



Weddings on State Properties

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Weddings on State Properties

Marriage is one of life's key milestones, and it is only natural for couples to want to celebrate their union by making the occasion as special as possible.

As lovebirds look towards creating memories that they can look back on fondly for the rest of their lives together, a big part of putting together a beautiful (and Instagrammable!) wedding lies in the venue.

Amidst the modern skyscrapers and high-rise apartments of our bustling cosmopolitan city, one may think that enchanting wedding locations may not be easy to find. However, grand and scenic wedding venues can be found dotted all around our island – if only one knows where to look.

Some of these fairytale locations include the visually distinctive Black and White houses which are managed by the Singapore Land Authority (SLA). What may come as a surprise to many is that some of these properties have actually been made available for uses such as wedding photoshoots and even wedding events!

To find out more about the appeal of these iconic heritage buildings, LAND spoke to two young couples, one of which had their wedding photoshoot at a black and white house, while the other actually held their wedding reception at one of these distinctive State properties!

Ron Ho and Valerie Ho Wedding Reception at 8 Winchester Road



The Black and White House at 8 Winchester Road was ideal for Ron and Valerie who wanted a wedding location with lots of character

1) How did you find out that State properties were available for wedding receptions?

It all started out with us wanting to have a cosy wedding in a bungalow setting. Besides privately owned bungalows, we also looked at some alternatives, and that was when we realised that there were some Black & White bungalows on Goodwood Hill that were managed by SLA.

We put together a few slides to present our idea and sent it to the SLA enquiries portal. From there, we were contacted by Tze Wei from SLA's residential leasing team, and the planning process took off!

2) Why did you decide to have your reception at a Black and White house instead of the usual locations like at a restaurant or hotel?

We felt that restaurants and hotels were too commercial and too transient. We wanted something more enduring, with more character and history to the place. At the same time, the idea of being able to design our ideal wedding from scratch was very appealing. It turned the whole process into a memorable journey, rather than just a single day of celebrations because of all the preparation. The best part, however, was being able to involve our friends and family on the journey. We still talk fondly about our wedding all the time!

3) How did the location make the reception special? What were some features of the Black and White house that you made use of during the reception?

8 Winchester Road was great because it had a large and grand entrance and hallway, which was ideal for our walk down the aisle. It also had bedrooms upstairs as well as a sitting area which we used as our individual preparation rooms at opposite ends of the house. There were even separate staircases so the groom would not bump into the bride during the preparation. We also placed sofas at the sitting area upstairs, converting it into a living room for the tea ceremony.

My favourite part of the wedding was the session we had by the pool deck, with the speeches, games, and all the other activities. Other wedding venues would not have been as versatile to offer such different "settings", from being grand to cosy, just by holding events in different parts of the house!

As a bonus, our pictures from the day will never look dated because Black and White houses have a certain timeless quality to them.

4) What was the process like? Did you or the wedding organisers face any challenges during the planning and execution of the event?

The process was surprisingly smooth, and we appreciated that SLA also offered us other locations as contingencies, in case 8 Winchester Road had to be taken off the market before our wedding.

The way SLA made arrangements for the house and lease not only demonstrated a high level of understanding of the needs and constraints of a wedding, but balanced other interests such as keeping the property on the market and managing noise in the neighbourhood.

We got a wedding planner to help manage part of the logistics, and it was actually very straightforward managing the process together with SLA and the managing agent, Cushman and Wakefield.

We were also really thankful that the property management was planned in such a way that pest control, landscaping, painting and such were all settled before the wedding so the property was in optimal condition without requiring us to be involved.

5) Would you recommend a Black and White house as an event location to your friends/family in the future?

Definitely – it was so private and so special! We are constantly telling friends and family to consider such an option, but there needs to be an understanding that it requires a high amount of involvement with plenty of "project management".

For us, having an experienced wedding planner helped a lot. Also, the fact that Ron is a realtor and thus familiar with real estate contracts made the process a lot less stressful for us.

Muhammad Faiz and Siti Nur Faizah Wedding Photoshoot at 19 Adam Park



Other than the groom and the bride, the photographers also had a great experience shooting at the historical location

1) How did you find out that State properties are available for wedding photoshoots?

