

**MEDIA RELEASE**

**For immediate release**

**SINGAPORE RIVER BRIDGES AND THE PADANG TO BE GAZETTED AS NATIONAL MONUMENTS**



*Cavenagh Bridge, one of the three Singapore River Bridges that will be collectively gazetted.*

*Credit line: Photo courtesy of National Heritage Board*



*The Padang in 1966 where the first National Day Parade was held.*

*Credit line: Ministry of Information and the Arts collection, courtesy of National Archives of Singapore*

**Singapore, 3 August 2019** – Singapore will welcome two new National Monuments – the Singapore River Bridges (Cavenagh, Anderson and Elgin Bridges) and the Padang. With the upcoming gazettes, the bridges and the Padang will be accorded the highest level of preservation in view of their national significance. The National Heritage Board’s (NHB) intention to gazette the National Monuments was announced by Deputy Prime Minister Heng Swee Keat today. The announcement was made to commemorate Singapore’s Bicentennial this year, in light of the significance that the Singapore River Bridges and the Padang have to our growth and development as a nation.

2 Ms Jean Wee, Director of the Preservation of Sites and Monuments division, NHB, said, “The Padang and the Singapore River Bridges have been pivotal to Singapore’s early years. Cavenagh bridge is the oldest bridge to still span the river. The gazette of Cavenagh, Anderson and Elgin Bridges as an ensemble gives recognition to the technological advancements in early



bridge construction. Functionally, they supported Singapore's expanding trade interests, as well as physically linked the commercial and government quarters. The Padang, an open space in the heart of the civic district, was the de facto town square of sorts. People would gather there for milestone events throughout the course of our nation's history – witnessing the surrender of the Japanese at City Hall, and responding to the political declarations as they were rallied by founders of our nation. It was really spontaneous public engagement on a mass scale!"

3 She added, "Today, the Padang continues to be relevant in a broad range of uses. This year's National Day Parade is very aptly held at the Padang, in commemoration of our Bicentennial, as well as our very first National Day Parade back in 1966. Both these impending gazettes will contribute to the architectural and cultural diversity of our nation's built heritage, and together with our 72 other National Monuments, preserve and celebrate the many places and stories that define Singapore and our people."

#### Significance of the Singapore River Bridges

4 The Cavenagh, Anderson and Elgin Bridges are the three most historic and architecturally impressive bridges spanning the Singapore River. Collectively, they illustrate Singapore's growth as a trading port and city. Located at the historic 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.

5 Apart from the vital role they played in Singapore's growth as a trading port and city, the Singapore River Bridges represent the progression of engineering technology in bridge construction from the mid-19th to the mid-20th centuries. From Cavenagh Bridge's use of cast iron in 1869, to Anderson Bridge's use of steel in 1909 and the use of reinforced concrete for Elgin Bridge in 1929, the three bridges illustrate 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 The Singapore River Bridges collectively highlight the relationship of trade and collaboration between Great Britain and her colonies. The structures of all three were manufactured in Britain before being shipped to Singapore, and two of the three (i.e., Cavenagh and Anderson) were designed by prominent British engineers in consultation with their counterparts here.

7 Cavenagh Bridge, Anderson Bridge and Elgin Bridge will be collectively gazetted as a National Monument as they are the most architecturally significant of the bridges along the Singapore River, bear unique ornamental features, and carry greater impact as a group rather than as individual structures. Following their gazette, the bridges will continue to be used for daily business, even as they are protected from future redevelopment. (Please refer to **Annex A** for more details on the Singapore River Bridges.)

#### Significance of the Padang

8 The Padang is one of the oldest open spaces in Singapore for public recreation, and has been a commemorative space for people to gather and participate in witnessing the key milestones of Singapore's history. Fronting the Former Supreme Court and City Hall building, the Padang is a key landmark in Singapore, with its open green space standing out amidst the built-up colonial buildings immediately ahead of it, and the larger commercial core of the city centre looming to its south-west.

9 Throughout Singapore's development, the Padang's open field has been respected as part of the urban setting. It is bordered by several National Monuments – the Cenotaph, Lim Bo Seng Memorial, Tan Kim Seng fountain on one side, flanked by the Former City Hall and Former Supreme Court on the other, and has the Civilian War Memorial and Victoria Theatre and Concert Hall across the road at either end respectively.

