



Former Stamford Girls' School



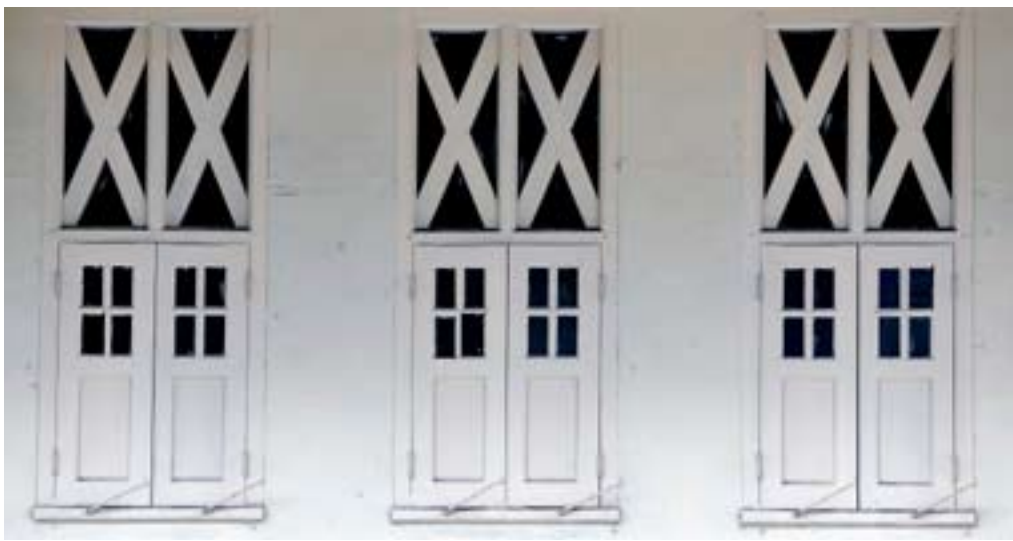
Former Tao Nan School



The Chinese High School



St Patrick's School



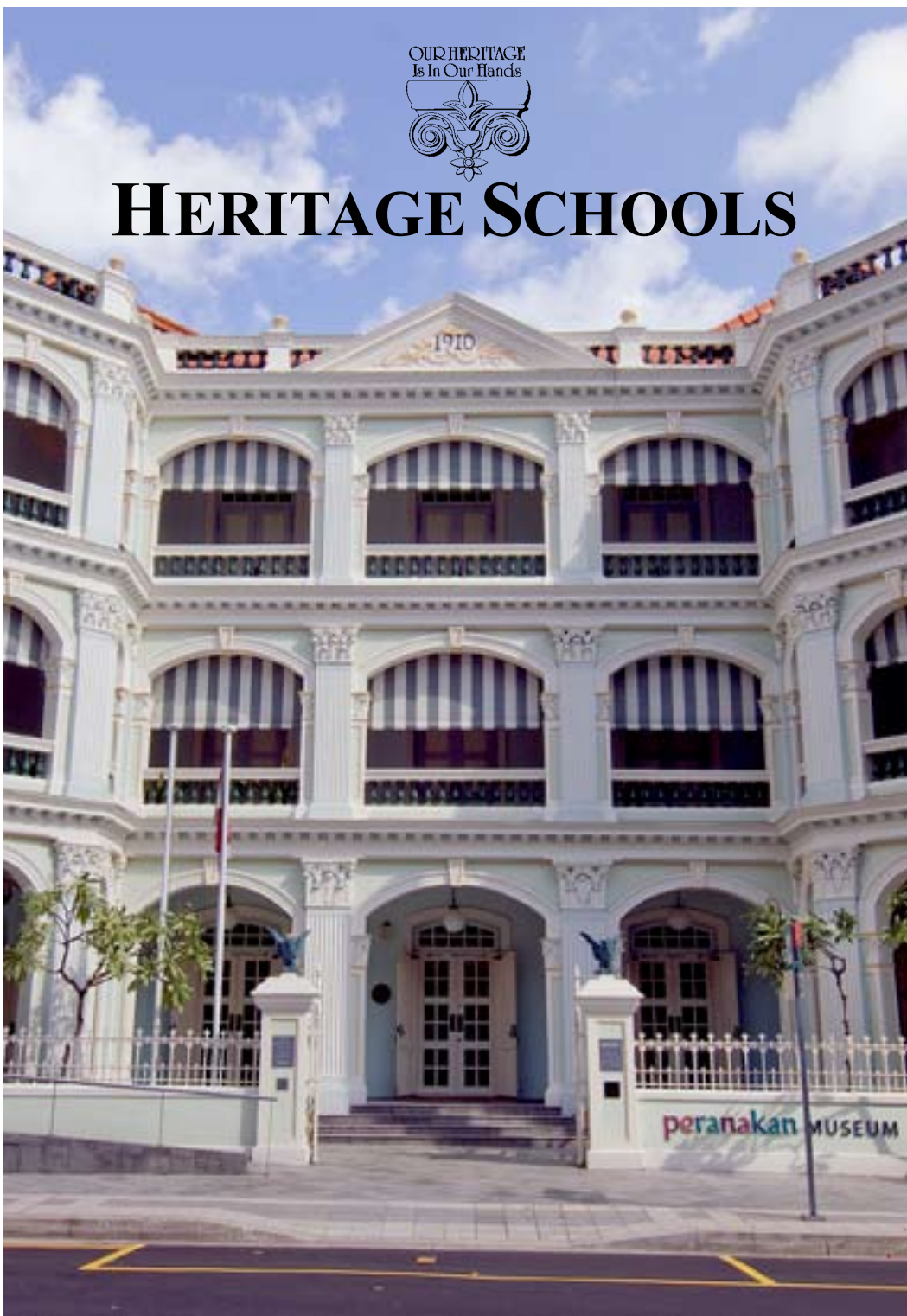
Former St Anthony's Convent



St Patrick's School



Former Convent of the Holy Infant Jesus



Former Tao Nan School



Former ACS Primary School



Former Tanjong Katong Girls School



Former Yock Eng High School



Former Convent of the Holy Infant Jesus



Former Fairfield Methodist School



The Chinese High School



Former Chai Eng Free School



Former St Andrew's School



Chong-Wen Ge



Former St Joseph's Institution



Former Chong Cheng School / Chong Pun Girls' School



Former St Anthony's Convent



Former Hong Wen School



ACS House



Former Chong Cheng School / Chong Pun Girls' School



St Patrick's School



Former St Joseph's Institution



Former Victoria School



Former St Andrew's School



Urban Redevelopment Authority

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

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# HERITAGE SCHOOLS

## Introduction

Remember the times we ran down the school corridor? Played hopscotch at the school canteen? Waited at the gate for mum to bring us home? For many of us, the schools that we grew up in are part of our childhood memories. They are places where we were educated, introduced to life beyond our family, and met teachers and classmates that influenced our lives.

School buildings are special places. They are sites of shared memories which bond each successive generation of students who pass through its gates. Schools leave both tangible and intangible imprints on their surroundings, whether they are the sounds of children’s laughter as you pass by its doors, or the sight of a familiar clock tower that marks a journey home. Many school buildings have become architectural or community landmarks, lending a physical and social character to their neighborhoods.

The history of schools in Singapore can be traced back to the establishment of the Raffles College in 1823. Over time, more schools were set up. These included the mission schools, and the various vernacular schools to serve the needs of each ethnic community. It was in this era, before the Second World War, that many of the familiar old schools of Singapore were built. Each of these buildings reflected their unique cultural background. Since the 1960s, many of these old schools moved out of the city centre and relocated into the new towns, when the population was re-housed. While some of these historic schools have been protected and re-used, others were lost through redevelopment as the original sites were on prime land.

Today, in recognition of the importance of schools as important social institutions and a cornerstone of local memories, a number of old schools have been recognized as national monuments or conservation buildings. Some still serve as schools, while others have found new uses. Overall, they will continue to serve as personal and community landmarks to those who have passed through their gates, or have simply passed by them on their daily journeys.



### 1 ACS House

70 Amoy St

In 1886, the first Anglo-Chinese School was set up in a humble shophouse at Amoy St, by Bishop William Fitzjames Oldham of the Protestant Church. It took in street boys from the neighbourhood of Chinatown, with an initial enrolment of 13 students. Lessons were conducted in Chinese in the afternoons, and English at night, giving rise to the school’s name.



