



Bite-sized lessons
with big impact
from SLA's Brown
Bag sessions

Stories of grit, growth and
resilience—featuring the dreamers,
disruptors, believers, risk-takers,
visionaries, movers, fighters and
challengers from Singapore.

CONTENTS

The Idea	4	
About SLA	9	
Stories		
	10	Making Singapore Lovable: Wee Teng Wen
	20	Way of the Ninja: Lai Chang Wen
	30	A Lifelong Fascination with Storytelling: Quak Hiang Whai
	42	The Combo Specialist, with a Signature Dish: Eric Sim
	52	The Boy Who Dared to Dream: Fandi Ahmad
	62	The Modern Agora: Jaelle Ang
	72	Conquering a Multi-Million-Dollar Business—and Herself: Rachel Lim
	84	Saving Ourselves, and the Planet: Professor Koh Lian Pin
	94	Spreading the Gift of Education: Ng Yi-Xian
	106	Man on a Green Mission: Zac Toh
	118	Matters of the Mind: Dr Lim Boon Leng
	128	Lights, Camera, Action: Dasmond Koh
	138	Eye on Singapore: Darren Soh
	150	The Toast That Binds: Jesher Loi
	160	First Instincts, Best Instincts: Sharon Sim
	170	Liberating the Voice: Petrina Kow
	180	The Singaporean Who Beat Michael Phelps: Joseph Schooling
	190	Happiness, with a Side of Spice: Benjamin Boh
	200	Never Too Young to Build an Empire: Vanessa Ho
	210	Force for Good: Sybil Lau
	220	On Stage, Off Stage: Taufik Batisah
Index	230	
Photo Credits	238	

THE
IDEA

As Singapore marks its 60th year of independence, we honour the generations who have built this nation through unity, ingenuity, and resilience. SG60 is not just a celebration of how far we've come—it's also a call to action: to continue building a more inclusive, innovative, and sustainable Singapore together.

It is in this spirit that we at the Singapore Land Authority (SLA) embrace the challenge of turning constraints into possibilities. While Singapore may be bounded by limited land, our capacity for innovation and transformation knows no bounds.

As our world becomes increasingly unpredictable and challenges grow ever more complex, it is crucial—now more than ever—that we pause to reconsider how we think, work, act, and engage with our stakeholders.

The Brown Bag sessions were a series of lunchtime conversations initiated to exemplify how curiosity and collaboration can spark meaningful dialogue and inspire new ideas.

In 2021, as the effects of the pandemic continued to reverberate through the lives of individuals and across organisations and governments, we found ourselves asking, “How can we gain a real sense of what is happening on the ground? How do we stay attuned to emerging trends? How can we be inspired to generate new ideas in optimising spaces, beyond purely economic uses?”

One way, we believed, was by bringing together individuals from diverse backgrounds, industries, and areas of expertise to share their stories, thought processes, experiences, and lessons. And this was how SLA's Brown Bag sessions began.

In July 2021, we held our inaugural session with Mr Wee Teng Wen from the Lo & Behold Group. Since then, we have had the privilege of hosting over 20 speakers, primarily from the private sector, who shared their stories of resilience, entrepreneurship, and sustainability.

From sports to finance to logistics to fashion to hospitality and entertainment, these conversations have been a wellspring of learning for all of us at SLA. And this book, *Think Unlimited*, extends that spirit outward—to our fellow Singaporeans today, and for generations to come.

At SLA, we are committed to shaping and stewarding Singapore's land and geospatial resources not just with technical excellence, but with imagination and purpose. We aim to engage, co-create, and evolve alongside the people we serve by tapping into the collective talents of our community and embracing a mindset of possibility—realising a vision of space that is not just physical, but filled with potential.

As we reflect on our shared journey and look toward the future, we hope this compilation of stories will serve as a beacon of hope and inspiration for us all to always *Think Unlimited*.

This publication is a collaborative effort between SLA and our distinguished speakers, all of whom generously contributed their time and effort on a pro bono basis.

All speakers featured in this publication were from the private sector when their respective sessions took place between 2021 and 2024.

The content reflects their Brown Bag session, and each

story features them photographed against a State property that best resonates with their professional domain or personal narrative. The ■ **State properties** managed by SLA in this publication are highlighted in colour and with a square.

We extend our warmest gratitude to all the speakers who have participated in these conversations, embraced this project, and shared their wisdom.





ABOUT SLA

The Singapore Land Authority (SLA) is a statutory board under the Ministry of Law. Formed on 1 June 2001, our mission is to ensure effective use of land resources and data for the economic and social development of Singapore.

