

# No. 92 CAIRNHILL ROAD

Rustic Charm



## 2004 AWARD

CATEGORY B

**Owner:**  
*Dr Kenson Kwok*

**Architect:**  
*LT&T Architects*

**Engineer:**  
*K L Tham Engineering Consultants*

**Contractor:**  
*Advanced Construction & Engineering Pte Ltd*

*This two-storey terrace house is located in the Cairnhill Conservation Area. Built in the 1930s in the Transitional Style, it has been restored and cleverly adapted to two attractive self-contained living units with a common entrance to house two generations under one roof.*

### Two-in-one Concept

Prior to restoration, the house was structurally sound although the plaster finishes had deteriorated over the years and the original roof covering had been replaced with corrugated roof sheets. The windows and doors facing the external rear courtyard were in a poor condition. Some timber floor planks were damaged due to a leaking roof.

During restoration, the 3R principle and the “Top-Down” approach was used. When the roof was replaced with new clay tiles, the interior of the house was protected with a cover to keep out the elements.

A “two-in-one” design concept was introduced to meet the owner’s challenging brief of having two self-contained units to accommodate two generations. Privacy was assured as each unit was equipped with a kitchen and accessible by a separate entrance. A lift of a traditional design was sensitively inserted without affecting the spatial quality of the house.

### Retaining Inherent Quality

At the entrance forecourt and the side boundary wall, the concrete balustrades with mouldings and ornate handrails were restored. Restoration of the front façade went beyond the timber windows and doors to include the old fashion vertical iron bars, original locking devices and fanlights to the first storey unit. Original cement floor tiles found at the first storey were carefully salvaged, restored and relaid at the entrance courtyard, covered internal courtyard and second storey front balcony. Timber joists, purlins and floor planks were carefully inspected, treated and reused.



*Entrance leading to the restored terrace house*

### Courtyard Magic

The spatial quality of the various rooms was enhanced through the introduction of naturally-lit internal courtyards, one covered courtyard between the main building and the new three-storey rear extension and the other open-to-sky courtyard near the rear of the house. Both courtyards provided natural light and cross-ventilation to the 30m deep house and connected the first and second storey units.

The well-lit covered courtyard also acted as an entrance porch to the first storey unit. A verandah deck was created around this courtyard at the second storey to optimize the interior space. The detailings of its timber balustrades followed that of the Thai seaside summer palace of King Rama VII to give the house an air of royalty. A timber beam salvaged from the cross-wall of the front room was recycled as the main feature post to support the second storey verandah at the entrance porch of the first storey unit.

At the second and third storeys around the open courtyard, the new parapet wall was sensitively designed with perforated pre-cast concrete blocks and moulded coping similar to that at the second storey front façade.

### Touches of Nostalgia

Extra effort was spent in sourcing for compatible materials and detailing to complement the original. They included additional pattern cement floor tiles from Malacca to replace damaged ones, and antique furniture and artefacts to enhance the traditional setting. The timber louvred windows and colour pattern glass panels of the windows and fanlights in the new extension also complemented the old building. A ceiling painting by Indian craftsman was added at the second storey as an interesting piece of artwork to enliven the space.

The result is a faithfully restored old house that harks back to the charming pre-war era in a perfect blend of old and new.



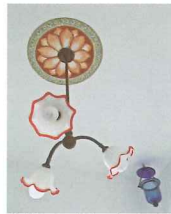
Well-lit covered courtyard serves as entrance to ground floor unit



Light introduced into the covered courtyard through skylight



Open-to-sky rear court



Ceiling painting by Indian craftsman



Living room at second storey



Restored verandah with original floor tiles



Replicated timber louvered windows at new extension



Forecourt balustrade in geometric design kept



View of entrance foyer at the first floor

No. 92 Cairnhill Road was constructed in the 1930/40s and was one of the two-storey pre-war terrace houses.

The house was purchased by Dr Kenson Kwok on 29 September 2000 from the previous owners, Mr Lee Boon Siong and Mr Lee Jee Koon. The construction for the restoration of the house and the addition of a 3-storey rear extension was started on 18 July 2001 and the whole works was completed on 31 March 2003.