### 2 Former Chui Eng Free School (Chinese Free School)

Now part of China Square  
130 Amoy St

Chui Eng Free School was one of the earliest Chinese Free Schools, built in 1854 by the Hokkien Huay Kuan. It was endowed by Tan Kim Seng, a prominent Straits-Chinese (Peranakan) merchant. Initially, these schools followed China’s curriculum and taught Chinese culture and values, including the Analects of Confucius, in Hokkien.



### 3 Former Hong Wen School

2 Dickson Rd

Hong Wen School was established in 1920 by the Hing Hua dialect group from Fujian province in China. The building used to be a residential complex till Hong Wen school moved in after the Second World War. The building facade features European Art Nouveau-inspired tiles used on a scale that is unique to Singapore.



### 4 Former Vinayagananda Tamil School

51 Blair Rd

Tamil Schools emerged soon after Tamils who had emigrated from South India could bring their wives and children to the settlement of Singapore. Early Tamil Schools were set up in shophouses in Tanjong Pagar, in Serangoon and Potong Pasir. These were small classes of pupils taught by a single teacher. The pupils learnt Tamil Language and Literature, the Hindu epics, Tamil values and culture.



### 5 Alsagoff Arabic School

111 Jalan Sultan

Built in 1912, the school was named after Syed Mohamed Alsagoff, a wealthy Arab of Yemeni/Hadramaut descent who, as a merchant and philanthropist, was very influential in Singapore’s early colonial days. It was the island’s first Muslim school. The Dutch Indies-style brick and plaster school buildings features wide verandahs, double-storey high arches and beautifully crafted cast-iron balusters.



### 6 Chong-Wen Ge (Chong Hock Girls’ School)

156 Telok Ayer St

Chong-Wen Ge, or the “Institute for the Veneration of Literature”, was the first educational institute set up in 1849 by the Chinese community in Singapore. The school was housed in a pagoda to the right of Thian Hock Keng Temple, which was the most important Hokkien Temple at the time. In 1915, the first Hokkien girls’ school, Chong Hock Girls’ School, was founded in the adjacent temple pavilion. The temple complex was gazetted as a National Monument in 1973.



### 7 Former Tao Nan School

Now the Peranakan Museum  
39 Armenian St

The Hokkien Huay Kuan started Tao Nan School in 1906. It was one of six Modern Chinese schools in Singapore influenced by the educational reforms in China at the end of the 19th century, and the first to change the medium of instruction from dialect to Mandarin. The building, completed in 1912, was designed in the Neo-classical style with features of the French Renaissance. The choice of style symbolized the positioning of the school as a Modern educational institution. It was gazetted as a national monument in 1998.



### 8 The Chinese High School

661 Bukit Timah Rd

Founded in 1919 by Mr Tan Kah Kee, the Chinese High School was the first Chinese-medium secondary school in Southeast Asia catering to the overseas Chinese. During the Battle of Singapore, the school clock tower with its height and vantage point served as headquarters for both the Allied defenders and the Imperial Japanese Army. It was gazetted as a National Monument in 1999.



### 9 Former Stamford Girls’ School

Now The Stamford Arts Centre  
155 Waterloo St

The Japan Club (now The Japanese Association) built this school in 1920 at Waterloo St. It functioned as the Japanese School until it was closed by the British Army at the beginning of World War 2. It is best known as the post-war site of Stamford Girls’ School. The building is now used as Arts Housing under the National Arts Council.



### 10 Former St Joseph’s Institution

Now the Singapore Art Museum  
71 Bras Basah Rd

This was the site of Singapore’s oldest Catholic Boys’ School, which was founded in 1852 by the La Salle Brothers. The design of the classical grand façade and dome is said to be inspired by Bernini’s Colonnade in front of St Peter’s Basilica in Rome. The former school chapel still retains many original features such as embossed coloured floor tiles, a pressed steel panel ceiling, and plaques depicting religious scenes. The building was gazetted as a National Monument in 1992.



### 11 Former Convent of the Holy Infant Jesus

Now CHIJMES  
30 Victoria St

This building complex on Victoria St was home to the French Catholic Convent and School of the Holy Infant Jesus for over 130 years. Founded in 1854, the beautiful neo-gothic chapel with its spire and French-stained glass windows have remained a landmark along Bras Basah Road. It is the only true cloister complex in Asia. It was gazetted as a National Monument in 1990 and its restoration won a Merit Award in the UNESCO Asia Pacific Heritage Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation in 2002.



