

2 FINLAYSON GREEN

Suite Memories



Owner:

The Ascott Group Limited

Architect:

RSP Architects Planners & Engineers (Pte) Ltd

Engineer:

RSP Architects Planners & Engineers (Pte) Ltd

Contractor:

Tiong Aik Construction Pte Ltd

Once uncontested as the tallest building in Southeast Asia, this 18-storey Art Deco style former office building, completed in 1955, now stands prominently as a 20-storey upscale serviced suites, Ascott Raffles Place, within the financial district. It is a commercial landmark and reminder of Singapore's emergence as a regional powerhouse during the mid-20th century.

Originally Clad

Among the most significant efforts of this conservation project is the restoration of the building's unique and prominent exterior. The project team demonstrated outstanding skill and inventiveness in restoring the original travertine stone panel claddings on all four of the building's façades. Using the pin-restraint technique, each piece of panel was delicately fastened back to the original wall while cracked fragments were expertly reunited with parent panels. The original marble columns and the Nero Portaro stone panel claddings along the ground floor walkway were also carefully hand-polished to their original sheen.

Great Panes

Another prominent rescue effort is the antiquated window frames with brass handles. In addition to sensitive repair and restoration, the team thoughtfully upgraded the building for its new purpose by replacing



Art Deco building restored to six-star serviced suites

the original window panes with high-performance glass. This discrete addition offers superior sound and heat insulation befitting the upmarket hotel of serviced suites.

Paradigm Shifts

The project team has created a sense of arrival from the newly constructed drop-off portico right up the stone steps and into the lobby. There is little evidence to indicate that the floors of this structure used to be served by two separate lift cores located at the sides of the building. Now, after check-in, a guest's path is naturally directed towards one centrally located consolidated lift core.

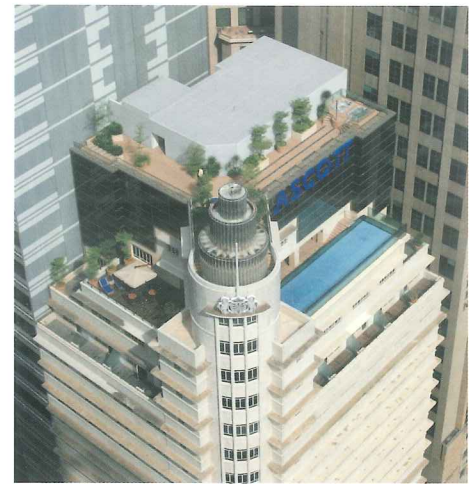
The lift gives residents convenient access to a revitalised rooftop, where once again the new and the old have been thoughtfully juxtaposed. Two new storeys and a state-of-the-art infinity pool add to

the new lustre given to the building's originally stainless steel crown. The original brass mail chute and the ornamental staircase railings at the upper floors were also kept.

Overall, it is a very gracious and elegantly executed project that succeeded in giving new shine and life to a handsome old building designed by Singapore's pioneer architect, Ng Keng Siang.



Grand Entrance and Nero Portoro marble columns at first storey



New rooftop addition with original stainless steel crown kept



Six-star serviced suite



Lift lobby with original brass mail chute and mailbox



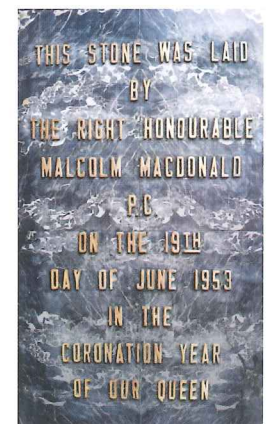
Rooftop swimming pool



First storey elevated reception lobby



Original brass window handles



Foundation stone laid by Commissioner General Malcolm MacDonal



PREFACE

The original Asia Insurance Building was designed by Ng Keng Siang, who was the first Singaporean member of the Royal Institute of British Architects. Completed in 1955, it is now 54 years old and was given Conservation status by URA in April 2007.

Its completion marked Singapore's emergence as a regional financial powerhouse during the mid-20th century. This 18-storey office building was the unchallenged tallest building in South-east Asia through the 1950s and was a prominent feature of Singapore's heritage coastal-scape.

The Ascott Group, the largest serviced apartment owner-operator in the world, bought the building from Asia Insurance in 2005, and conserved / restored the building, and converted the once-office building into a 20-storey hotel comprising 146 accommodation suites.