



MEDIA RELEASE

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SINGAPORE RIVER BRIDGES GAZETTED AS SINGAPORE'S 73RD NATIONAL MONUMENT

Singapore, 15 October 2019 – The Singapore River Bridges – Cavenagh, Anderson and Elgin Bridges – were gazetted and accorded the highest level of protection today, as part of the National Heritage Board's (NHB) ongoing efforts to preserve and safeguard Singapore's built heritage. Following their collective gazette, the bridges will continue to be used for daily business, even as they are protected from future redevelopment.

2 The gazette was officiated by Ms Grace Fu, Minister for Culture, Community and Youth (MCCY), who said, "The gazette is especially meaningful as it takes place during Singapore's Bicentennial. The Singapore River Bridges have witnessed the progress of our nation over the past two centuries. As we preserve these tangible markers of our identity, we should also pass on the stories and memories of these bridges to our younger generation. This is part of *Our SG Heritage Plan* to safeguard Singapore's tangible heritage while promoting greater awareness and appreciation of our National Monuments."

3 At the event, Minister Fu also launched NHB's new *Milestones Through Monuments* programme that the public can participate in to relive and experience moments of Singapore's history at our National Monuments. She also announced that a new tranche of S\$15 million will be made available to help eligible monument owners co-fund upcoming restoration projects under the *National Monuments Fund*.

Singapore River Bridges and Their Significance

4 Recognised as the three most historic and architecturally impressive bridges spanning the Singapore River, the Cavenagh, Anderson and Elgin Bridges illustrate Singapore's growth as a trading port and city. With their strategic locations at the mouth of the Singapore River, the bridges symbolically connected Singapore with the world as they facilitated trade and transport links that



were necessary for the growth of Singapore in the 19th century. Together, the bridges eliminated the need for boatmen to ferry passengers across the river by linking the south bank of the river with the north – serving the critical function of connecting the mercantile and commercial side with government offices located on the north bank of the river. This also allowed people to move conveniently between the two districts.

5 The Singapore River Bridges also represent the progressive technological advancements in bridge construction from the mid-19th to the mid-20th centuries. Built decades apart, Cavenagh Bridge's use of cast iron in 1869, Anderson Bridge's use of steel in 1909 and Elgin Bridge's use of reinforced concrete in 1929 showcase the rapid development in new materials, industrial technology and shipping trade. They are also testament to how Singapore was part of the larger, global story of industrial revolution and technological advancement.

6 As the structures of all three bridges were manufactured in Britain before they were shipped to Singapore, the bridges indicate Singapore's relationship of trade and collaboration with Britain back then. The Cavenagh and Anderson bridges were also designed by prominent British engineers in consultation with their counterparts here. This relationship is reflected in the gazette date of 15 October 2019, to commemorate 200 years since the founding of Singapore as a trading post by Sir Stamford Raffles, and in celebration of the diplomatic ties between the United Kingdom and Singapore. The date of 15 October was also chosen as it harks back to 15 October 1965 when Singapore officially became a Commonwealth nation.

New Milestones Through Monuments Programme

7 In conjunction with the gazette of the Singapore River Bridges, NHB also launched its new *Milestones Through Monuments* programme, which aims to showcase the roles our National Monuments played during significant periods in Singapore's history, and raise greater awareness of our iconic national treasures. Its inaugural edition will kick off with the Singapore River Bridges given Singapore's Bicentennial commemoration this year, and take place from 15 to 28 October 2019. It will offer specially commissioned installations on the Singapore River Bridges that will cast the spotlight on the newly gazetted bridges, and invite Singaporeans on a journey to relive and rediscover moments of Singapore's history through our National Monuments.



8 The specially commissioned installations on each of the three Singapore River Bridges include: supersized origami boats on Cavenagh Bridge, inspired by the many boats that plied the Singapore River in the past, which showcase the stories of early immigrants in Singapore; a reconstructed tram on Anderson bridge which features the various modes of transport that used to run across it; and a past and present juxtaposition of the iconic Singapore River along Elgin Bridge.

9 The installations on Cavenagh and Anderson Bridges are done by creative director Danny C. Wijaya, while the installation on Elgin Bridge is presented by local artist Yip Yew Chong. Gavin MacLellan, the great-great-grandson of Walter MacLellan (the co-founder of Glasgow-based engineering firm P&W MacLellan which manufactured the cast iron structure of Cavenagh Bridge back in the day), will also be giving a talk on the history behind the impressive structure and how it represents the technological advancement of the 19th and 20th centuries.