### 12 Former St Andrew’s School

Now the Diocese of Singapore building  
1 Francis Thomas Drive

The St Andrew’s school was founded by an Anglican Missionary in 1862, and was first known as the St. Andrew’s Church of England Mission School. The buildings, featuring distinctive fish-scale stucco texture walls, were designed in 1939 by Frank Brewer. The complex is said to be one of his finest and largest completed works in Singapore. The buildings of the old Junior school are now part of the St Andrew’s Village.



### 13 St Patrick’s School

490 East Coast Rd

Built in Katong in 1933, St Patrick’s School used to be known up to the 70s as the “School by the Sea” – being located in the area of Marine Parade Road being where the shoreline once stood. The original Art-Deco buildings were designed by Dennis Santry of Swan & MacLaren, who was also behind the Sultan Mosque and the Tanjong Pagar Malayan Railway Station.



### 14 Former Fairfield Methodist School

178 Neil Rd

The school was founded in 1888 by Miss Sophia Blackmore, an Australian missionary. It began as a one-room school for girls in Cross Street, Singapore, with 8 Peranakan students. In 1913, the school moved to Neil Road, and was renamed Fairfield Girls’ School. Its elegant two-storey neoclassical facade features recessed balconies and a central pediment.



### 15 Former ACS Primary School

Now The National Archives of Singapore  
1 Canning Rise

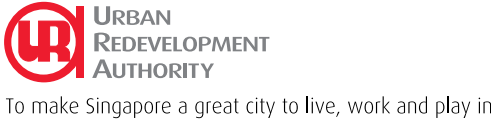
The Anglo-Chinese School relocated from its original site at Amoy St to the foothills of Fort Canning in 1892. The original 1897 school building known as Oldham Hall was redeveloped into an elegant Modern style reinforced concrete building in 1959 by Ng Keng Siang, a well-known local architect. It remained as the site of the Primary School until Nov 1993.



## The URA Conservation Programme

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 94 conservation areas involving over 7000 buildings 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 add variety to our streetscapes and modulate 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, giving it a sense of history and memory of place.



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We wish to thank the following schools for the generous contribution of archival photos:

- St Patrick’s School
- Tanjong Katong Girls’ School

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### 16 Former Yock Eng High School

Now The Chinese Development Assistance Council  
65 Tanjong Katong Rd

Yock Eng High School was founded in 1910 by the Hainanese community as a Chinese medium school. Originally, the school was located at Prinsep Street. A larger school building along Tanjong Katong Road was built in the early 1940s. This two-storey building is designed in the Modern style with some Art Deco influences, and a key feature of the building is its distinctive octagonal clock tower which serves as a landmark in the area.



### 17 Former Tanjong Katong Girls’ School

371 Tanjong Katong Road

Established in 1953, Tanjong Katong Girls’ School was the first post-war government English girls’ school built in colonial Singapore. The school buildings were based upon one of the early PWD prototypes for standardised modern school buildings. The landmark school hall, with its row of circular port windows, is a distinctive feature along Tanjong Katong Road.



### 18 Former Victoria School

Now The People’s Association Headquarters  
2 Tyrwhitt Rd

Victoria School had its origin as an English class in the Kampong Glam Malay School in 1876. It moved to the site at Tyrwhitt Road in 1933. The original main classroom/ administrative block is a Neo-classical style building with a signature long frontage, and was designed by Frank Dorrington Ward of the PWD, who also designed the Supreme Court and former Traffic Police Building.



### 19 Former Chong Cheng School / Chong Pun Girls’ School

32 Alival St

This building in the heart of Kampong Glam housed an integrated Boys’ and Girls’ Chinese School in the late 1930s. The Chong Cheng Boys’ School and the Chong Pun Girls School were housed in separate wings of the building, with a common school hall. The Art Deco-styled building features clean geometrical lines and a flag post under which is inscribed the year of its completion and the names of its donors, the Haw Par brothers.



### 20 Former St Anthony’s Convent & St Anthony’s Boys School

111 Middle Rd

The St Anna’s School with an enrolment of 6 students was opened at Middle Rd in 1879 by the Portuguese Mission. This later became the St Anthony’s Boys and Girls School. In 1906, the Girls’ school became known as St Anthony’s Convent and was run by nuns of the Canossian order. Over the years, new wings and a chapel were added. In 1952, a modern 5-storey building fronting Middle Rd took the place of the old wooden convent.