I was browsing through SLA's Instagram and was surprised to find that there were couples who had their wedding photoshoot at State properties such as the Old Kallang Airport and Pasir Panjang Power Station. However, I did not see any photoshoots at the Black and White houses, so I decided to write in to enquire if these heritage houses were available for wedding shoots—and they were!

2) Why did you decide to have your photoshoot at a Black and White house instead of the usual photoshoot locations like at a park or beach?

We wanted an indoor location as we planned to have our photoshoot in the afternoon. When we raised this idea with our photographer, he was also keen to shoot at a Black and White house.

Personally, I have always liked the timeless and iconic design of the Black and White houses and have always wanted to do my wedding photoshoot there. I am glad my husband was into the idea too and it became a reality!

3) How did the location make the photoshoot special? What were some features of the Black and White house that you made use of during the photoshoot?

When I envisioned the photoshoot, I thought we would just make use of the iconic exterior façade of the building. I never imagined there were so many rooms and hallways for us to explore inside the house itself.

Our photographer did a really good job in capturing the unique angles from almost every corner of the house, showcasing the intricate interior details of the house as well as the rich exterior design. The heritage value of the property also made the photoshoot very special.

4) What was the process like? Did you/the photographers face any challenges during the shoot?

Accessing the property was a very smooth process thanks to SLA.

We did not face many challenges during the shoot and even managed to complete the photoshoot way ahead of schedule.

Even better, we were not the only ones who enjoyed the process – our photographers were glad to have had the unique opportunity to shoot at the historical location as well.

5) Would you recommend a Black and White as a photoshoot location to your friends/family in the future?

It was such an amazing and unique experience for us and we would definitely recommend it to our friends and family!

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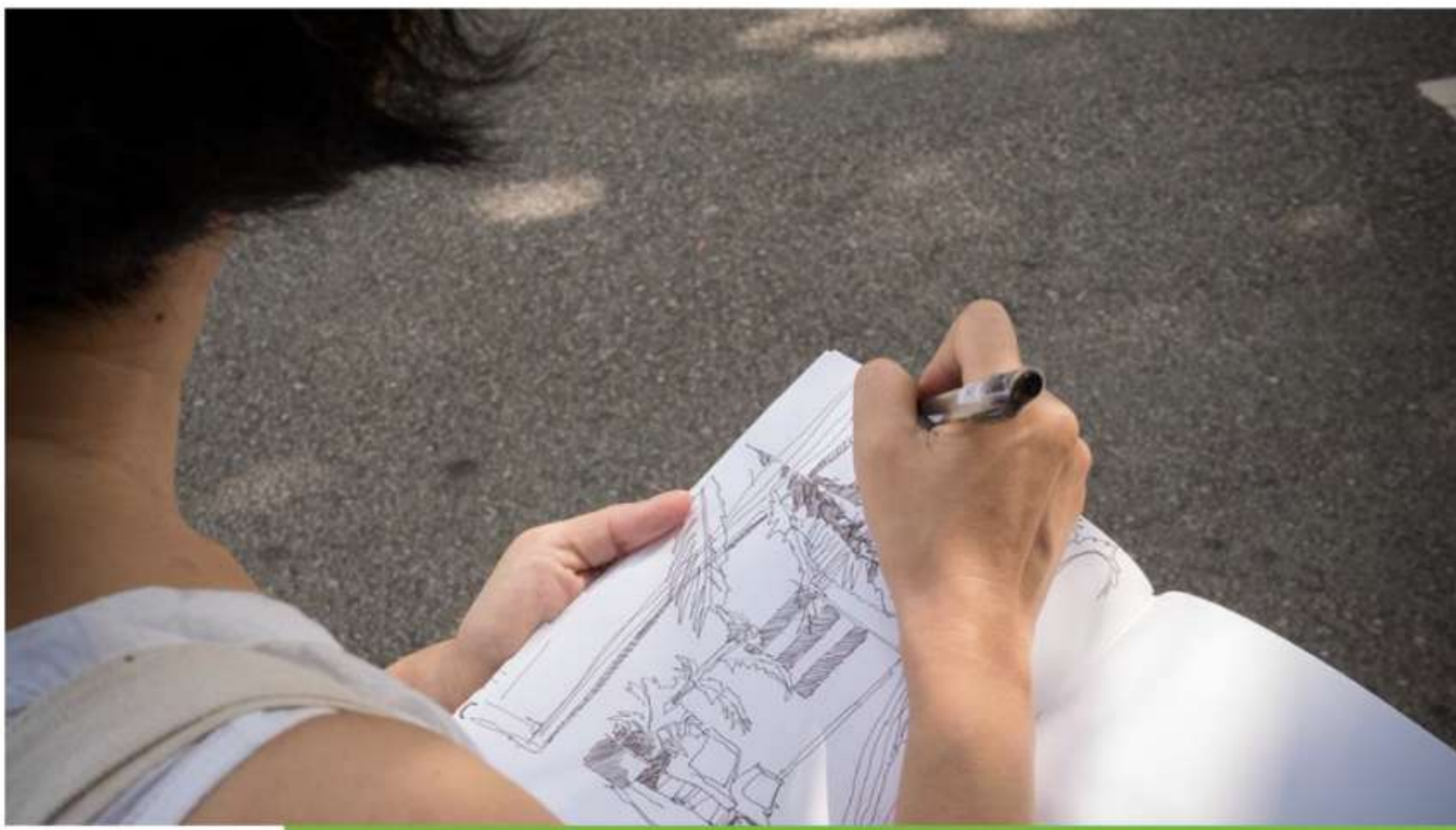
Postcards at Chip Bee Gardens



