL ROUTES

## LEISURE AND LEARNING TRAIL

2 hours; on foot

Bukit Timah consists of a number of social and leisure landmarks that are well-loved by its residents and Singaporeans. This trail covers some of these landmarks including popular eating destinations, Singapore's first UNESCO World Heritage Site as well as vital centres of research and education.



Begin your journey at the Botanic Gardens MRT station (exit A) and walk a short distance down Bukit Timah Road to **Cluny Court** which comprises a row of shophouses that houses cafes and other businesses. Built in 1928, these shophouses are conserved by the Urban Redevelopment Authority and feature ornate decorative elements, including fluted columns, bas-relief and patterned tiles which are distinctive of shophouses from 1900 to 1940.

Next, cross Bukit Timah Road to reach **Adam Food Centre** which opened in 1974. The centre started as a gathering of open-air food stalls before the hawkers were relocated to its present-day location to make way for the construction of a flyover. Here you may wish to sample the delicious *nasi lemak* ("coconut milk rice" in Malay), *sup tulang* ("bone marrow soup" in Malay) and Indian *rojak* dishes (a dish consisting of deep fried fritters and other ingredients) which this food centre is well-known for.

From Adam Food Centre, walk down Dunearn Road towards the junction intersecting Kheam Hock Road. Cross Dunearn and Bukit Timah roads, and you will reach the Bukit Timah campus of the National University of Singapore. These were the grounds of the **former Raffles College** which was established in 1928 as Singapore's second institution of higher learning.

The buildings within the campus reflect a panoply of architectural styles including Neo-Classical and International Modern, and have been gazetted collectively as a National Monument.

The former Raffles College grounds adjoin the **Singapore Botanic Gardens** which is the last stop on this trail. Established in 1859, the Gardens is Singapore's first UNESCO World Heritage Site. Through the years, the Gardens played significant roles in botanical science and conservation, and served as the springboard for economic and environmental change across the region. Within the Gardens, you can explore the large diversity of trees and plants in the Rain Forest, or take a stroll around the serene Swan Lake, constructed in 1866. You can also visit the many conserved buildings within the Gardens, including the 1868 Burkill Hall. This two-storey bungalow is the only example of an Anglo-Malay plantation-style house left in the world.

## WWII LEGACY TRAIL

1.5 hours; bus and walk

During World War II (WWII), Bukit Timah was a key target for the Japanese as the British supply depots, reservoirs and the strategic Bukit Timah Hill were all located in the area. This trail explores WWII-related sites as well as places that carry the memories and legacies of the Japanese Occupation.



Start your journey at the **Bukit Timah Nature Reserve**, which is accessible via Hindhede Drive. The reserve, established by the British in the 1880s, contains the largest tract of primary rainforest in Singapore, and also harbours a diverse range of plant and animal species. Within the reserve is the 163-metre-tall Bukit Timah Hill, which made Bukit Timah a key target for the Japanese during WWII as the hill provided a tactical vantage point for the invading forces. Despite Allied attempts to defend the hill, it was captured by the Japanese on 11 February 1942. A heritage marker near the Visitors' Centre provides more details of some of the battles fought in this area.

From the reserve, take a bus down Upper Bukit Timah Road to the **former Ford Factory**. The factory had

been the Ford Motor Company's first automobile assembly plant in Southeast Asia, before becoming Japanese Lieutenant-General Yamashita Tomoyuki's temporary headquarters during the invasion of Singapore. It was here that the British surrender to the Japanese in 1942 took place, marking the start of the Japanese Occupation. In 2017, a permanent exhibition titled *Surviving the Japanese Occupation: War and its Legacies* was launched and it showcases the events and memories surrounding the war and the Japanese Occupation.

Take a bus back down Upper Bukit Timah Road to Beauty World Centre. This shopping mall was completed in 1984 to house hawkers and stallholders from the former [Beauty World](#), located across the road. The former Beauty World was a market and entertainment hub that was established during the Japanese Occupation as the Tai Tong Ah Sai Kai ("Greater East Asia World" in Cantonese) amusement park. The Japanese authorities allowed and encouraged gambling activities at the park as a means to combat currency inflation and divert resistance to their rule. After the war, Tai Tong Ah was renamed Beauty World and became a market for Bukit Timah residents, housing over 160 market stalls, a cinema and a Chinese temple. After being ravaged by fire on five separate occasions, Beauty World finally closed in 1983.

You have now come to the end of the trail! If you are hungry, you may wish to make your way to [Cheong Chin Nam Road](#), which houses a string of eateries. This road and a number of connecting roads are named after Cheong Chun Tin and his family members. Cheong was the first certified dentist of Chinese descent in Singapore and had set up his dentist practice at South Bridge Road in 1869. The Cheong family later went on to establish the Pearlle White toothpaste brand.

