

the Tanjong Pagar area of Chinatown. The second (157 Neil Road) was restored 20 years later in 2007–08, demonstrating how far Singapore has come in its efforts.

### ***Emerald Hill***

Emerald Hill is another example of a historic residential district. Located to the northwest of the Downtown Core, it is off busy Orchard Road, yet affords an attractive and quiet residential presence. The predominantly two-storey terrace houses built over 90 years ago showcase a variety of architectural styles ranging from Transitional to Art Deco. The area was gazetted for conservation on 7 July 1989. The predominant use in the area is residential except for a few houses that are zoned for commercial use.

Emerald Hill was a jungle before Sir Stamford Raffles' landing in 1819. Between 1819 and 1836, the area was cleared to provide fuel to boil gambier leaves. It became a wasteland and looked like a barren hill covered with short brushwood and lalang. In mid-1837, the area comprising 146 hectares was leased to William Cuppage to grow nutmeg, popular with the Europeans at the time. The area was permanently granted to William Cuppage in June 1845. Unfortunately, after a successful period, the nutmeg estate failed in the 1860s due to disease and falling prices, and Cuppage decided to grow fruit trees instead. When he passed on in 1872, the Emerald Hill Estate was handed over to his three daughters, who subsequently auctioned the property. The estate was purchased by Cuppage's son-in-law, Edwin Koek, a well-known solicitor at that time. As the estate subsequently changed hands over the next several decades, more properties were built. Due to the absence of planning legislation and the fragmented ownership, the terrace house developments were accidental and circumstantial. However, the shophouse design dictated by Raffles and Farquhar enabled the whole street to retain its charm and grace. By the 1960s, as Orchard Road was beginning to develop into a bustling thoroughfare, Emerald Hill provided a quiet retreat from the busy street.

Because this residential district lies in the historic core of the city, provisions have been made for all units to have extension at the rear of



*Left: Two-storey Late style terrace houses along Emerald Hill Road, built in the early 1900s with identical façades (pictured in 2005).*

*Right: Two-storey Art Deco style terrace houses in the Cairnhill Historic District adjacent to Emerald Hill, 2009.*



the main conservation building should the owners so desire. However, to ensure that the overall aesthetics and spirit of conservation are not negatively compromised, the rear extension is to be lower than the main roof and not to exceed the allowable number of storeys for landed housing development, that is, three storeys. If a pitched tile roof is proposed, it can be higher than the eaves of the main conservation building but lower than the ridge of the main roof. This allows owners to have more flexibility in the creation of space for the old houses. While some who take a more purist stance have voiced their disappointment, others, including some owners, welcome this flexibility. The area also boasts many well-restored buildings.

Like the neighbouring Emerald Hill, Cairnhill was a jungle-turned-nutmeg plantation. Charlie Carnie, a partner of Martin Dyce & Co, was mainly responsible for this change, and so the area became known as Carnie's Hill, and later as "Cairnhill", a corruption of "Carnie's Hill".

Today, the Cairnhill Historic District, located to the northwest of the Downtown Core, is a quiet residential area of predominantly two-storey terrace houses built in the Late Shophouse and Art Deco styles. The area was gazetted for conservation on 7 July 1989. The predominant use is residential except for House No. 56 Cairnhill Road which is zoned for commercial use. Like Emerald Hill, all units can have extension at the



rear of the main conservation building, with the same restrictions.

An excellent example of Late terrace house style may be found at 54 Cairnhill Road. The three French windows at the second storey and two casement windows at the first storey reduce the wall area to a minimum but provides maximum ventilation when all the windows are opened. Despite the reduction of wall spaces, there are elaborate and decorative plaster mouldings above the second storey windows, which distinguish the houses. The beauty of the façade is further enhanced by the decorative corinthian columns and pilasters. Above the windows and doors are the intricate cast iron panel fanlights. These unmistakable features distinguish the shophouse from No. 108, of the Art Deco style. There, the façade lacks the decorative plaster mouldings and capitals on top of the columns. The vents and fanlights are in simple geometric forms.

*This 1927 two-storey Art Deco Style bungalow (opposite, top left) in the Whitehouse Park/ Nassim Road Conservation Area was designed by Frank Brewer. The restored bungalow has brick arches resembling sunrays.*

*Top right: A charming and rare single-storey Art Deco style bungalow at 25 Chapel Road revived at the owners' and architect's initiative.*

*Bottom: A single-storey Victorian style bungalow at 124 St Patrick's Road has been masterfully restored and adapted for use as a clubhouse within the Grand Duchess.*

## BUNGALOWS

For a long time, bungalows have held an attraction for my mother as a kind of suburban dream home. Not just any bungalow, but the iconic black-and-white bungalow. So called because the timber structures, windows and doors of the standalone houses are painted black while the infill plaster panels are white, these bungalows are characterised by verandahs located along the front and sides of the house, symmetrical layout with three bays across the front, a carriage porch on the ground floor, minimal ornamentation, and broad, simple, overhanging hipped roofs. They are essentially a single-storey house raised about two feet from the ground on small pillars or timber posts, with a space beneath, which helps to enhance ventilation, a critical consideration in the sapping tropical heat.

Built particularly from the 1900s to 1920s, these bungalows earned conservation status from late 1991 onwards. The early bungalows are a blend of mock Tudor and Malay kampong houses. Some say they were inspired by the sprawling suburbs of England, particularly stockbroker-belt Tudor housing, and the Arts and Crafts movement of the late 19th century. Four reasons have been offered to explain the early British