New Tranche of National Monuments Fund Funding

10 As NHB continues to safeguard and commemorate our tangible heritage, a key aspect of this work includes partnering National Monument owners and the community to upkeep our National Monuments. Hence, to further support eligible monument owners, a fresh tranche of funding for restoration projects will be made available through the *National Monuments Fund (NMF)*, as announced by Minister Fu. The new tranche of S\$15 million – the third since the *NMF* was first launched in 2008, will be dedicated to the *NMF*'s Restoration Fund¹ category to support restoration works at National Monuments.

11 Administered by NHB's Preservation of Sites and Monuments (PSM) division, the *NMF* aims to aid eligible monument owners – namely non-profit or religious National Monuments – in the restoration and maintenance of our built heritage. First introduced in 2008 with S\$5 million, the *NMF* was given a second round of funding in 2015 amounting to S\$11.77 million to better

¹ *NMF* consists of both the Restoration Fund and Maintenance Fund. The Restoration Fund covers rectification works that restore the spirit of the buildings' historical fabric, while the Maintenance Fund covers regular work to identify building issues early and pre-empt necessary restorative works.



serve the evolving needs of Singapore's National Monuments and their owners. This will be the third tranche to the grant, and its largest to date.

12 Minister Fu added, "Singapore's heritage belongs to every Singaporean. We hope our communities will join us in playing a part to preserve and promote our heritage. Through the *National Monuments Fund*, the Government will continue to support restoration efforts and work together with monument owners to ensure that these landmarks of our heritage will continue to be well-preserved for the future."

13 For more information, please refer to:

- **Annex A:** Information on Singapore River Bridges
- **Annex B:** Information on *Milestones Through Monuments*
- **Annex C:** About the NMF
- **Annex D:** List of National Monuments eligible for the application of the NMF

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About the National Heritage Board

The National Heritage Board (NHB) was formed on 1 August 1993. As the custodian of Singapore's heritage, NHB is responsible for telling the Singapore story, sharing the Singaporean experience and imparting our Singapore spirit.

NHB's mission is to preserve and celebrate the shared heritage of our diverse communities, for the purpose of education, nation-building and cultural understanding. It manages the national museums and heritage institutions, and sets policies relating to heritage sites, monuments and the National Collection. Through the National Collection, NHB curates heritage programmes and presents exhibitions to connect the past, present and future generations of Singaporeans. NHB



is a statutory board under the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth. Please visit www.nhb.gov.sg for more information.

About the Preservation of Sites and Monuments Division

The Preservation of Sites and Monuments (PSM) division, under the National Heritage Board (NHB) and with advice from the PSM Advisory Board, guides the preservation of buildings, monuments and sites, which commemorates Singapore's heritage as defined under the Preservation of Monuments Act. The PSM division also leads NHB's joint efforts with National Parks Board to list the Singapore Botanic Gardens as Singapore's first UNESCO world heritage site. It also oversees the 100 heritage sites that have been marked by NHB.

The PSM division's administration of the preservation gazette is complemented by its outreach objectives to promote a renewed appreciation and understanding of national monuments and their history, and to encourage people to relate to them as sites of memory that convey a sense of place, identity and belonging. To date, 73 structures have been gazetted as National Monuments. For more information on the PSM division, please visit www.nhb.gov.sg/psm.

The Singapore River Bridges: Cavenagh Bridge, Anderson Bridge and Elgin Bridge

Cavenagh, Anderson and Elgin Bridges are the three most historic and architecturally impressive bridges that span the Singapore River. Collectively, they illustrate Singapore’s growth as a trading port and flourishing city. Standing at the historic mouth of the river, the bridges symbolically connected Singapore with the world as they facilitated the trade and transport links necessary for the growth of the city. Together, they improved accessibility between the river’s north and south banks. They also represent the progression of engineering technology in bridge construction from the 19th century to the 20th century. Individually, they each have unique aesthetic features.

The construction of the bridges also highlighted the importance of trade and procurement between the motherland and domiciles of the British Empire – all structural components for construction were manufactured in Britain and shipped to Singapore. The engineers involved were also British.

Designers:	<p>Cavenagh Bridge: Likely G.C. Collyer, R.M. Ordish and Municipal Engineer A. H. De Wind</p> <p>Anderson Bridge: Public Works Department (Municipal Engineer from 1901-1916, Robert Peirce and his assistant, D.M. Martia)</p> <p>Elgin Bridge: Municipal Bridge Engineer T.C. Hood</p>
Address:	Singapore River

Historic and Architectural Interest of the Singapore River Bridges

Cavenagh Bridge (completed and opened 1869)