## KAMPONG LIFE TRAIL

1 hour; bus and walk

**Buildings and institutions that were once part of Bukit Timah's kampong past can still be found in the area today. This trail features a former railway station as well as houses of faith that were once central to the religious and social lives of kampong residents and now serve the same function for their respective congregations.**

From King Albert Park MRT station (exit A), walk west down Bukit Timah Road towards the railway truss bridge. There is a path near the bridge that leads towards the former [Bukit Timah Railway Station](#). Constructed in the 1930s, the station was part of a former railway line connecting Singapore and the Malay Peninsula. This single-storey station was built in a style reminiscent of traditional European country

cottages and comprised an open platform with six structural bays, a stationmaster's office, waiting areas and a signals office. The railway line ran alongside and sometimes bisected a number of settlements, including Kampong Quarry and Fuyong Estate. For children playing by the train tracks or residents used to the sounds of the trains, the railway was part and parcel of everyday life.

Make your way back towards Bukit Timah Road, where you can catch a bus or the MRT to Sixth Avenue. Walk down Sixth Avenue towards Jalan Haji Alias, and head towards [Masjid Al-Huda](#). Built in 1925, the mosque was central to the community life of Muslim villagers in the area, which was previously dotted with kampongs until the 1980s. These kampongs included Kampong Coronation (or Kampong Tempe) and Kampong Holland. In the mosque, you can find a heritage gallery that showcases the heritage of the mosque.

The last stop on this short trail is [Hoon San Temple](#), which is just a street away from Masjid Al-Huda. Built in 1902 by immigrants from Jiazhou village in Fujian, China, the temple enshrines the deity Lim Tai See, whose name is reflected in the road Jalan Lim Tai See. Hoon San Temple features interlocking wooden beams which were constructed in the Hokkien style, as well as intricate frescos and murals themed on filial piety and traditional Chinese culture. Until the 1980s, performances were held regularly on a permanent *wayang* ("street theatre" in Malay) stage near the temple and drew crowds of spectators from nearby villages.

**Optional:** If you would like to explore the kampong past of Bukit Timah further, head down Upper Bukit Timah Road via bus or follow the Rail Corridor on foot to [Fuyong Estate](#). Built in the 1950s, this estate was developed by philanthropist Lee Kong Chian to provide affordable modern housing during Singapore's housing shortage. It was located next to the former Kampong Chamar which is known for being the childhood home of singer-songwriter Ramli Sarip, father of the Malay rock movement. Here, you can also explore another railway truss bridge spanning Upper Bukit Timah Road, or grab some refreshments at the nearby Rail Mall.