Miss Su-Ann Oh's artworks of Chip Bee Gardens are now on display at the Chip Bee Gardens show house

With its curated collection of artisanal shops and cafes, Chip Bee Gardens is a quaint and scenic neighbourhood that attracts not just visitors, but also many local artists who look to the quiet enclave, as well as its residents and inhabitants, as inspiration for their art.

One such artistic spirit is Ms Su-Ann Oh. Having lived in Chip Bee Gardens since 2012, Su-Ann first started sketching the intricacies of the charming neighbourhood in 2018. Inspired by the charm of everyday life, her drawings range from terracotta pots to sunbathing cats to decorative ornaments, and the sight of her wandering around the neighbourhood and sketching in her notebook is not uncommon to residents and regular visitors to the area.



Realising that she could make quicker drawings on postcards, Su-Ann decided to come up with a set of postcard-sized sketches and Postcards from Chip Bee was born!

The intricate details of her drawings coupled with a light splattering of colour give her works a unique offbeat charm, much like the neighbourhood which serves as both her residence and inspiration. Her works have been extremely well received, specially by her fellow residents. Su-Ann reflected: "My neighbours were enthusiastic and encouraging. It has been such a pleasure to share the everyday charm of the neighbourhood with the people who know it best. Our shared experience of the neighbourhood made the drawings even more meaningful; they spark conversations about the things we love about our little corner of the world!"

Realising that she could make smaller and quicker drawings on postcards, and receiving encouragement from other residents who started to ask for a book of her drawings, Su-Ann decided to come up with a set of postcard-sized sketches – and Postcards from Chip Bee was born!

However, fret not if you have not been able to get your hands on these pocket-sized works of art. Su Ann has also begun to produce her works on Chip Bee Gardens in attention-grabbing A3 size, now painted in full watercolour to add to its allure. These art pieces will allow yet another level of appreciation for this uniquely serene location in our bustling city.



The intricate details together with a light splattering of colour give the drawings a unique offbeat charm

Embracing the artistic spirit at Chip Bee Gardens, the Singapore Land Authority (SLA) has looked to further cultivate and encourage these burgeoning creative pursuits, and has provided spaces around the neighbourhood for local artists to exhibit their artwork.

Displayed in its full glory at the aforementioned Chip Bee Gardens show house, visitors can now not only admire Su Ann's artworks, but at the same time also enjoy the show room, which was recently given a facelift as well as a "smart boost".

Together with the charismatic cafes, artisan boutiques and the rows of picturesque terrace houses that line the road, there is certainly no lack of things to do or sights to see in this enchanting neighbourhood, as Su Ann and the residents of Chip Bee Gardens will attest!

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Pasir Panjang Power District

When it comes to reimagining a power station, hotels, theme parks and towers built from old shipping containers are hardly the first ideas that come to mind. However, these were just some of the creative entries proposed to redevelop the Pasir Panjang Power District, as part of the Government's plans to transform the Greater Southern Waterfront.

