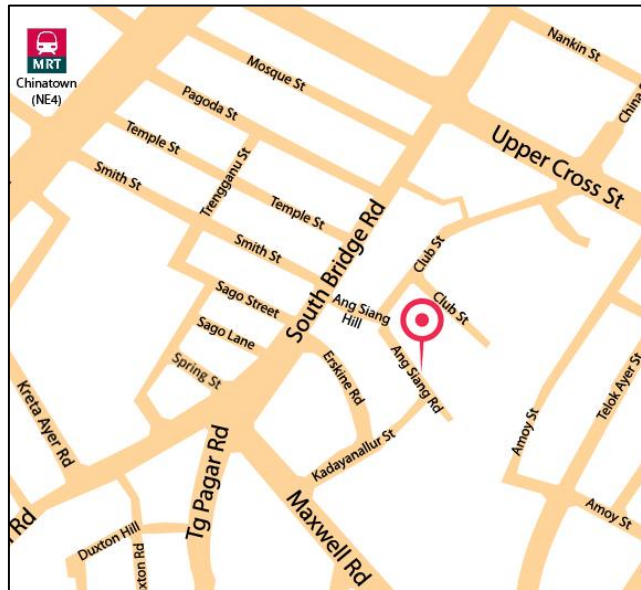




The main entrance features an intact 1960s “residential front” with wall tiles laid in brickwork pattern, a decorative timber double door behind the collapsible iron gate, and decorative mild-steel window grilles. Framing the main entrance are auspicious Chinese greetings and couplets in traditional script and handwritten in vigorous brushstrokes using ink on red paper.



The association’s first storey main hall retained its original 1960s character with its intact mosaic-tiled floor, antique long table and chairs, and walls decorated in the traditional manner. The airwell has a retractable transparent roof which helps to keep the interior dry during rain and allowing natural ventilation and daylight into the building.



The Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA) is the national planning authority for Singapore. Its active involvement in conservation started as early as the 1970s with the rehabilitation of some state-owned properties for adaptive reuse. To-date, conservation status has been given to over 7000 buildings in more than 100 areas throughout the island.

Conservation of our built heritage is an integral part of urban planning and development in Singapore. The restoration of our historic areas adds variety to our streetscapes and modulates the scale of our urban fabric, creating the visual contrast and excitement within the city while protecting the important reminders and representations of our past. In addition, it adds to the distinctive character and identity of our city. The presence of historic community groups such as clans and associations enhances our city by giving it a sense of community, history and memory of place.

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To make Singapore a great city to live, work and play in

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广惠肇李氏书室 KWONG WAI SIEW LI SI SHE SHUT 25 ANN SIANG ROAD



广惠肇李氏书室

KWONG WAI SIEW LI SI SHE SHUT

25 ANN SIANG ROAD

During the reign of Emperor Tongzhi of the Qing Dynasty (1862-1875), there were several Li sailors who often travelled between Hong Kong and Singapore. Each time they came to Singapore, they found it difficult to find accommodation. So in 1874, together with other fellow clansmen, they bought a shophouse at Upper Chin Chew Street to form an association. The premises was also used as a rest-house for fellow clansmen. After 1876, many sailors moved to other places and this led to a drastic decline in the association's membership. Fortunately, a few clansmen came forward to contact local the Li clansmen of Guangzhou (Kwong), Huizhou (Wai) and Zhaoqing (Siew).

In 1911, the association was run by leaders such as Li Xing Nan and Li Sheng Yu, both of whom were board of directors of the Kwong Wai Shiu Free Hospital. During the Japanese Occupation of Singapore, operations of the association temporarily ceased and was revived by Li Yuan Zhang after the war in 1946. In 1954, the association moved to its current location at 25 Ann Siang Road.



Photo taken in 1968 during the association's 94th anniversary celebration.



The association's musical ensemble in the 1960s.



The association has remained active in the promotion of Chinese culture, offering free calligraphy lessons and talks to the public at the first storey main hall.



Lee Dai Soh (1913-1989), the popular Cantonese storyteller, was a member of the association.

History of the Building

No. 25 Ann Siang Road has been the premises of Kwong Wai Siew Li Si She Shut since 1954. It is located within the Telok Ayer area of the Chinatown Historic District which is rich in 19th century urban heritage. Built around the late-19th century and renovated in 1963, this two-storey building has a distinctive tiled front façade with a pediment and flagpole in Art Deco Style. It is one of the landmark clan buildings along Ann Siang Road.

The street was named after Chia Ann Siang (1832-1892), a wealthy Hokkien Chinese sawmiller who used to own the land around the area. Many clans and associations were formed at Ann Siang Road area since the late 19th century as the Chinese live-in population around the area increased.



Street scene of Ann Siang Road in 1967

References

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