10 The Padang has borne witness to key events throughout Singapore's history. It was where significant events during pre- and post-independent Singapore took place, such as the victory parade celebrating the formal surrender of the Japanese in Singapore in 1945; swearing-in of



Yusof Ishak as head-of-state in December 1959; announcement of the merger with Malaysia in September 1963; and the first National Day Parade in August 1966. It also hosted dignitaries such as the Prince of Wales and had also been used by the British and Japanese for events in conjunction with the birthdays of Queen Elizabeth II and Emperor Hirohito from 1952 to 1959 and 1942 to 1945 respectively.

11 In view of its strong national, historical and social significance, the Padang is intended to be gazetted as a National Monument. With this, the character and appearance of the Padang, as a key green area and open space within the city, will be preserved for future generations. The gazette will not change the Padang's current use, whether for sports and recreation, or as part of national events such as the National Day Parade. (Please refer to **Annex B** for more details on the Padang.)

12 Additional quotes by stakeholders:

- “The Padang has always held a special place in the hearts of the Singapore Recreational Club and our members. Our club’s presence at the Padang can be traced back to 1883, where we only had a pavilion erected on site. Today, our club stands proudly at the north end of the Padang, and our members have enjoyed use of the Padang for countless sports and activities. It is a space deeply entrenched in the memories of all SRC members, and we are happy that it will now be protected for future generations of Singaporeans.”

**Mr Sareef Jaffar, General Manager/Secretary, Singapore Recreation Club**

- “As a National Monument, we at the Fullerton Hotel are excited to know that the Singapore River Bridges will be gazetted as well. Both the Cavenagh and Anderson Bridges are situated a stone’s throw away from the Fullerton Hotel, and are well utilised by our guests as they cross the bridges to explore the many attractions in the Civic District by foot. The upcoming gazette is a validation of the bridges’ vital role and significance in our Singapore story.”

**Mr Daryl Ng, Deputy Chairman, Sino Group**



13 For more information, please refer to:

- **Annex A:** Information on Singapore River Bridges
- **Annex B:** Information on the Padang
- **Annex C:** List of Singapore's National Monuments

**For media enquiries, please contact:**

Michelle Wong

DID: 6568 9152

Email: [michelle.wong@tateanzur.com](mailto:michelle.wong@tateanzur.com)

– END –

**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](http://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, 72 structures have been gazetted as National Monuments. For more information on the PSM division, please visit [www.nhb.gov.sg/psm](http://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: | Cavenagh Bridge: Likely G.C. Collyer, R.M. Ordish and Municipal Engineer A. H. De Wind<br><br>Anderson Bridge: Public Works Department (Municipal Engineer from 1901-1916, Robert Peirce and his assistant, D.M. Martia)<br><br>Elgin Bridge: Municipal Bridge Engineer T.C. Hood |
| 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, people were 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 cast iron 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

## **The Padang**

The Padang is one of the oldest open spaces in Singapore for public recreation, and has been a commemorative space for people to gather and participate in witnessing the key milestones of Singapore's history.

Fronting the Former Supreme Court and City Hall building, the Padang is a key landmark in Singapore, with its open green space standing out amidst the built-up colonial buildings immediately ahead of it, and the larger commercial core of the city centre looming to its south-west.

|            |   |
|------------|---|
| Designers: | N/A   |
| Address:   | Opposite the former City Hall and former Supreme Court Building |

### **Historic Interest of the Padang**

- In existence since c.1822, the Padang is one of the oldest open spaces in Singapore continually used for public recreation and commemoration.
- It has served as a key recreation and commemorative space for members of all communities:
  - Past sporting events during the colonial period included annual New Year's day sports including tug of war, high jump and football matches. Cricket matches were also held there.
  - Today, besides cricket, other sporting events including the Singapore Cricket Club International Rugby Sevens, and the starting and end-point of the Standard Chartered Singapore Marathon are at the Padang. In addition, the Singapore Grand Prix circuit passes the Padang en route to Anderson Bridge and the Esplanade.
  - During the colonial period, Chinese New Year, Royal Birthdays, Jubilees and Coronations, and occasionally Thaipusam would be commemorated with fireworks displays at the Padang, entertaining all members of the community.
- It was a key commemorative space for people to gather and participate as witnesses to key milestones in Singapore history. These included:
  - The World War II victory parade celebrating the formal surrender of the Japanese in Singapore on 12 September 1945.
  - The victory rally of the elected legislative council after Singapore was granted internal self-governance on 3 June 1959.
  - The installation of Yusof bin Ishak as the *Yang di Pertuan Negara* of Singapore and introduction of the state flag, coat of arms and national anthem on 3 December 1959.
  - The declaration of merger with the Federation of Malaysia on 16 September 1963.
  - The first National Day Parade on 9 August 1966, and every National Day Parade thereafter until 1975.
  - The SG50 National Day Parade on 9 August 2015.



