

MANSION HIDAYAH AMIN



Ms Hidayah wrote her book (right) to record memories of her youth in the mansion where she was born and the history of her great-grandfather, a Malay entrepreneur and philanthropist who bought the building in 1912.

PHOTOS: COURTESY OF HIDAYAH AMIN

Remembering life in a colonial-era home

MS HIDAYAH Amin, 39, still finds it hard to visit Gedung Kuning, a colonial-era mansion in Kampong Glam, off Beach Road. Together with her parents, grandparents, younger brother and extended family members, she moved out of the building when it was acquired to become part of the Malay Heritage Centre in 1999.

The Master of Philosophy graduate in historical studies, from University of Cambridge, is the great-granddaughter of Haji Yusoff, a Malay entrepreneur and philanthropist who bought Gedung Kuning, or Yellow Mansion, in 1912.

Hoping to record memories of her youth in the mansion where she was born and the history of her great-grandfather, Ms Hidayah wrote *Gedung Kuning: Memories Of A Malay Childhood*, published early last year. The book is a collection of 28 short stories chronicling four generations of a Malay family in Singapore and the life of Malay residents in Kampong Glam.

"When my childhood home was acquired by the Government, I felt lost. It was as if a piece of me was taken away," says Ms Hidayah. "I decided to write the book to preserve those precious memories."

LYDIA VASKO