Photo courtesy of the National Heritage Board

- Cavenagh Bridge was named after Sir William Orfeur Cavenagh, the governor of the Straits Settlements at that time.
- Of the three bridges, Cavenagh Bridge stands out as it is the oldest surviving bridge across the Singapore River.
- Its location was also strategic as it served as a key link from Commercial Square (Raffles Place today) to the government quarter. Prior to the construction of Cavenagh Bridge, a temporary wooden footbridge with turnstiles provided people with a means of crossing near this site. People were also ferried by boatmen from the north bank of the river, to the south bank at this site.
- Today, it is one of the two remaining bridges in the world built with the “Ordish-Lefevre system” as a modified cable-stayed bridge – the other is Albert Bridge (1873) in London which is no longer using this system fully.
- The cast iron structure was manufactured and shipped out from Glasgow, Scotland.
- Key features of the bridge include:
 - Antique signs at the end of the bridge, prohibiting “any vehicle of which the laden weight exceeds 3 cwt and to all cattle and horses”



- Steel plates emblazoned with the engineers' names
- The Cavenagh family crest
- Hanging lamps and the bridge's "tie-backs"

Anderson Bridge (completed 1909, opened 1910)



Photo courtesy of the National Heritage Board

- Anderson Bridge was built to supplement the capacity of Cavenagh Bridge which was unable to cope with the increased vehicular and pedestrian traffic.
- The bridge was named after Sir John Anderson, the Governor of the Straits Settlements and High Commissioner of the Federated Malay States. His contributions to Singapore include:
 - Construction of the Victoria Memorial Hall
 - Regulating and fixing the value of the Straits Settlements currency
 - Pushing for the creation of public back lanes to improve sanitation and overcome overcrowding in the city
- The need to build this bridge demonstrates the importance of the Singapore River as a key area of trade and business on the island.
- The bridge is a variant of the Pratt truss bridge with a gentle arch, bearing close resemblance to the old Victoria Bridge over the Brisbane River.
- Key features of the bridge include:



- Diagonal structural members and steel lattice work
- Rusticated granite pedestrian archways and fluted piers
- Bronze lamps
- Stone with inscription facing Victoria Theatre and Victoria Concert Hall. This was from Aswan, Egypt.

Elgin Bridge (completed and opened 1929)



Photo courtesy of the National Heritage Board

- Historic site of the first footbridge to be built in Singapore (in c.1820s). The present Elgin Bridge is the 5th bridge and 2nd “Elgin Bridge” to be built on the site.
 - The bridge began as a footbridge/crossing of sorts across the Singapore River in the 1820s. It was the only bridge that linked the north and south banks of the Singapore River until Coleman Bridge was constructed.
 - Later, a wooden drawbridge replaced this footbridge. It was known as Presentment Bridge, also known as Jackson Bridge.
 - In 1844, a new timber footbridge replaced the Presentment Bridge but was demolished by 1862.
 - In 1862, an iron bridge was brought in from Calcutta to replace the 1840s bridge. This was the first Elgin Bridge.



- In 1925, it was proposed that Elgin Bridge be rebuilt as it had become overly congested, and had also started to show signs of subsidence.
- In its past forms, Elgin bridge linked the Chinese community on the south side of the river to the Indian merchants on the north side. The roads on either side of the bridge – North and South Bridge Road – were named with reference to the bridge.
- The first Elgin Bridge was modified to accommodate the increasing vehicular traffic and the introduction of steam tramway.
- The current Elgin Bridge was built to replace the first, and was raised 4 feet higher to allow lighters and *tong kangs* (river boats) to pass freely. The bridge was named after Lord James Bruce Elgin, Governor General of India from 1862 to 1863. At that time, Singapore was part of the Straits Settlements reporting to the British authorities in India (until 1867, when control of the Straits Settlements was placed directly under the Colonial Office in London).
- This bowstring/arch bridge's structural frame was constructed in steel and encased in concrete. Its construction was described to be an engineering achievement in Singapore at that time. The bridge's foundation had to be sunk to a depth of 80 feet below water due to the soil conditions. Key features of the bridge include:
 - Cast iron lamps on the ends of the bridge
 - Bronze plaques engraved with the lion symbol of the city
 - The struts and hangers that hold the bridge together

About *Milestones Through Monuments*

From 15 to 28 October 2019, *Milestones Through Monuments* takes members of the public on a journey to relive and rediscover moments of Singapore's history through its National Monuments. This inaugural edition casts the spotlight on three Singapore River Bridges – Cavenagh, Anderson and Elgin Bridges, with a series of specially curated programmes.

1) Installations

Connecting Communities, Cavenagh Bridge



Image courtesy of National Heritage Board

Embark on a journey as you walk across this bridge and surround yourself with larger-than-life origami boats that tell the stories of some of our early immigrants.



