

## **Information on the steel truss bridges**

### **History**

The two steel truss bridges were opened in 1932. They were constructed as part of the re-aligned former Keretapi Tanah Melayu (KTM) railway line south of Bukit Panjang in 1930. The railway was re-aligned to create a more direct route into the city centre and to minimise road-level crossings that caused inconvenience when cars and pedestrians had to stop for passing trains. In the Bukit Timah area which was fairly hilly, bridge crossings were adopted to overcome terrain differences and to segregate the railway line from roads. The opening of the bridges facilitated the seamless transport of passengers and goods.

### **Historical, social and architectural significance**

The bridges were designed by United Engineers, one of Singapore's pioneer engineering companies. They are two of three remaining steel truss bridges in Singapore, and are rare in their structural engineering design. The granite stone piers were skilfully hewed, constructed and dressed into their ornamental profiles, stepped parapet designs and barrel vaults for pedestrian access, demonstrating a high level of craftsmanship in the early-1900s. The bridges also cross the roads at an angle, illuminating their prominence and sense of presence to road users and pedestrians.

Due to their majestic size, unique structural design and prominent locations, the bridges became familiar landmarks in Bukit Timah and along the Rail Corridor. Many people associate them with Singapore's railway history and the story of Singapore's economic progress. Many also use them as distance markers for the 7<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> miles of Bukit Timah Road.

The bridge across Bukit Timah/Dunearn Road spans 45 metres, and is the only Baltimore truss bridge in Singapore. It is a popular spot today for photo-taking and widely-used by Rail Corridor users. The bridge across Upper Bukit Timah Road spans 60 metres, and is the only Pratt truss bridge in Singapore.