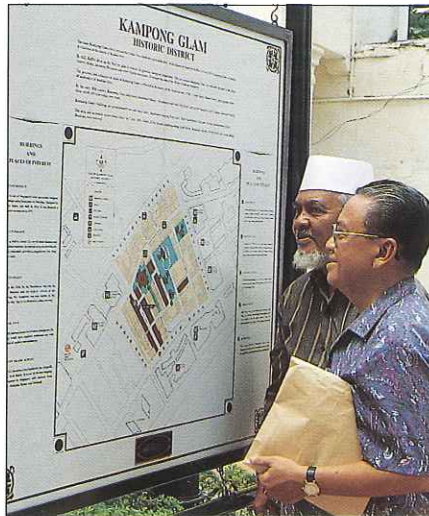


# Commemorating historic areas on a storyboard

**H**ave you ever wandered down the historic areas of Singapore and wished that somebody could tell you a bit more about this interesting backlane and that old building?

Well, as of January this year, the URA's heritage storyboards have been doing just that for passers-by, tourists and locals who are interested to know a bit more about the history of our conservation areas.

The first heritage storyboard on Bussorah Mall in Kampong Glam was unveiled in January this year by Mr Matthias Yao, Senior Parliamentary Secretary (Defence and National Development).



location within the Istana compound provides a magnificent view from Sultan Gate.

## ***73 Sultan Gate***

Built in the 1920s for the Bendahara, who was the Prime Minister and the highest official of the Kampong, this bungalow was also known as the "yellow villa" due to its distinctive yellow exterior.

## ***Alsagoff Arabic School***

Built in 1912 and named after the wealthy Alsagoff family who founded the school, it is now one of the few religious Islamic centres in Singapore with students from Singapore, Malaysia, Brunei and Thailand.

Since then, similar storyboards have been installed in Little India and Chinatown. In the next few months, storyboards will be put up in other conservation areas such as Emerald Hill/Cairnhill, Blair Plain, Boat Quay and Clarke Quay.

These information plaques commemorate the historic areas and serve as guides to the past and markers of the significance of the place. From these storyboards, the reader can garner interesting snippets of information about the area — from the origins of street names, interesting places and buildings and the history of the neighbourhood to location maps showing essential facilities like bus-stops, taxi-stands and MRT stations.

Here's a sampling of what you can get from reading these storyboards.

## **Kampong Glam Heritage Storyboard**

The name Kampong Glam is derived from the Gelam Tree which once grew in the area. In 1822, the area around Kampong Glam was officially allocated to the Bugis traders, Arabs, Javanese, Boyanese and other Muslim merchants. It became the seat of the Malay royalty in Singapore.

The presence and influence of the Arabs in Kampong Glam is reflected in the street names — Arab Street, Muscat Street and Baghdad Street.

Accorded conservation status on 7 July 1989, Kampong Glam's buildings are predominantly two and three-storey shophouses ranging from Early, First Transitional to Late and Art-Deco architectural styles.

Some of the significant buildings in the area include :

### ***Sultan Mosque***

One of Singapore's most spectacular religious buildings and a focal point for Muslims. Built in 1924, it was declared a national monument in 1975.

### ***Sultan Palace***

Built in 1840 by Sultan Ali, son of Sultan Hussein. Its centralised

## ***Arab Street***

Named after Singapore's Arab population who brought Islamic religion and trade. It is crammed with colourful textiles, saris, batik, basketry, leather goods, cane, rattan and perfumes.

## ***Bussorah Mall***

Completed in 1992 by the URA, Bussorah Mall fronts the Sultan Mosque and is most colourful and crowded during the fasting month when traditional Malay food is sold.

## **Little India Heritage Storyboard**

Originally a swampland, Little India is today the traditional hub of the Indian community in Singapore.

In the early 1940s, cattle trading was a major economic activity in the area, attracting Indians there. By the 1940s, Little India was an ethnically mixed commercial-residential community serving the needs of the Indian community in food, spices and religious items.

Landmarks in the area include :

### ***Kampong Kapor Methodist Church***

A Christian church with a Malay name, catering to the Straits Chinese and housed in a building with Spanish and Dutch influences.

### ***Abdul Gaffoor Mosque***

Built on land leased by Shaik Abdul Gaffoor bin Shaik Hyder in 1859, completed in 1910 and declared a national monument in 1979.

### ***Kerbau Road & Buffalo Road***

Kerbau means "buffalo" in Malay. The streets were so named as cattle was once kept in the slaughter houses located along the street.

### ***Race Course Road***

Named after the former race course where Farrer Park is now situated.