Our vision Limited Land • Unlimited Space is a creative paradox that aptly highlights our nation's constraints and SLA's commitment in addressing them. The word 'Space' is multi-dimensional, encompassing realms from the physical to the digital. 'Unlimited' represents the extent of our commitment in our quest for solutions and innovations that will contribute to the economic and social development of Singapore.

State Land and Properties

SLA manages about 11,000 hectares of State land and about 2,600 State properties, which are used for residential, commercial, social and community purposes. Through the careful planning and execution of interim uses for State properties under our management, SLA is able to maximise the use of vacant State land and properties in creative and innovative ways to support our nation's evolving economic and social needs.

Geospatial

SLA drives the use and development of geospatial information and technology by fostering a national collaborative environment that encourages innovation, knowledge sharing and value creation among public agencies, private enterprises and the community.

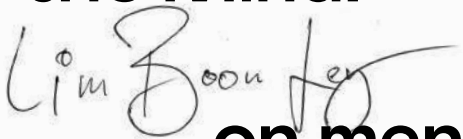
Regulatory

SLA is the national land registration and land survey authority and is responsible for maintaining accurate and reliable land ownership and land boundary systems.



Dr Lim is shot at ■ **Dignity Kitchen** at 69 Boon Keng Road, a foodcourt that employs people with disabilities. Since 2010, it has employed nearly 200 people with disabilities and trained more than 2,000 people. Mr Koh Seng Choon, the founder, was named The Straits Times Singaporean of the Year 2024.

Matters of the Mind:



on mental health stigma, stress, self-care and helping those around us

With one in eight people in the world living with a mental health condition, and one in seven in Singapore predicted to develop a mental health condition¹, mental health has emerged as one of the most pressing global health concerns. While societal awareness and resources have grown considerably, especially following the pandemic's mental health impact, stigma remains. What was once a taboo subject has gradually entered mainstream discourse, yet misconceptions continue to shape public attitudes and create challenges for those affected.

Dr Lim Boon Leng, a psychiatrist in private practice who has special interests in depression, mood and anxiety disorders, adult ADHD, and youth psychiatry, highlights this troubling disconnect.

"I think if you ask everyone if they are okay to be around people with mental illness, all of us will say yes. But if you look at studies, they will say that there's a high level of stigma. 32.4% actually express unwillingness to move next door to someone with mental illness. 42.8% will not want to work closely with a patient with mental illness."²

Perhaps most concerning is the misconception that mental illness reflects personal weakness, with some suggesting sufferers simply need to "try harder" to recover. The complexity of mental health conditions often contributes to these misunderstandings. Unlike physical illnesses with clear biomarkers, mental health diagnoses often rely on patient histories and symptom patterns.

1: World Health Organization and Singapore Mental Health Study (2016)

2: Tan, G.T.H., Shahwan, S., Goh, C.M.J. et al. Mental illness stigma's reasons and determinants (MiSReaD) among Singapore's lay public – a qualitative inquiry. BMC Psychiatry 20, 422 (2020). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12888-020-02823-6>

RIGHT
Dr Lim on *Channel 8's Hello Singapore*, on the topic of remote gambling.



“For mental health issues, there aren’t really biomarkers. So a lot of people still ask me, ‘Hey, can I do some imaging or blood test to prove or disprove that I have a mental illness?’ We cannot do that. We go by history. So history is important. And we need to get the symptoms from the patients, and match them to the diagnostic criteria.”

A multitude of factors—from biological predispositions and life experiences to stress and psychological makeup — interact in complex ways, making mental health conditions a challenging subject to unpack. As Singapore continues advancing its mental health landscape, addressing these knowledge gaps and societal biases remains crucial. With the all-pervasive nature of social media, Dr Lim cites certain platforms for spreading inaccurate mental health perceptions and promoting self-diagnosis, which can be dangerous and lead to the trivialisation of serious conditions.

“Misinformation really downplays serious conditions. It makes fun of it. And a lot of patients would feel really belittled.”

Here, Dr Lim shares key insights on mental health, and offers practical tips for nurturing well-being—whether for the youth, in the workplace, or within our personal relationships.

WELL-BEING AND STRESS

All living beings are not immune to stress, as it is our body’s natural response to demands or challenges—whether physical, emotional, or psychological. And although stress has gotten a bad reputation, it is not necessarily negative, Dr Lim explains.