- The Padang was also used as a space for significant nationalist parades, rallies and protests including:
  - Two Indian National Army parades on 6 July 1943 and 24 October 1943 respectively.
  - The Chinese community held a victory rally on 15 September 1945 celebrating the defeat of Japan in China.
  - A demonstration by 500 students of Nanyang University protesting perceived government bias against Nanyang University and its leader, Tan Lark Sye, on 7 October 1963.
- Some evidence suggests that the Padang could have been the site of negotiations between the British East India Company and the Sultan of Johore and Temenggong leading up to the eventual signing of the treaty on 6 February 1819 which allowed the establishment of the settlement of Singapore.

#### **Architectural Interest of the Padang**

- Visually, the Padang stands out against the highly built-up colonial and commercial core of the city centre as an open, green urban space.
- As an urban landscape, the Padang is conceptually seen in a number of colonial town plans of other former British colony cities in the region.

**List of Singapore's National Monuments**

| <b>Name of Building/Site/Structure</b> |   | <b>Date of Gazette</b>                              |
|--|---|---|
| 1                                      | Former Thong Chai Medical Institution (1892)  | 28 June 1973  |
| 2                                      | Armenian Church of St Gregory the Illuminator (1835–36)   | 28 June 1973  |
| 3                                      | St Andrew's Cathedral (Rebuilt 1856–64)   | 28 June 1973  |
| 4                                      | Former Telok Ayer Market (now Lau Pa Sat) (1890–94)   | 28 June 1973  |
| 5                                      | Thian Hock Keng (1839–42)   | 28 June 1973  |
| 6                                      | Sri Mariamman Temple (Rebuilt 1843)   | 28 June 1973  |
| 7                                      | Hajjah Fatimah Mosque (1845–46)   | 28 June 1973  |
| 8                                      | Cathedral of the Good Shepherd (1843–47)  | 28 June 1973  |
| 9                                      | Nagore Dargah (now Nagore Dargah Indian Muslim Heritage Centre) (1828–30)                         | 19 November 1974                                    |
| 10                                     | Al-Abrar Mosque (1850–55)   | 19 November 1974                                    |
| 11                                     | House of Tan Yeok Nee (The Former Salvation Army HQ) (1885)                                       | 19 November 1974                                    |
| 12                                     | Tan Si Chong Su (1876–78)   | 19 November 1974                                    |
| 13                                     | Jamae Mosque (Rebuilt 1830–35)  | 19 November 1974                                    |
| 14                                     | Sultan Mosque (Rebuilt 1924–28)   | 8 March 1975  |
| 15                                     | St George's Church (1910–13)  | 10 November 1978                                    |
| 16                                     | Hong San See (1908–12)  | 10 November 1978                                    |
| 17                                     | Sri Srinivasa Perumal Temple (Rebuilt 1961–66)  | 10 November 1978                                    |
| 18                                     | Abdul Gafoor Mosque (1907–27)   | 5 July 1979   |
| 19                                     | Siong Lim Temple (now Lian Shan Shuang Lin Monastery) (1902–08)                                   | 14 October 1980                                     |
| 20                                     | Raffles Hotel (1887–1907)   | 4 March 1987<br>(Re-gazetted on 3 June 1995)        |
| 21                                     | Telok Ayer Chinese Methodist Church (1924–25)   | 23 March 1989                                       |
| 22                                     | Goodwood Park Hotel (Tower Block) (1900)  | 23 March 1989                                       |
| 23                                     | Former Convent of Holy Infant Jesus Chapel (now CHIJMES Hall) (1903) and Caldwell House (1840–41) | 26 October 1990                                     |
| 24                                     | Istana and Sri Temasek (1867–69)  | 14 February 1992<br>(Re-gazetted on 1 October 1993) |
| 25                                     | Former City Hall (1926–29)  | 14 February 1992                                    |
| 26                                     | Victoria Theatre (1856–62) and Concert Hall (1902–05)   | 14 February 1992                                    |
| 27                                     | Former Parliament House and Annex Building (1826–27)  | 14 February 1992,<br>26 June 1992                   |
| 28                                     | Former Supreme Court (1937–39)  | 14 February 1992                                    |
| 29                                     | Former Empress Place Building (now Asian Civilisations Museum) (1864–67)                          | 14 February 1992                                    |
| 30                                     | National Museum (now National Museum of Singapore) (1884–87)                                      | 14 February 1992                                    |