The "Power-Up Pasir Panjang" exhibition, held at the URA Centre from 13 January to 7 February 2020, showcased the most exciting ideas submitted for a competition organised by the Singapore Land Authority (SLA) and the Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA). Held from April to June 2019, the competition called for ideas to reimagine the area in the next 15-20 years, and saw professionals, students and even members of the public come together to submit ideas under two topics: the first, a master plan for the whole Power District; the second, ways to re-purpose Power Station A.



10 proposals were selected for their originality, creativity, and appreciation for the heritage of the Pasir Panjang area

Altogether, 79 submissions were received across the Open, Tertiary and Professional categories, with 10 proposals eventually selected for their originality, creativity, and appreciation for the heritage of the Pasir Panjang area. Some interesting ideas included building two new towers that would pay homage to Power Station A's two demolished chimneys, as well as an idea to use the existing turbine hall as an exhibition space for creative professionals.



79 submissions were received across the Open, Tertiary and Professional categories

Chief Executive of SLA, Mr Tan Boon Khai said: "We are excited by the creativity and originality in the entries submitted. They gave us a glimpse into the potential as to how we can make this iconic building even better. We look forward to realising this potential through the transformation of the iconic property into an exciting and attractive destination for all."

Following the ideas competition, SLA and URA will now seek professional opinions on the feasibility of the winning ideas through a "Request for Information" exercise that will facilitate detailed discussion with developers and possible future users of the location.

The Pasir Panjang Power District, which was the size of 21 football fields, was built around the two original buildings of the first power station, oil tanks, and several outlying buildings. However, Power Station A ceased operations in the mid-1980s and Power Station B in the late 1990s, as more modern power stations at Senoko and Pulau Seraya were built. Some of the features of the modern-day Pasir Panjang district included Masjid Ahmad, a mosque originally built in 1934; the Pasir Panjang Wholesale Centre, which was opened in 1983; "Reflections@Bukit Chandu", which was an interactive war memorial that commemorated the Battle for Pasir Panjang during World War Two; and Haw Par Villa, which was originally named 'Tiger Balm Gardens' and opened in 1937.

Given the iconic nature of this State property and the surrounding area, one cannot help but look forward to plans that would both transform and preserve the unique heritage of the Pasir Panjang Power District.