“If there’s no stress, you won’t do anything—it’s just boredom. Stress actually improves your productivity initially. But as it gets higher, and you reach a peak, then productivity drops. Fatigue, exhaustion, and eventually burnout, anxiety, or depression set in.”

“Good stress” sharpens focus and drives action. But like a curve, stress has a tipping point and Dr Lim says that recognising when stress shifts from motivating to debilitating is crucial for long-term resilience. So why do we experience stress?

“DON'T
STRESS.
DO YOUR

BEST.
FORGET
THE
REST.”

"In Singapore, 1 in 7 people will develop a mental or behavioural disorder in their lifetime. And only 32% of them will seek any kind of treatment."

"Stress is a caveman's instinct, so unfortunately, it continues with us. It's a way to prepare ourselves for danger, fight or flight. That's why people who are anxious also become very irritable or aggressive, so you either fight the danger or you run away. These days, we no longer see danger, there's no lion running after us. But we have things like work running after us, so that is the mind's and body's perception of danger."

Apart from work stress, which could include dangerous work environments or burnout, stress can also be caused by factors such as life events—including a change in living environment, the dissolution of relationships, certain transitions, death and bereavement, caregiving, and having a child.

Other causes could be chronic illness, traumatic events, and existential crises.

Dr Lim also reveals how even those we perceive as being high functioning or supposedly self-assured are also susceptible to certain stressors.

"You'll be surprised; I see a lot of people, even highly functioning people from important places, who are stressed over presenting and giving speeches. They are always afraid of saying the wrong things."

UNHELPFUL THOUGHT PATTERNS AND THE POWER OF ACCEPTANCE

Our minds often trap us in rigid thought patterns that amplify stress. Known as "cognitive distortions", Dr Lim explains that it is sometimes these thought patterns that fuel anxiety and burnout. Some of these cognitive distortions include catastrophising ("The worst will happen"), perfectionism ("I must be flawless"), all-or-nothing thinking ("If I'm not perfect, I've failed"), and emotional reasoning ("I feel like a fraud, so I must be one").

"We expect too much of ourselves; we are perfectionists; we work hard. In our society, everything can be solved by working harder, right? That's always the prevailing thought process."

The antidote? Dr Lim says its radical acceptance, paired with accurate thinking.

"The glass is not half full, and it's not half empty. You don't judge the cup; it is just the way it is. So if we want to catch our negative thoughts, we need to challenge and change them. It's very simple; just ask yourself two questions: 'Is it true?' and 'Is it useful?'"

For example, believing "I should never make mistakes" crumbles under scrutiny—it's neither true nor helpful.

Dr Lim stresses the importance of acceptance, which means acknowledging your vulnerabilities and strengths without judgment. A person with impostor syndrome might resist accepting that others are more skilled in certain areas—but only by facing this reality can they grow.

"What is really useful here is the curious paradox that when we accept ourselves as what we are, then we change."

He gives us a quick framework from Cognitive Behavioural Therapy with the ABC model, a basic technique that helps us identify and

reevaluate certain irrational beliefs so that we can develop more rational and adaptive thoughts and behaviours.

The ABC Exercise:

(A)

Activating

event: Missing a tight deadline despite effort.

(B)

Belief: "I'm a failure for not being perfect."

(C)

Consequence: Shame, stress.

"We can't change the event or our initial emotions. But we can challenge the belief. Is 'I must never make mistakes' true? No. Is it useful? No. So then you can replace it with: Mistakes are part of growth. This is not difficult to do, but for it to be automatic, you need to keep practising, so practise, practise, practise."



Dr Lim consulting with a patient in his office.

Tips for building supportive work environments

1. Reintegrate gradually

"For someone who has taken leave from work due to a mental health issue, what I find to be the greatest barrier, is going back to work, because often, it is a bit of an all or nothing situation. So gradual reintegration is important. Some organisations implement a graded, protocolised way of working: 10% work, 20% work, 30% work."

2. Approach with sensitivity

"One of the things people always worry about is: how am I going to explain my absence? So we have to treat it with sensitivity. We don't want to *kay poh* and ask what happened to them. Let them come to you and explain things if they want to, and be gentle with them. There's a time and space for everything. And ultimately, it's about having that right approach, right attitude."

3. Get that access to care

"Some organisations have a doctor embedded within HR. So staff will go to that person, and they know that confidentiality is maintained. And then the doctor will liaise with us directly. There is also available subsidised care. A lot of people don't know, but all restructured hospitals have psychiatric departments, be it Changi General Hospital, Tan Tock Seng Hospital or the New Woodlands Hospital. You can also approach Family Service Centres, your general practitioner, or polyclinic doctors. They are often the first to help with treatment of anxieties, insomnia, and depression."