|    |  |                                  |
|----|--|----------------------------------|
| 31 | Former St Joseph's Institution – Main Building (1855–67), Chapel (1911–12) and Classroom (1906–07) (now Singapore Art Museum)                        | 14 February 1992<br>26 June 1992 |
| 32 | Former Attorney-General's Chambers (now Parliament House Block C) (Rebuilt c.a. 1906)  | 14 February 1992                 |
| 33 | Former Sun Yat Sen Villa (now Sun Yat Sen Nanyang Memorial Hall) (1900–02)   | 28 October 1994                  |
| 34 | Yueh Hai Ching Temple (1852–1855)  | 28 June 1996                     |
| 35 | Maghain Aboth Synagogue (1878)   | 27 February 1998                 |
| 36 | Former Ministry of Labour Building (now Family Justice Courts) (1928)  | 27 February 1998                 |
| 37 | Former Tao Nan School (now The Peranakan Museum) (1910–12)   | 27 February 1998                 |
| 38 | Chesed-El Synagogue (1905)   | 18 December 1998                 |
| 39 | Former Hill Street Police Station (1934–36)  | 18 December 1998                 |
| 40 | Ying Fo Fui Kun (1881–82)  | 18 December 1998                 |
| 41 | Central Fire Station (1908–09)   | 18 December 1998                 |
| 42 | Former Nanyang University Library & Administration Building, The Former Nanyang University Memorial and The Former Nanyang University Arch (1954–56) | 18 December 1998                 |
| 43 | The Chinese High School Clock Tower Building (1925)  | 19 March 1999                    |
| 44 | Prinsep Street Presbyterian Church (1930–31)   | 12 January 2000                  |
| 45 | Former Admiralty House (1939)  | 2 December 2002                  |
| 46 | Tan Teck Guan Building (1911)  | 2 December 2002                  |
| 47 | College of Medicine Building (1926)  | 2 December 2002                  |
| 48 | Former Cathay Building (now The Cathay) (1939)   | 10 February 2003                 |
| 49 | Church of St Peter and St Paul (1869–70)   | 10 February 2003                 |
| 50 | MacDonald House (1949)   | 10 February 2003                 |
| 51 | RC Church of St Joseph (1906–12)   | 14 January 2005                  |
| 52 | Church of Our Lady of Lourdes (1888)   | 14 January 2005                  |
| 53 | Church of Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary (1901)   | 14 January 2005                  |
| 54 | Tou Mu Kung Temple (1919–21)   | 14 January 2005                  |
| 55 | Former Ford Factory (now Memories at Old Ford Factory) (1941)  | 15 February 2006                 |
| 56 | Former Raffles College (now NUS Campus at Bukit Timah) (1927–53)   | 11 November 2009                 |
| 57 | Church of St Teresa (1926–28)  | 11 November 2009                 |
| 58 | Former Keng Teck Whay building (now Singapore Yu Huang Gong) (est 1831)  | 11 November 2009                 |
| 59 | Former Command House (1939)  | 11 November 2009                 |
| 60 | Former St James Power Station (1926)   | 11 November 2009                 |
| 61 | Bowyer Block (1926)  | 11 November 2009                 |
| 62 | Former Singapore Conference Hall and Trade Union House (now Singapore Conference Hall) (1962–65)   | 28 December 2010                 |





|    |   |                  |
|----|---|------------------|
| 63 | Esplanade Park Memorials: Lim Bo Seng Memorial (1953-54), Tan Kim Seng Fountain (1882) and Cenotaph (1920-22) | 28 December 2010 |
| 64 | Former Tanjong Pagar Railway Station (1929-31)  | 8 April 2011     |
| 65 | Civilian War Memorial (1966-67)   | 15 August 2013   |
| 66 | Chung Cheng High School (Main) Administration Building and Entrance Arch (1965-68)                            | 10 July 2014     |
| 67 | Sri Thendayuthapani Temple (rebuilt 1980-83)  | 20 October 2014  |
| 68 | Alkaff Upper Serangoon Mosque (1931-32)   | 19 December 2014 |
| 69 | Jurong Town Hall (1971-74)  | 2 June 2015      |
| 70 | Istana Kampong Gelam ( <i>circa</i> 1839-1843)  | 6 August 2015    |
| 71 | Former Fullerton Building (1924-28)   | 7 December 2015  |
| 72 | Changi Prison Entrance Gate, Wall and Turrets (1936)  | 15 February 2016 |