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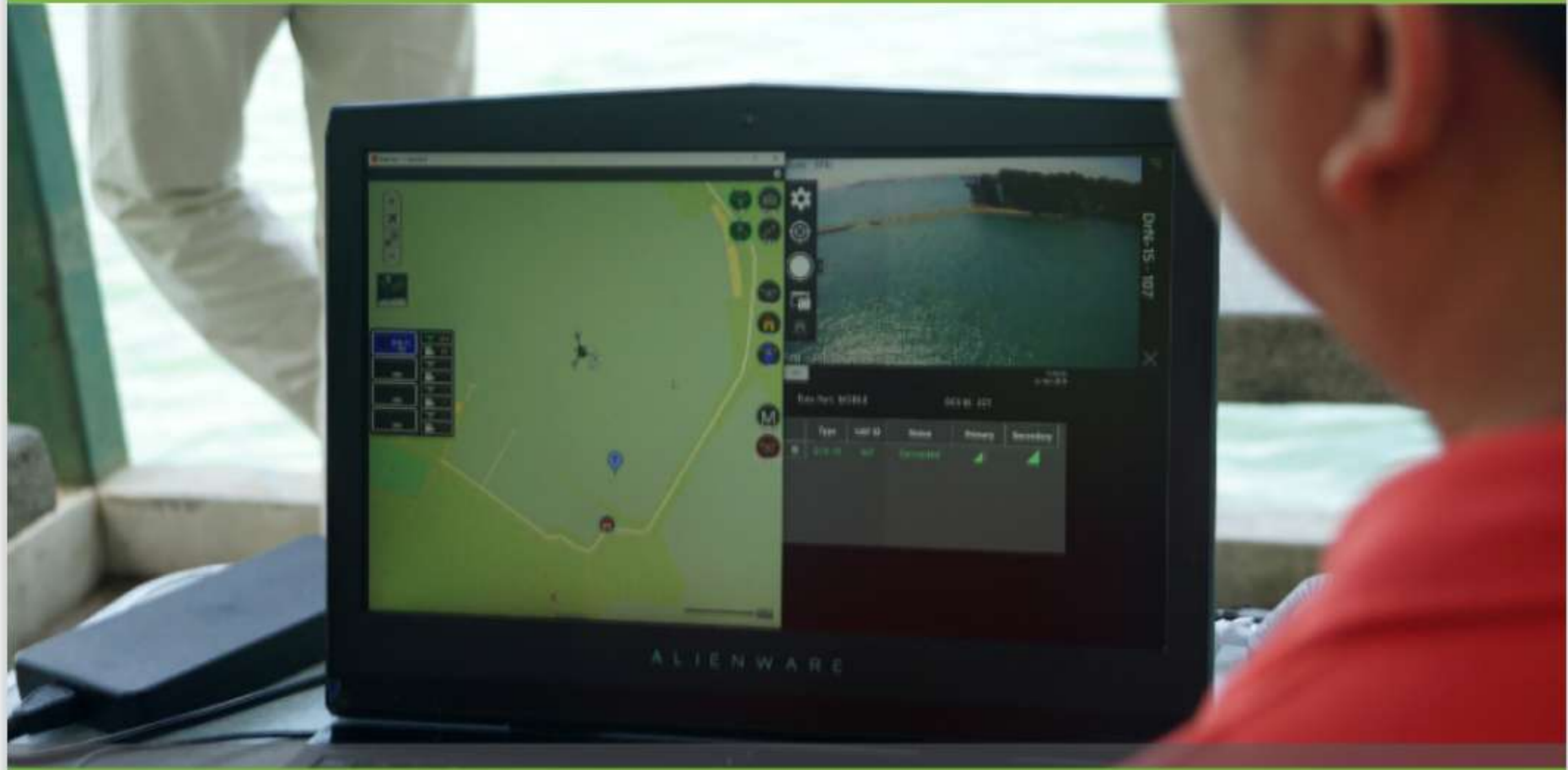
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Bringing Connectivity to Singapore's Southern Islands

As Singapore progresses towards achieving our goal of becoming a Smart Nation, the importance of the quality, reach and robustness of our internet connection cannot be understated. Given Singapore's size and level of technological advancement, it is easy to assume that we enjoy extensive network coverage across the island. However, how about the parts of Singapore that are not on the main island?

In fact, Singapore is also made up of numerous offshore islands that, due to geographical and pragmatic reasons, do not enjoy the same extensive network coverage as the rest of Singapore.

Although these islands are some distance away from the mainland, the importance of connectivity to these islands cannot be overlooked. Ms Thong Wai Lin, Assistant Chief Executive (Land Operations) of the Singapore Land Authority (SLA), says: "SLA manages some 11,000ha of State land and uses Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV), sensors and Internet of Things (IoT) applications for more efficient and effective management of State land. However, intermittent and poor connectivity in the Southern Islands has hampered the deployment of such technology."

To improve the situation, the Singapore Land Authority (SLA), Government Technology Agency of Singapore (GovTech) and Civil Aviation Authority of Singapore (CAAS) is currently conducting trials to provide low-cost, reliable and long-range wireless connectivity for data transmission using a broadcast band known as TV White Space (TVWS). The test, which is conducted on five southern islands – St John's Island, Kusu Island, Kias Island, Pulau Seringat and Pulau Hantu Besar – is part of the Smart Nation Sensor Platform project, an initiative which aims to enable everyone and everything, everywhere, to be connected all the time.

TVWS, which is commonly used for broadcasting analogue signals, was chosen as it is more resistant to physical externalities – an important factor especially in an island setting, where signals may be disrupted by anything from sea waves and weather conditions to obstacles such as passing ships. However, just how robust is it?



The trial, which will test drone flights with TVWS connectivity, will also distinguish Singapore as the first country in the region to do so

In the trial, agencies will work with a Singapore start-up, Whizpace, to explore the use of TVWS connectivity to support sensor and IoT deployments on these Southern Islands. TVWS will be used to provide long-distance wireless connectivity across the sea and to various islands that could be as far as 10km away. At the same time, IoT will be used to connect and control UAVs, with the quality of the video data that will be transmitted from UAV flights in near real-time circumstances being observed as the robustness of the connection is monitored and studied. Coincidentally, this trial distinguishes Singapore as the first country in the region to test drone flights with TVWS connectivity!