WORK SMARTER WITH THE 80/20 RULE

Dr Lim offers a useful tip using the Pareto Principle, also known as the 80/20 rule. It suggests that roughly 80% of outcomes or results come from about 20% of the causes or inputs—

which means, focusing on the select 20% alone can yield significant results. He illustrates how this phenomenon persists—whether in business (20% of clients cause 80% of problems) or in daily life (20% of words make up 80% of conversations). The key insight? Maximum effort doesn't equal maximum returns.

"People think they need to give 200%, but that's not possible. You can only put in 100%, and even when you reach 100%, you're not going to get 100% returns, because of diminishing returns. Discipline isn't pushing to 100%—it's knowing when to stop at 20%."

Dr Lim on *Channel NewsAsia's First Look Asia* programme, discussing the topic of positive parenting.



Dr Lim was trained at the Institute of Mental Health (IMH), where he served as the Director of the Ministry of Health (MOH)'s GP Partnership Programme for Mental Health. He was also a past visiting consultant at the National University Hospital and a Senior Clinical Lecturer with the National University of Singapore Faculty Scheme.

Additionally, he served as the honorary treasurer of the Singapore Psychiatric Association from 2009 to 2011 and was a member of the editorial board of *SMA News*, the Singapore Medical Association's monthly newsletter. Dr Lim also volunteered as vice chairman of the Ang Mo Kio Family Service Centre.

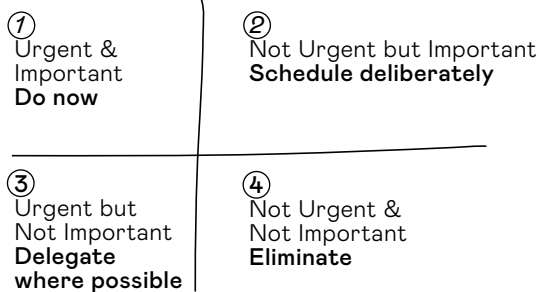
During his time in public service, Dr Lim received several awards for service excellence, including the IMH Sayang Award, the Excellence in Service Award Gold Award, and the National Healthcare Group Excellence in Action (Individual) Award.

Work isn't about doing more, but doing what matters. Identify your high-impact 20%, then reinvest the saved energy elsewhere.

"I strongly advocate for working smart, not just working hard. We need to rethink an approach that benefits both management and employees. By prioritising efficiency over mere effort, we can achieve better work-life balance, optimise our time, and ultimately enhance our mental well-being."

"If it's not important, why are you doing it?"

Another useful framework to help us prioritise our tasks is the Eisenhower Matrix. Dr Lim explains how it helps cut through clutter by sorting tasks into four clear categories:



The real challenge, he says, lies in defining what's "important". Dr Lim gave the example of asking his medical students when they last met their friends. When they admitted they never made time for friends—deeming it "not in the matrix"—he exposed a flawed value system.

"Meeting friends can be important, not urgent, and sometimes it becomes important and urgent. Just like sleep, sometimes you think sleep is not

important, not urgent, but it can escalate very quickly, so do take care of your health!”

Dr Lim co-authored the *National Clinical Practice Guideline for Bipolar Disorder* and was a member of the Professional Advisory Committee Depression and Anxiety subgroup at MOH. Dr Lim is also the co-author of *Handbook of Common Mental Illnesses in Singapore*.

Tips for nurturing youth mental health

1. Build strong foundations

“Mental health begins at home. One of the times you can communicate with your children will be during dinner, and try to make it device-free. If you’re not sure if the child is going through puberty or having real difficulties, and he or she is becoming more and more withdrawn, it’s better to get some opinions.”

2. Spot the signs early and get help

“You don’t have to see a psychiatrist first off. You can see your family doctor as they are well equipped to identify mental illnesses these days. You can bring them to a psychologist, which can be less stigmatising. In school, there are school counsellors you can approach, and sometimes, you can speak to the people around them, like their friends and teachers to know how they are doing. Usually if it’s pervasive, other people in their life will be able to see it as well.”

3. Tackle root causes

“Get to the root of the problem. For example, if it’s OCD, treat the OCD. It’s not a question of whether you’re not going to check your homework again, or not going to retie your shoelaces one more time. You’ve got to talk to them and say, ‘Hey, you know, this is not sustainable. I think we need to sit down and talk about it’. To be honest to yourself and recognise you need some treatment.”

