

“A” Queen Street, Cathedral of the Good Shepherd
2017 Award for Restoration

Owner: Titular RC Archbishop of Singapore
Architect: Architects 61 Pte Ltd
Engineer: ECAS Consultants Pte Ltd
Contractor: Shanghai Chong Kee Furniture & Construction Pte Ltd
Conservation Specialist: Studio Lapis

A Spirited Revival

This national monument of historical interest in origins and architecture has been lovingly restored and returned for the appreciation and benefit of the congregation as well as the wider community.

Heritage Grounds

For over 170 years, the passage of time took its toll on the church, both structurally and aesthetically. In this restoration, the team opted for maximum retention to keep the layers of history while bringing the facilities up-to-date. With a conservation specialist, an archaeologist, a pipe organ restorer and a stained glass restorer on board, best practices were adopted to restore the inherent heritage value and to reveal the rich stories in the centuries-old site. Backed by detailed research and analysis, the results glow with many treasured revivals.

Referencing the Past

The existing building fabric was reinforced with fibre-reinforced polymer wrapping. For the East portico which unexpectedly collapsed, a steel structure clad with brickwork to meet current code, brought back the original profile. Elaborate underpinning works preceded reconstruction of the ground floor slab. The team also made use of the opportunity to conceal new Mechanical & Electrical services under the slab which allow air-conditioning units to be neatly hidden behind perimeter cabinets.

The Cathedral's original chequerboard pattern floor seen in historic photographs was reinstated. A lighter colour scheme that took reference from the original was adopted after careful examination of the multiple layers of paint coating. The Cathedral's stained glass windows, installed in the early 1900s, were carefully documented before dismantling for restoration at an off-site studio. Missing glass pieces from the windows were replicated and additional clear glass panels were installed behind the windows for protection.

Lights of Glory

The glass panels of the pre-war mild-steel pivoted windows were also systematically tagged before removal for restoration. Of note is that the glass panels have different shades of green as a result of sporadic replacements over the years. The colour variation was kept and broken panels replaced with like-

for-like pieces. The patchwork of shades gave the Cathedral a unique light quality while acknowledging the works of previous generations. Clear glass panels were also cleverly inserted into the openings between the open pivoted panels so that natural light continue to stream into the newly air-conditioned interior.

Rising Again

Described as a rare intact example of an Edwardian-style residential building, the Rectory displays a classic Edwardian architectural feature of alternating bands of red brickwork and white plaster, also known as “blood and bandage”. Upon discovering that the colours had been reversed, the team painstakingly removed the white paint over the brickwork and the red paint over the plaster to reinstate its original finish.

The Rectory also houses the largest collection of intact encaustic floor tiles in Singapore. As these were in relatively good condition, they were carefully documented and removed for cleaning before being laid back in their original positions. Tiles that could not be saved were replaced.

Celebration of Heritage

The construction of a new annex and a new basement have yielded additional space for the church to grow. A heritage gallery has been incorporated into the new annex. It tells the history of the church and showcases artefacts in the time capsule that was uncovered together with the church’s foundation stone. A heritage ministry was also set up to enhance its outreach efforts through publications, onsite information boards and a docent programme.

More than a sacred historical landmark, the Cathedral is well known for its pipe organ music. It houses the oldest pipe organ in Singapore. This antiquated musical rarity, installed in 1912, was delicately dismantled and brought off-site for restoration. It continues to be instrumental in preserving the Cathedral’s strong heritage of pipe organ music.

To safeguard this aspect of its heritage, the Cathedral has introduced initiatives such as the Organ Scholarship Programme for people who are interested to serve as organists.

Communal Space

The Cathedral has been opening its doors to people from all walks of life, regardless of race or religion. Its premises and programmes contribute to bringing diverse communities together. The three-year major restoration project has successfully revived the Cathedral’s position as a heritage asset and a beacon of the community for generations to come.

320 Havelock Road, The Warehouse Hotel
2017 Award for Restoration & Innovation

Owner: I Hotel Pte Ltd
Architect: Zarch Collaboratives Pte Ltd
Engineer: JS Tan Consultants Pte Ltd
Contractor: Towner Construction Pte Ltd

Checking in with a Renewed Purpose

This former warehouse along the Singapore River has been reborn as a boutique hotel. The heritage building now whisks guests to a bygone era of bustling trade activities of 1930s Singapore.

Accommodating the Past and Present

Left empty for a long time, the three connected structures were in a dilapidated condition. Nevertheless, the team managed to revitalise them after thorough research and careful site investigation.

The character of the former warehouse has been retained while new interventions sensitively kept the spatial qualities. Original elements such as metal roof trusses were retained and new portal frames discreetly added to bear the new loading requirement for the roof. Jackroofs, a typical feature of warehouses were also retained. To bring natural light into the interior spaces, corrugated glass skylight panels similar in profile to the corrugated metal roof were introduced. Original vertical security bars of the windows were repaired and kept, but with an innovative touch to the frames so that some of the windows can double up as fire escapes.

Homage to Heritage

The lobby showcases the original double-volume space of the warehouse and provides an unobstructed view to the Singapore River. Within the space is a complement of fittings and furnishing like collapsible gates and pulleys that add to the sense of nostalgia. The design treatment of hospitality areas and guest rooms is also reminiscent of its industrial past. The use of solid metallic materials with industrial finishes and look ensure that a touch of the past prevails at every corner.

Evidence from old photographs and other archival materials also enabled the restoration of eroded features such as the Chinese characters ‘和豐油較有限公司’ (Ho Hong Oil Mills Limited) on the façade. The documentation and sharing of the site’s history through the hotel’s collaterals, website and onsite storyboards reconnect the building back with the wider public.

Warehouse of Memories

Through the thoughtful integration of old and new, and despite various site constraints, the team managed to bring out the heritage of the warehouse and the Singapore River while adapting the building to a new use.

75 East Coast Road, Red House
Special Mention

Owner: WRH Pte Ltd
Architect: SH Lim Architects Pte Ltd
Engineer: K P Chai Engineering & Management Consultants
Contractor: Tokyu Construction Co., Ltd.

Rising to a New Day

This project is commended for the energy displayed in re-establishing some memorable and intangible elements of Katong's heritage.

Icing on the Cake

The outcome is the result of the efforts of the owner to bring back a familiar piece of social heritage that was a part of Katong for almost a century. Today, the use in the Red House is reminiscent of the old Katong Bakery and Confectionery Co. Besides keeping the iconic red colour of the building, the owners deliberately set out to source for a new tenant who operates the same nature of business – a local cafe. The new café offers traditional local food items and its interior design took cues from the former.

Spreading the Love

Substantial research was done to unearth the history of the building and the wider area. To properly capture the social memory of the building, the team tracked down a former staff who worked at the bakery to help provide a glimpse into its past. The research was then shared through storyboards installed along the five-foot way that documents stories about the building's history, the wider Katong area and its social role as a *wakaf* (endowment) to give back to society. The dedicated owners has kept alive the building's intangible heritage and today, the building remains relevant to the community. A slice of old Katong is, as they say, 'back in business'.