Commonly used for broadcasting analogue signals, TVWS was chosen as it is more resistant to physical externalities

Besides facilitating island maintenance and inspections, TVWS could also potentially provide internet network connectivity, and thus a more pleasurable experience, for visitors to popular Southern Islands such as St John's Island and Kusu Island.

As a radio spectrum in TV broadcast bands, TVWS is not widely used in Singapore. However, the success of the trial may just change the way we perceive and utilise it. Lim Chinn Hwa, Senior Director (Smart Nation Platform Solutions) of GovTech, says: "TVWS can potentially be an affordable and reliable solution. Through this trial, we hope to show how the Public Service is always innovating to serve citizens and businesses better through technology."

Images by GovTech

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FOURSQUARE

Meet a GeoWorks GeoPartner: Foursquare

Many Singaporeans would be familiar with Foursquare – the mobile app which makes personalised recommendations of the best or most popular nearby amenities such as food or entertainment outlets, based on a user's location and search data.

However, Foursquare is much more than just a lifestyle app – it is actually a location intelligence company which is rapidly expanding its presence in Asia (with its base located in Singapore). Joining GeoWorks as a GeoPartner last year, this partnership allows users of SLA's OneMap app to access Points of Interests (POIs) and amenities in a selected area.

With several exciting plans under its belt, and surely more to come, GeoWorks speaks to Ms Aditi Kohli who has recently joined as Managing Director, APAC at Foursquare. Aditi comes with extensive experience in new media and location technology space having worked for Near.co, Walt Disney, Turner & Viacom in Singapore.



Ms Aditi Kohli, Managing Director, APAC of Foursquare: "GeoWorks has been a great partner in helping us make connections with the location industry in Singapore!"

1) Tell us about Foursquare and its solutions

Foursquare is a location intelligence company headquartered in New York City, USA. We launched over 10 years ago as a consumer-facing app for sharing location and exploring.

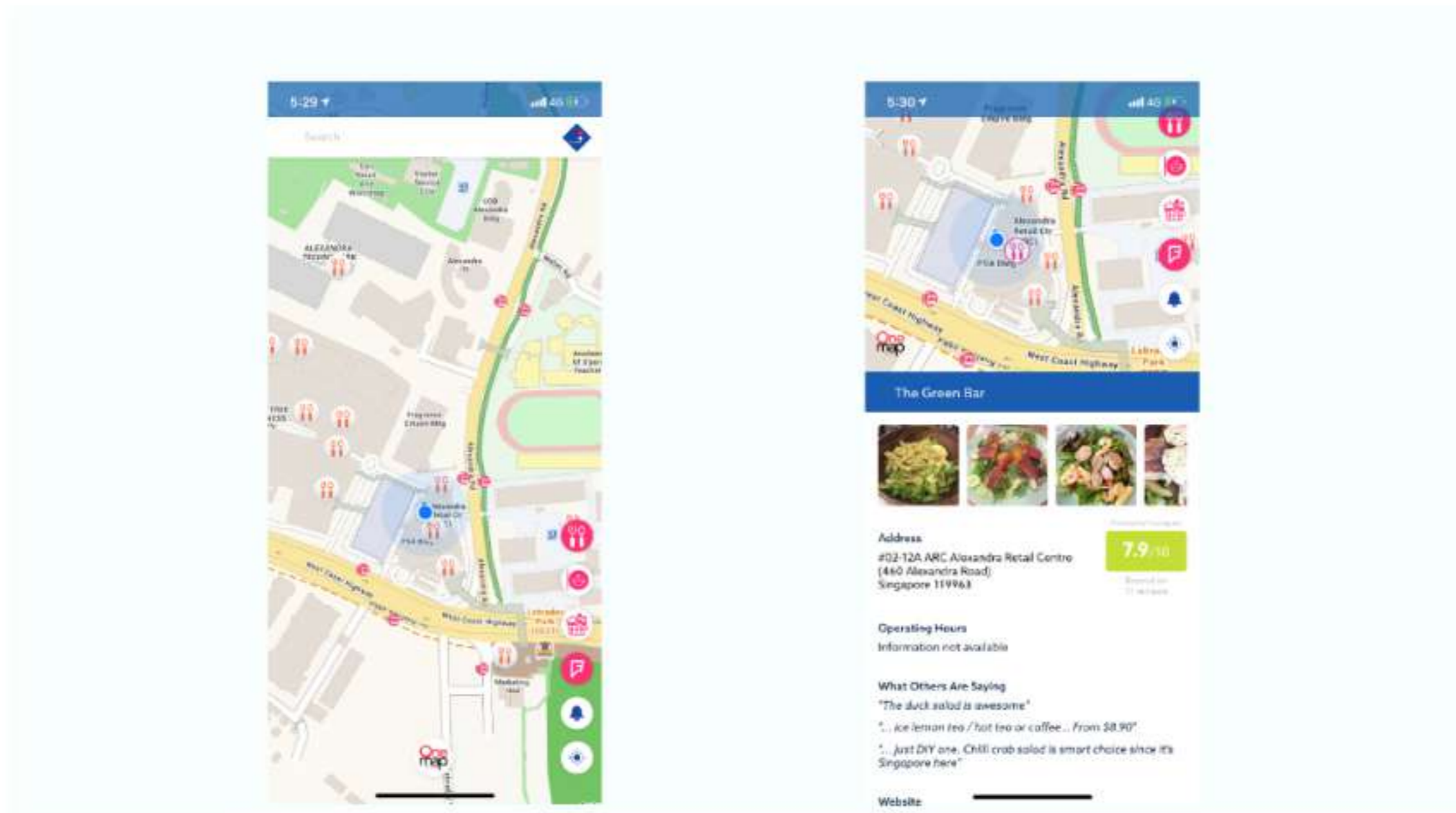
Many people are familiar with the Foursquare brand through our consumer-facing service, but what many do not know is that our company has shifted to focus our efforts on B2B services.