YOUR FUTURE SELF WILL THANK YOU

Investing in mental health isn’t just wise—it’s economical, explains Dr Lim.

“For every one dollar you invest in treatment for depression and anxiety, you get \$4 returned.”

His prescription for mental wellness combines science and practicality, including regular exercise, deep abdominal breathing, healthy social connections, and engaging in hobbies.

“Exercising is the best prevention—be it for physical or mental illness. Three times a week, 20 minutes each time of cardiovascular exercise is the best prevention, I think. Mindfulness practices or meditation are also useful for the prevention of anxiety and depression. And one of the best relaxation exercises? Abdominal breathing. Once you master it, you can relax and recondition your mind and body.”

Dr Lim leaves us with a provocative question from philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche: If a demon told you that you’d relive this life endlessly, unchanged—would today’s choices fill you with pride or regret?

“It’s not just a thought experiment. It’s a litmus test for how we live now. The good news? Prevention is within reach. Simple practices—exercise, meditation, mindful pauses—can be woven into even the busiest workday. Start today, and your future self will thank you.”

Tips for helping those around us

1. Nudge, not push

“We don’t push people—we nudge, we encourage, we are non-judgemental. Instead of demanding change, try: ‘Let’s go for a walk together. If you can’t today, we’ll try tomorrow.’ A lot of times, I see family members sabotaging the treatment. The patient may be doing well on the treatment but they say, ‘Hey, why are you still taking medication? Why are you still going to your therapist? Why can’t you step out of it?’”

2. Show up

“A lot of times it’s not what we do that matters, but it’s what we don’t do that can help. So just being there, offering your presence, can be more than enough. Things are unspoken but people can feel it, that you’re there for them. We want to go with a very non-punitive approach.”

3. Debunk medication myths

“Antidepressants are never addictive and there’s a misconception that they are. I’ll give you this illustration—if person A has depression, and takes her antidepressants, and person B has depression, and is not getting treated, who do you think in five years would do better, person A or person B?”

4. Seek to understand

“It is good to understand the whole condition, to accompany them to the doctors if you can, speak to the psychologist if need be, understand their problems, and help them take their medication, because it’s very easy to forget. Sometimes we just want to help them with the little things.”

南洋咖啡
ANYANG KOPI



"Creativity and innovation allow us to break through limitations and reimagine possibilities. With thoughtful planning and design, we can transform limited physical spaces into boundless opportunities for community, growth, and connection. As Singapore moves forward, I hope we can embrace a more holistic approach—one that protects the cultural identity and spirit they embody. Spaces should reflect and celebrate our rich heritage, including the stories of our Orang Laut and Peranakan communities. True progress is not just about development but also about preserving the intangible heritage that makes us who we are."

When I think unlimited, I think of...
the human capacity to adapt, innovate, and create meaning despite constraints.

I am unlimited when...
I empower others to overcome challenges and find purpose beyond their struggles.

I N D E X



↑ Once a British military barracks in the 1800s, **■ Dempsey** has evolved into a vibrant lifestyle and dining destination near the Singapore Botanic Gardens. Nestled in lush greenery, it blends colonial heritage with modern charm, featuring a mix of restaurants, cafés, boutiques and sports and wellness establishments. Remnants like tiled-roof structures and old playing fields hint at its military past. Today, Dempsey is celebrated both locally and internationally as one of Singapore's premier spots for dining and leisure.

LEFT: Dempsey was originally the site of a nutmeg plantation that later became Tanglin Barracks for British troops in the 1800s. The site was also once the headquarters of the Far East Land Forces, and later the headquarters of the Ministry of Defence (MINDEF) and the Central Manpower Base (CMPB).

➤ Built in the mid-1960s as married quarters for British military personnel, **■ Chip Bee Gardens** has transformed into a trendy lifestyle enclave. Once home to expatriate teachers after the British withdrawal, it now features a mix of residential and commercial spaces, blending heritage with contemporary charm. Known for its distinctive 1960s-style design, the estate is now popular for its eclectic blend of local lifestyle and F&B brands, including quaint cafés and homegrown brand names.



➔ ■ **Dignity Kitchen at 69 Boon Keng Road** is a social enterprise-run food court staffed by individuals with disabilities and from disadvantaged backgrounds. Operated by Project Dignity and founded by Koh Seng Choon, engineer turned entrepreneur and recipient of the Straits Times Singaporean of the Year 2024 award for his efforts, the outlet offers meaningful employment through skills training and food service roles. Housed in a striking red State property since 2021, it serves affordable local hawker fare and baked goods in an inclusive environment. Beyond being a vibrant dining spot, Dignity Kitchen stands as a powerful symbol of empowerment, mental health advocacy, and social change, aligning with broader efforts to promote dignity and opportunity for all.