# HERITAGE SITES IN THE SUGGESTED SHORT TRAIL ROUTES



**FORMER BEAUTY WORLD**



**CHEONG CHIN NAM ROAD,  
CHUN TIN ROAD,  
YUK TONG AVENUE  
& THAM SOONG AVENUE**



**BUKIT TIMAH  
NATURE RESERVE**



**FORMER FORD FACTORY**



**MASJID AL-HUDA**



**HOON SAN TEMPLE**



**FORMER BUKIT TIMAH  
RAILWAY STATION**



**ADAM FOOD CENTRE**



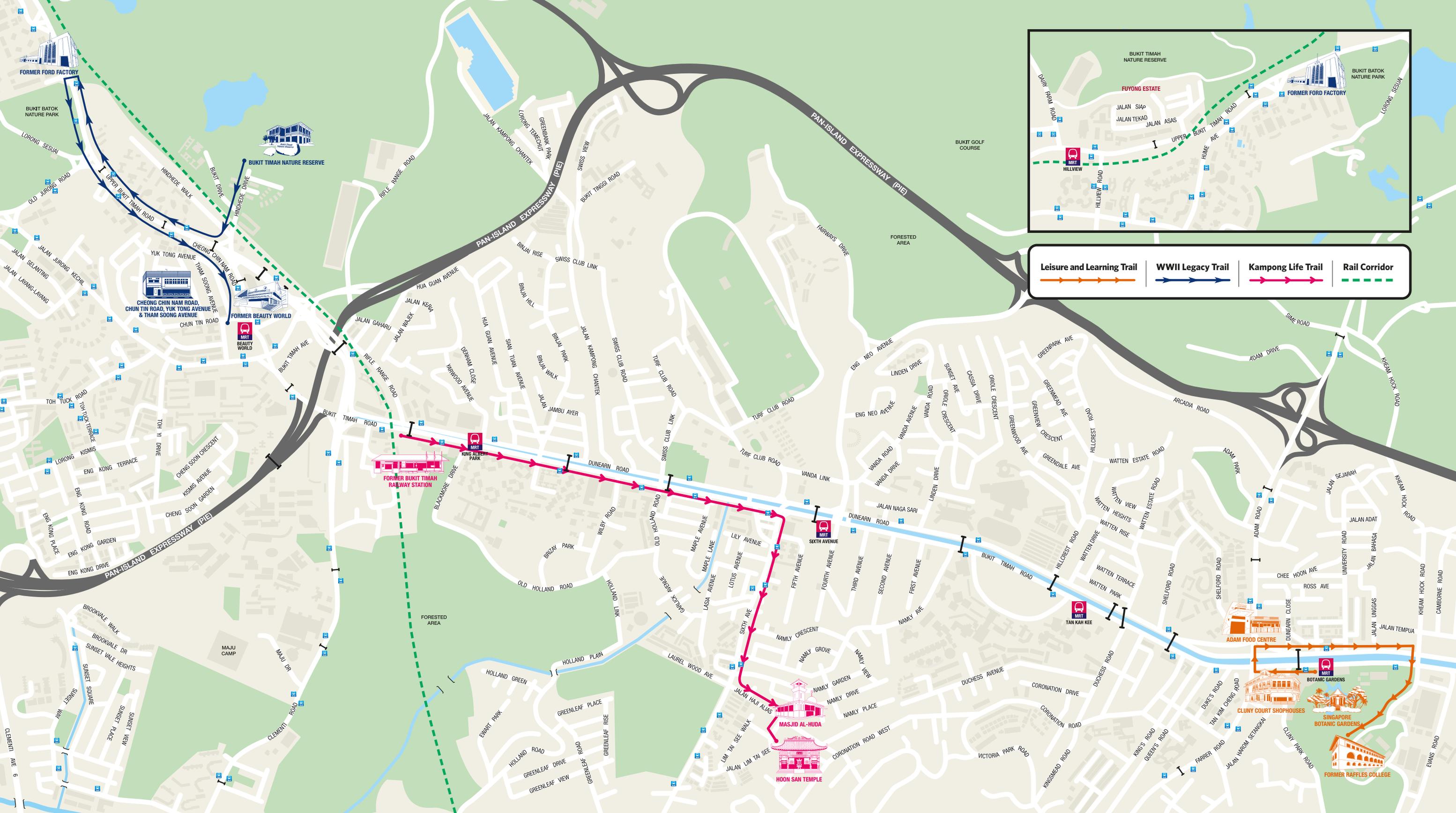
**CLUNY COURT SHOPHOUSES**



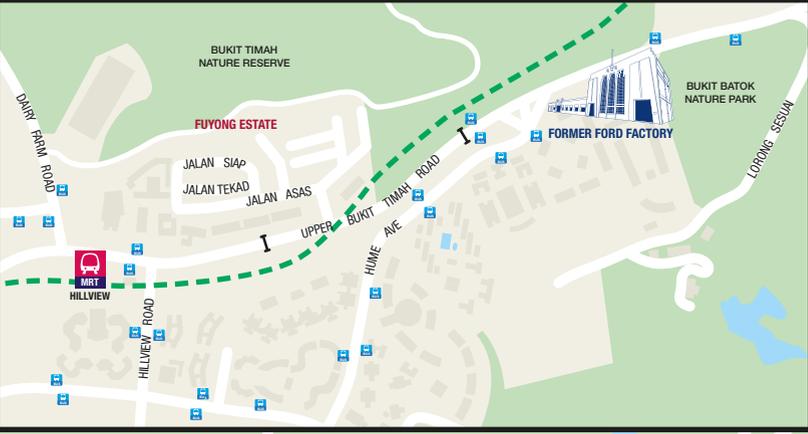
**FORMER RAFFLES COLLEGE**



**SINGAPORE BOTANIC GARDENS**



<b>Leisure and Learning Trail</b>	<b>WWII Legacy Trail</b>	<b>Kampong Life Trail</b>	<b>Rail Corridor</b>



**FORMER FORD FACTORY**

**BUKIT BATOK NATURE PARK**

**BUKIT TIMAH NATURE RESERVE**

**CHEONG CHIN NAM ROAD, CHUN TIN ROAD, YUK TONG AVENUE & THAM SOONG AVENUE**

**FORMER BEAUTY WORLD**

**MRT BEAUTY WORLD**

**FORMER BUKIT TIMAH RAILWAY STATION**

**MRT KING ALBERT PARK**

**MASJID AL-HUDA**

**HOON SAN TEMPLE**

**ADAM FOOD CENTRE**

**MRT TAN KAH KEE**

**BOTANIC GARDENS**

**SINGAPORE BOTANIC GARDENS**

**CLUNY COURT SHOPHOUSES**

**FORMER RAFFLES COLLEGE**

The Bukit Timah Heritage Trail is part of the National Heritage Board's ongoing efforts to document and present the history and social memories of places in Singapore. We hope this trail will bring back fond memories for those who have worked, lived or played in the area, and serve as a useful source of information for visitors and new residents.

Supported by



*Upper Bukit Timah Road, 1982*

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