We still operate our apps and are proud of our loyal user base. However, we have evolved into a location data and technology platform that helps developers, brands, and marketers better leverage location data and capabilities around the globe.

2) What is something about Foursquare that the general public might not know?

What people may not realise is that they are using Foursquare data almost every day, even if they do not have our apps on their phones!

Our data and technology has been used to power services in Samsung phones, in popular social media and messaging apps such as WeChat, LINE, Twitter and Snapchat, and even in pinpointing Grab and GoJek's pickup and drop-off locations.



The Foursquare mobile app became popular for its personalised recommendations of the best or most popular nearby amenities such as food or entertainment outlets, based on a user's location and search data

3) How has your experience with GeoWorks been?

GeoWorks has been a great partner in helping us make connections with the location industry in Singapore. I had met some really talented people through GeoWorks events and I am glad that we have had the chance to be a part of the GeoWorks family.

4) How does geospatial technology help you in your work?

I love digging into problems together with developers to come up with new and interesting ways to leverage on location intelligence, be it for consumer services, analytics, or other use cases. Using geospatial data helps companies get smarter and better, and I am happy to be a part of that discovery journey for our customers.

5) Are there any challenges that come with working with geospatial technology?

There are many! Data can be patchy and at the same time, regulations are constantly increasing and changing.

As such, maintaining a high level of data quality and retaining the ability to capture the right signals for use in a commercial setting is getting more and more difficult.

It's a challenge that we as an industry need to stay ahead of, although we regard it as something that will hopefully make the industry better in the long run.

6) In your opinion, what skills are needed to work in the geospatial industry?

Working in the geospatial industry requires a balance of art and science.

Data and analytics are a massive part of being effective in the geospatial industry, but understanding consumer behaviour and thinking of creative ways to better engage consumers is often even more important.

I, for one, enjoy the challenge of coming up with ways to better leverage location information and to map out a proposal for the client that can help them to have better data collection. This in turn would mean that the client can better enhance consumer experiences.

7) Do you have any advice for aspiring entrepreneurs?

Know your customer. Propose solutions that solve your customers' requirements so they can be prepared for the future. Seeking ongoing feedback from your customers and improving your products and services will build advocacy and trust and enhance growth for your business.