↩ The charming row of restored 1930s heritage buildings at ■ **52-56 Kampong Java Road** will soon become a vibrant multi-disciplinary arts sandbox for experimentation, creation, and collaboration. Originally residences for municipal officers, the buildings sit along a road named after Javanese gardeners who once sold produce along Arab Street. Awarded to 19SixtyFive Pte Ltd via a joint tender by SLA and the National Arts Council, the space will feature acoustically treated studios, galleries, and performance venues. It will also host live performances, arts markets, and arts festivals - enriching Singapore's artistic landscape and fostering creative growth.



➔ Built in 1956, the ■ **Former Bukit Timah Fire Station** served as part of the post-war Fire Service expansion and features distinctive elements like a hose drying tower and the Colony of Singapore's coat of arms. Decommissioned in 2005, the 0.86ha site—comprising the main station, firefighters' quarters, and Station Master's residence—has been gazetted for conservation. Strategically located near the Rail Corridor and nature reserves, it is now set to be revitalised by LHN Facilities Management into a mixed-use community node, offering co-living, heritage, and nature experiences with sustainable, zero-energy features while preserving its historic character.





↑ Originally known as Flagstaff House, the **Former Command House** was built between 1937 and 1938 as the residence of Malaya's senior military commander. Designed in a distinctive Arts and Crafts-inspired style with pitched roofs and brick archways, the house later provided lodging for royalty, a president in office, and senior military figures. In 2007, UBS, the Swiss investment bank, made it its business university's Asia-Pacific campus. Now a national monument, the State property continues its legacy as an elegant event venue, blending heritage, architecture, and history with quiet distinction.



↑ The former St Andrew's Mission Hospital at **5 Kadayannallur Street** provided respite and care to impoverished women and children in its early years, with a unique triangular air well in the middle of the building to let in natural light and ventilation. Originally built in the 1920s, it has served various purposes over the years, including as a government medical store, an outpatient dispensary and an office space. It has most recently been transformed into **KADA**, a creative lifestyle and wellness hub with co-working and co-living spaces popular with the youth. The building, one of Singapore's earliest Modernist structures, houses one of the nation's oldest electric lifts, still in operation today.

1. Crowd of onlookers during the opening of the outpatient clinic at Kadayannallur Street (1964).
2. Maxwell Road outpatient dispensary (1989).



↓ Launched in November 2024, **The Foundry** is a collaborative hub for social purpose organisations housed in the former Elections Department building at **11 Prinsep Link**. The Foundry is a result of a partnership with The Majority Trust, SLA, Tote Board, and the Singapore Government Partnerships Office, with its 17,000 sq ft space housing over 20 non-profits and social enterprises. With an aim to foster a vibrant ecosystem, The Foundry supports idea incubation, community-building, and collaborative innovation to address Singapore's evolving social challenges.



➔ ■ **1925 Quarters at 79-95 Hindoo Road** is situated in a beautifully restored row of red-brick, two-storey building in the heritage Little India precinct. Originally built in 1927 to house junior Asian staff of the Municipality of Singapore, this State property has been transformed into a modern co-living space by Eco-Energy Pte Ltd and Cove Living Pte Ltd. The building retains its distinctive colonial architecture, featuring pitched roofs and fair-faced brick columns, and reflects the shared history of other municipal quarters in the area.



↓ Opened in 1937, ■ **Old Kallang Airport** was Singapore's first purpose-built civilian aerodrome and was hailed as the world's most modern at the time. Described as the "finest airport in the British Empire", it gained international recognition, with aviator Amelia Earhart praising it as "an aviation miracle of the East". The Art Deco terminal later housed the People's Association from 1960 to 2009 and is now part of a conserved site with a hangar, service blocks, and an entrance gateway. Since 2011, it has hosted a variety of events, from arts and culture to corporate launches.

4. Immigration check point (1948).

5. Aerial view in 1957. The foreground shows Nicoll Highway, while the circular control tower can be seen beside the highway on the right.

↑ ■ **New Bahru at 46 & 58 Kim Yam Road** occupies the former site of Nan Chiau High School, a historically significant educational institution that was first the Nan Chiau Teachers' Training School established in 1941. Today, the site has been reimagined into a dynamic lifestyle destination that blends residential, retail, and commercial uses. Developed by the Lo and Behold Group, it houses an exciting collection of homegrown brands and offers community-centric spaces and activities, and is well visited by locals and international tourists.