A Ride Down Memory Lane, Anderson Bridge

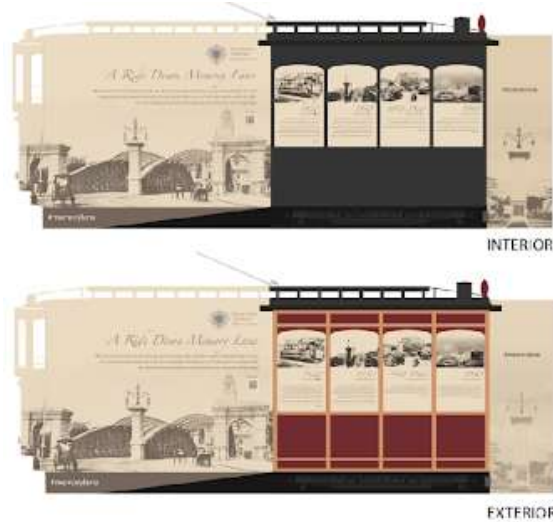


Image courtesy of National Heritage Board

Travel back in time as you hop on a life-sized tram and learn about the various modes of transport that ran across this bridge.

View from Elgin Bridge, Elgin Bridge



Image courtesy of National Heritage Board



“*View from Elgin Bridge*” is an artwork that aims to recreate this bustling scene in the present day Singapore River. It juxtaposes the miniature *tong kang*s made from wooden clogs, with the real scene of modern skyscrapers in the background, to form a surreal view that combines both past and present.

2) Talk by Gavin MacLellan

Date: 15 October 2019

Cavenagh Bridge: From Glasgow to Singapore

Completed in 1869, Cavenagh Bridge is the oldest surviving bridge across the Singapore River. Its cast iron structure was manufactured by engineering firm P&W MacLellan and shipped out from Glasgow to be assembled in Singapore. This talk by Gavin MacLellan, a descendant of the firm’s co-founder Walter MacLellan, will share the story behind this magnificent structure, and how it represented the technological advancement of that time.

About the NMF

In 2008, the *National Monuments Fund (NMF)* was introduced with a first tranche of S\$5 million, dedicated to monument restoration works. In 2015, in recognition of the growing needs of our National Monuments, and to better support the monument owners in addressing these needs, the *NMF* was given a second tranche of funding of S\$11.77 million.

In addition to its increased funding pool, the enhanced *NMF* in 2015 went beyond restoration to include a new category of funding for maintenance. This *Maintenance Fund* was allocated S\$2 million from the second tranche (of S\$11.77 million), and aims to ensure that stakeholders conduct regular maintenance work to restrain building deterioration, thereby preventing unaddressed works from snowballing into significant restoration costs. Monument owners will be able to receive funding from PSM for regular maintenance work based on their identified needs. The *NMF* received its third tranche of S\$15 million in 2019, dedicated to supporting monument restoration works.

To encourage responsible ownership of the National Monuments, the *NMF* is disbursed through a co-funding scheme. Application is open to National Monuments that are owned and managed by non-profit or religious organisations. To apply, monument owners will need to be able to financially co-support the restoration and or maintenance works, and the disbursement quantum is individually assessed based on the severity and urgency of the scope of work required for rectification.

The outstanding costs of works not covered by *NMF*, including those for upgrading and enhancement works unrelated to but done in conjunction with the restoration or maintenance process, are usually covered by donations raised by the monument owners.

List of National Monuments Eligible for the Application of the NMF

Criteria of eligibility:

- Owned and managed by a non-profit or religious organisation
- The organisation has the ability to finance the works before applying for contribution from the NMF
- Public has access to the National Monument

There are currently 31 non-profit or religious National Monuments that qualify for the grant:

1. Abdul Gaffoor Mosque
2. Al-Abrar Mosque
3. Alkaff Upper Serangoon Mosque
4. Armenian Church of St Gregory
5. Cathedral of the Good Shepherd
6. Chesed-El Synagogue
7. Church of Our Lady of Lourdes
8. Church of Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary
9. Church of St Peter and St Paul
10. Church of St Teresa
11. Hajjah Fatimah Mosque
12. Hong San See
13. Jamae Mosque
14. Lian Shan Shuang Lin Monastery (Former Siong Lim Temple)
15. Maghain Aboth Synagogue
16. Nagore Dargah Indian Muslim Heritage Centre
17. Prinsep Street Presbyterian Church
18. Singapore Yu Huang Gong (Former Keng Teck Whay)
19. Sri Mariamman Temple
20. Sri Srinivasa Perumal Temple
21. Sri Thendayuthapani Temple
22. St Andrew's Cathedral



23. St George's Church
24. St Joseph's Church
25. Sultan Mosque (Masjid Sultan)
26. Tan Si Chong Su
27. Telok Ayer Chinese Methodist Church
28. Thian Hock Keng (Chong Wen Ge & Chong Hock Pavilion)
29. Tou Mu Kung
30. Ying Fo Fui Kun
31. Yueh Hai Ching Temple