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5 Kadayanallur St

Think preserved heritage buildings, and chances are we may think of old, isolated properties far removed from any bustling centre of human activity and not immediately accessible by public transport. After all, within the land-scarce city centre of Singapore, land use has to be optimised for the purpose of the nation's primary needs, such as economic and social development. Right?

The truth, however, is that marks of Singapore's physical development can be found all over the island, and thus landmarks of our built heritage can be found even within prime areas such as our central business district (CBD).

The State property at 5 Kadayanallur Street, located right in the heart of the CBD at Tanjong Pagar, is one such property.

The currently vacant three-storey building, which can be found just behind the beloved Maxwell Food Centre, is under the management of the Singapore Land Authority (SLA). It dates back to our colonial period, and was built in the 1920s to house the St Andrew's Mission Hospital for Women and Children. At the time, the hospital featured 60 inpatient beds and an outpatient clinic, and was also the first hospital to offer three-year general nursing and midwifery courses for locals. It is recognised as having played a very important role in bringing healthcare to those who would have difficulty affording it at the time.

It is also recognised as one of the earliest Modernist buildings to be constructed in Singapore, and captured the imagination of the locals back then with its handsome and striking appearance. The building itself was designed by Swan & Maclaren, the same architectural firm behind some of Singapore's most iconic buildings, including Raffles Hotel and the Tanjong Pagar Railway Station.

The building also houses a unique antique elevator, which was used to transport children with tuberculosis to the rooftop for sunlight and fresh air to bring them relief. With its collapsible iron gates and wooden panels, the elevator is one of the oldest of its kind in Singapore, but don't let its appearance fool you – it was certified to be in working order as recently as 2017!



The currently vacant three-storey building, was designed by Swan & Maclaren, the same architectural firm behind some of the Singapore's most iconic buildings, including Raffles Hotel and the Tanjong Pagar Railway Station

The building was repurposed several times after World War II, serving as a medical store in 1946, the Maxwell Road Outpatient Dispensary in 1964, an IOH Polyclinic in 1998, and was later put up for commercial adaptive use by SLA, including as the corporate office for CK Tang Limited. More recently, it was used to hold a [National Day celebration cum local art exhibition](#) that was open to the public in a collaboration between SLA and local art market organiser, The Local People, in an effort to increase awareness of the building to the masses.

Now approaching its centennial milestone, the fabled story of this pioneering State property looks set to continue with many more exciting chapters ahead!

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International Exchange

The Singapore Land Authority (SLA) definitely had a fruitful time during December and January as we welcomed several delegations from East Asia, including Taiwan, Japan, and Korea, and hosted the High Commission of Rwanda in Singapore.

Although the visitors came from several different countries and ministries, common topics of interest included the digitisation of processes, the use of smart technology in land management, and OneMap – SLA's own national map application. This shared focus on harnessing technology means other countries can learn from our processes just as we learn from theirs.



The Railway Bureau, Taiwan Ministry of Transportation and Communications – 10th December 2019

Deputy Chief Executive Mr Simon Ong (fourth from left) hosted The Railway Bureau, who were keen to learn about the Land Acquisition process.



The High Commission of Rwanda – 11th December 2019

Chief Executive Mr Tan Boon Khai (3rd from left) hosted the High Commission of the Republic of Rwanda. The new High Commissioner, Jean de Dieu Uwihanganye, highlighted the similarities between the two countries and looked forward to closer collaborations in the future.



Seoul Metropolitan Government – 12th December 2019

The delegation from the Seoul Metropolitan Government were hosted by D/GSDD Mr Ng Siau Yong (3rd from left), and were keen to learn about the development of SLA's OneMap as they were working on their own Virtual Seoul project.



Department of Land Administration of Taoyuan City Government, Taiwan – 19th December

The delegation from the Taoyuan City Government was hosted by Assistant Chief Executive (Land Ops) Ms Thong Wai Lin (5th from right), and were interested in SLA's Land Acquisition processes.



Tokyo Metropolitan Government – 21st January

Assistant Chief Executive (Land Ops) Ms Thong Wai Lin (3rd from left) and Deputy Chief Executive Mr Simon Ong (fifth from left) hosted the Tokyo Metropolitan Government, who were keen to learn about the Land Acquisition process.

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