3. Nan Chiau High School in 1993.

➔ Built between 1952 and 1953, **■ Pasir Panjang Power Station** began with Station A, which was named when Station B was added in 1965. Its iconic red-brick design reflects Singapore's early urban transformation. Together, the two stations powered Singapore's industrial boom in the 1960s. In recent years, its arresting architecture was the stunning backdrop for the staging of shows and events, including the Louis Vuitton Spring Summer 2023 trunk show and the immersive exhibition on Singapore's founding Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew's life and legacy.

BOTTOM: Aerial view of Pasir Panjang Power Station (1957).



↑ The **■ Ridout Tea Gardens** in Queenstown was once home to Singapore's first Japanese-themed community garden, later redeveloped in 1980 into a traditional Japanese Garden (RIGHT) with ponds, pavilions and bridges. In the late 1990s, the site was transformed into the McDonald's Ridout Garden outlet, blending modern dining with the location's tranquil past. Today, it stands as one of the few recognisable flagship McDonald's outlets worldwide, drawing families for its food as much as its unique and scenic setting.





↑ The **State Land @ Margaret Drive**, once the site of Hua Yi Secondary School or previously known as Hua Yi Government Chinese Middle School, is now home to a restored public running track. Established in 1956 as Singapore's first government-aided Chinese secondary school, Hua Yi was renowned for its academic excellence and sports achievements. After relocating in the 1980s, the school left behind its legacy at Margaret Drive. The newly restored running track honours its historical connection to education and sports, providing a community space for residents to enjoy.



↑ The Team Singapore Wall of Fame at **8C Jalan Kledek** features a vibrant mural celebrating Singapore's Olympians and Paralympians. Created by graffiti artist Ceno2, it showcases Team Singapore athletes Nur Syahidah Alim, Shanti Pereira, Maximilian Maeder, Loh Kean Yew, and Yip Pin Xiu for their sporting achievements on the world stage. The location also houses the Vintage Camera Museum, home to over 1,000 cameras that offer a fascinating glimpse into photographic history. It's a unique landmark in Kampong Glam where sport, art, and photography come together.

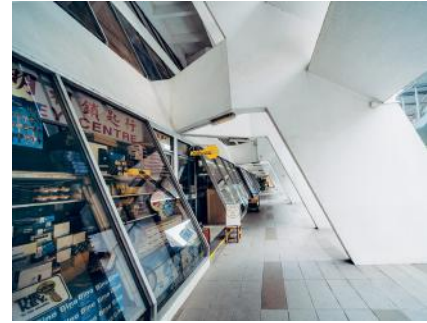
↓ **Smith Street**—named after Sir Cecil Clementi Smith, Governor of the Straits Settlements—is a heritage-rich enclave in Chinatown where conserved shophouses and pedestrian-friendly spaces bring the area's storied past to life. Once known as Hei Yuen Kai or "Theatre Street" and home to the iconic Lai Chun Yuen Theatre, Smith Street has been rejuvenated with exciting lifestyle concepts including local favourites and international brands while preserving local Chinese culture. With its unique blend of history, culture and architecture, Smith Street is a living showcase of Chinatown's enduring identity and evolving vibrancy.



↓ EtonHouse International Education Group's headquarters at **6A and 8 Stevens Road** occupies a pair of conserved colonial-era heritage bungalows managed by SLA. Once a residential property—including the former home of philanthropist and businessman Lee Kong Chian—the heritage site has been thoughtfully repurposed into a serene, greenery-filled office space. Retaining elements like timber floors and arched doorways, the design features biophilic elements and clever adaptive reuse.



➔ The **Tanjong Katong Complex**, a familiar and iconic landmark in the heart of the Geylang Serai area, is set for rejuvenation. These include plans to dedicate a portion of the redeveloped space to tenants representing traditional Malay trades, preserving and celebrating the heritage and culture of the Malay community. With its deep historical roots and strong cultural ties, the revitalised Tanjong Katong Complex will continue to serve as a vibrant hub, honouring its past while evolving to meet the future needs of the community.



⤵ **Temasek Shophouse at 28 Orchard Road** was known for its distinctive architecture. Built in 1928, it was one of the first buildings in Singapore to feature spiral staircases. The social impact hub will expand to include restored units at **14, 22, and 38 Orchard Road** with reinstated historic features such as its Shanghai plaster façade, further highlighting Orchard Road's transformation from nutmeg plantations and motor showrooms to a place of renewed purpose for people, planet, and community.



