

## Malay Kampongs<sup>1</sup>

- There were three main Malay kampongs in the city area - Kampong Glam, Telok Blangah and Kampong Melaka.
- Traditionally, Malay kampongs were found in rural areas around the eastern and interior parts of Singapore such as Kampong Siglap, Kampong Bedok, and Kampong Darat Nanas.

## Chinese Kampongs<sup>2</sup>

- Some of the earliest Chinese villages in the northern and western parts of Singapore may have been brought about by agriculture or gambier plantations.
- It was common for families of the same dialect groups to live in the same kampong region. For instance, Nee Soon mostly consisted of Hokkiens, while Choa Chu Kang was largely Teochew.

## Kampong: Serani (Eurasians) and Chulia<sup>2</sup>

- The Eurasians kampong (also known as Serani) comprised 25 rented houses located in the Haigh Road area.
- Chulia Kampong in Cross Street in Chinatown was home for the Indian traders.

Did you know?



Kampong life is generally a simple and carefree affair, where houses were rarely gated and children were free to run around and play. Opportunities for communal sharing and bonding were aplenty at places such as standpipes where routine chores, such as laundry, were eased with chatter and laughter amongst the kampong residents.<sup>3</sup>

The arrival of dawn was usually heralded by a rooster's crow, while most evenings were quiet, occasionally punctuated by laughter from audiences at free movie screenings held at the nearby community centre.



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While rain was mostly a welcome relief from the heat of the day, extreme downpours sometimes resulted in floods that had potentially devastating effects such as landslides, drownings, and destruction to cultivated crops.<sup>4</sup>

## Issues and problems

Due to the growing population, housing became one of the key issues faced by the government during Singapore's pre-independence years. In addition to managing outbreaks caused by poor sanitation, kampong houses were also susceptible to destruction by fires.

## Managing the problem

**1927:** The Singapore Improvement Trust (SIT) was formed to improve on housing conditions, but saw little success due to lack of funding.

**1960:** The Housing and Development Board (HDB) was set up to replace SIT, as public housing became one of the top priorities for national development. The first five-year building programme was initiated in 1961, which resulted in the construction of 120,669 flats by 1970.<sup>5</sup>

Under the new home-ownership scheme, families were given compensation to help them relocate to their new homes.



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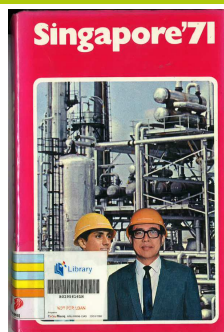
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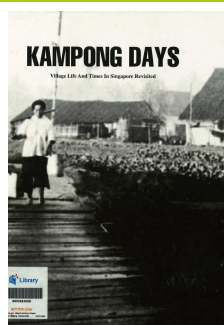
Singapore Yearbook



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**Singapore '1971. (1971). Singapore : Ministry of Culture.**  
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Book



Contains rich visuals and narratives, featuring the daily lives in Malay and Chinese kampongs residents .

**National Archives (1993). Kampong days: village life and times in Singapore Revisited. Singapore: National Archives.**  
Call no: RSING 959.57 KAM

Infopedia and BiblioAsia online articles



**Yu-Mei Balasingamchow. (2016, Oct-Nov). Public housing, private lives. Vol. 12 Iss 3. pp 30-35. BiblioAsia. National Library Board.**

**Valerie Chew. (2010). Public Housing Singapore. Infopedia. National Library Board.**

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1. National Archives (1993). *Kampong Days: village life and times in Singapore revisited.* (pp. 10-11). Singapore: National Archives. (Call no.: RSING 959.57 KAM)
2. Kwang, M. (1994, December 11). *Some new rules in recent years.* *The Straits Times*, Sunday Review, p. 6. Retrieved from NewspaperSG.
3. Naidu, R. T. (2016). *Travelling hawkers.* *Infopedia.* National Library Board.
4. National Archives (1993). *Kampong Days: village life and times in Singapore revisited.* (p. 75). Singapore: National Archives. (Call no.: RSING 959.57 KAM)
5. *Singapore 1971.* (1971). (pp. 225-227). Singapore: Ministry of Culture. (Call no.: RSING 959.57 SIN)