↑ ■ **Vidacity** is a sustainability innovation hub located at the former Loyang Primary School (RIGHT), now creatively repurposed as a space for green entrepreneurship by City Sprouts. The site features co-working areas, workshops, and living labs focused on urban farming and sustainable technologies. Home to startups in fields such as agriculture, water treatment, reusable materials, and waste innovation, Vidacity brings together a community dedicated to building solutions for a more sustainable future.



↶ The former community centre at **10 Kampong Eunus** is now home to ■ **Vivistop Kampong Eunus**, Singapore's only non-profit makerspace dedicated to children and youth. Operated by Vivita, the space offers hands-on workshops, camps, and competitions that introduce young learners to robotics, AI, and emerging technologies. Supported by public sector and community partners, this SLA-led initiative has transformed the State property into a vibrant hub for creative learning and empowering the next generation of tech-savvy changemakers.



PHOTO CREDITS

All images in this publication, unless otherwise specified, are provided courtesy of the speakers.

The numbers refer to pages.

Hosanna Swee

12 (Top left)

Finbarr Fallon

14, 18 (Bottom right), 110 (Bottom left)

Colossal Photos

14 (Top right), 66 (Top), 68 (Top)

Lisa Cohen

15 (Top), 16 (Bottom left)

Darren Soh

16 (Top & right), 236 (Bottom left)

**Ministry of Information and the Arts
Collection, courtesy of National
Archives of Singapore**

31, 191 (Top), 232 (Photo no. 1)

**The Straits Times © SPH Media Limited.
Reprinted with permission**

54, 55, 56 (Top left), 58, 59 (Top),
191 (Bottom)

WriteHaus Asia

60 (Top)

BP Chua, Junpiter Futbol

60 (Bottom)

E.K. Yap

68 (Bottom left)

**People's Association, Chingay Parade
Singapore**

130 (Top right)

National Archives of Singapore

152 (Left), 232 (Photo no. 2), 233
(Photo no. 3)

Alvin Toh

182, 185, 187, 188 (Top)

International Olympic Committee

184

Simone Castrovillari

188 (Bottom)

Fremantle / 19

222 (Top right)

Jerome Lim

230 (Top right), 232 (Top right),
233 (Top)

**Collection of the National Museum of
Singapore, National Heritage Board**
230 (Clockwise from top left, 4th photo),
234 (Bottom left & right)

**Civil Aviation Authority of Singapore
Collection, courtesy of National
Archives of Singapore**

233 (Photo no. 4)

**Aerial photographs by the British
Royal Air Force between 1940 to 1970s,
from a collection held by the National
Archives of Singapore.**

Crown copyright.

233 (Photo no. 5), 234 (B&W photo)

Singapore Tourism Board

235 (Top right)

When I think **unlimited**, I think of...



*Inspired to think
unlimited? Let
this space be
where your own
story begins.*

I am **unlimited** when...

Copyright © 2025
Singapore Land Authority.
This publication may include material for
which copyright is held by other parties.

DESIGN

Do Not Design

WRITER

Charlene Kuah

PHOTOGRAPHER

Sayher Heffernan

PRINTER

AC Dominie

PUBLISHER

Singapore Land Authority
55 Newton Road, Revenue House
#09-01, Singapore 307987

EXTRACT FROM ISBN

978-981-94-3583-8 (e-Book)

DISCLOSURE

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, transmitted or used in any form or by any means - electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise - without the prior written permission of the copyright owner(s), including the publisher.

The information in this publication is based on the featured individuals' Brown Bag sessions held at the Singapore Land Authority between 2021 and 2024 and has been updated where necessary and appropriate as of July 2025. The views expressed by the featured individuals do not necessarily represent the views of the Singapore Land Authority.

Whilst every care has been taken to ensure the accuracy of the information in this publication, the Singapore Land Authority makes no representations or warranties as to its completeness, reliability, accuracy, or current relevance, and accepts no liability for any loss or damage arising from reliance on such information.



Wee Teng Wen
Lai Chang Wen
Quak Hiang Whai
Eric Sim
Fandi Ahmad
Jaelle Ang
Rachel Lim
Professor Koh Lian Pin
Ng Yi-Xian
Zac Toh
Dr Lim Boon Leng
Dasmond Koh
Darren Soh
Jesher Loi
Sharon Sim
Petrina Kow
Joseph Schooling
Benjamin Boh
Vanessa Ho
Sybil Lau
Taufik Batisah



Limited Land • Unlimited Space

