



PHT *newsletter*

ISSUE No.84 NOV 2004 - APRIL 2005

**PENANG
HERITAGE
TRUST**

*Persatuan
Warisan
Pulau
Pinang*

SUPPORT CONSERVATION EFFORTS IN YOUR COMMUNITY!

26A Stewart Lane, 10200 Penang, Malaysia

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PHT



PERFORMANCES BY
MISS TAN SENG GUAN (PENGHAYU)
YA BHC DATIN FAZURA
SITI ENDON MAHMUD

**ARTS IN HERITAGE
CHARITY
EVENING**
26 MARCH 2005



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A MESSAGE FROM OUR PATRON

I WOULD LIKE TO CONGRATULATE THE PENANG HERITAGE TRUST FOR THEIR INITIATIVES AND WORK TOWARDS CREATING GREATER AWARENESS FOR THE CULTURAL AND ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE OF PENANG. BEING HISTORICALLY AT THE CROSS ROADS OF REGIONAL TRADE SINCE THE 18TH CENTURY, PENANG HAS A FASCINATING MIX OF DIFFERENT REGIONAL ETHNIC CULTURES.

FROM MALAYS AND ACHENESE TO THAIS, BURMESE, CHINESE, INDIANS AND EUROPEANS, THEY HAVE ALL LEFT A LIVING LEGACY SEEN IN EVERY ASPECT OF LIFE IN PENANG – IN OUR URBAN ARCHITECTURE FROM GRAND MOSQUES AND TEMPLES TO THE HUMBLE SHOPHOUSE, IN OUR EXQUISITE NYONYA COSTUMES, BLENDING THE BEST FROM SO MANY CULTURAL INFLUENCES, IN FOOD FROM FOUR STAR FUSION CUISINE TO THE HUMBLE HAWKER FARE. PENANG AS IT IS TO-DAY IS THE END PRODUCT OF YEARS OF CULTURAL FACILITATION AND ASSIMILATION.

I AM VERY HAPPY TO SEE AN NGO ACTIVELY PROMOTING HERITAGE AT ALL LEVELS – FROM SCHOOL CHILDREN TO SENIOR CITIZENS, FROM GRASSROOTS ORGANIZATIONS TO GOVERNMENT AND INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES LIKE UNESCO AND WMF – FORGING CLOSE LINKS WITH STAKEHOLDERS. I AM SURE THESE EFFORTS WILL GO A LONG WAY IN CREATING GREATER TOLERANCE AND UNDERSTANDING AMONG MALAYSIANS OF DIFFERENT RACES, AS WELL AS IN FACILITATING VISITORS, PARTICULARLY TOURISTS, REALIZE THE CULTURAL RICHNESS OF OUR REGION.

CONGRATULATIONS ALSO TO THE ORGANIZING COMMITTEE FOR HOLDING SUCH AN INTERESTING EVENT AT A UNIQUE VENUE LIKE HOMESTEAD. IT IS INDEED BEFITTING OF YOUR HERITAGE ORGANIZATION.

I SINCERELY WISH THE PENANG HERITAGE TRUST EVERY SUCCESS IN ITS EFFORTS TO MAKE PENANG AN EXEMPLAR HERITAGE CITY IN THE REGION.

DATIN PADUKA SERI ENDON MAHMOOD



The Silent Auction



Nonya paraphernalia (such as underwear) & History of Penang Shoes from embroidered boots for bound feet to Jimmy Choo's



Ronggeng Ticket dancers & the CM



Federal ministers, Chia Kwang Chye & Lim Keng Yaik



Acappella singers of Penang



The YDP of MPPP & friends



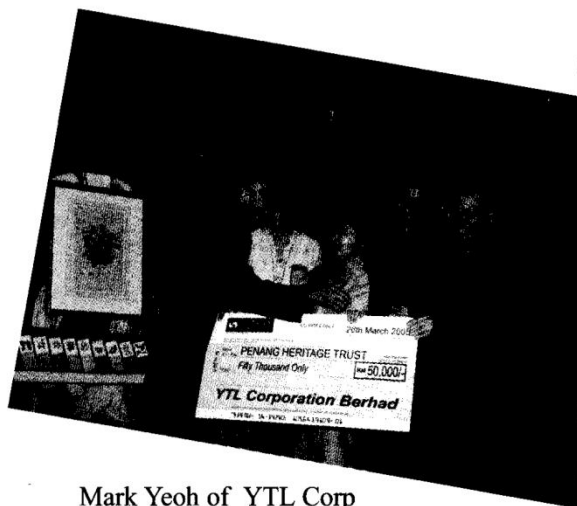
The Winners of the Best Dressed Competition

Dato Yeap, Dato Kee, Dato & Datin Kadir





Dato Wong
Kam Hoong
Dep.Minister of
Arts, Culture &
Heritage



Mark Yeoh of YTL Corp



Cikgu Baha & his girls joined by Hooi Lay of PESSOC

MESSAGE OF ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

FROM
ORGANISING CHAIRPERSON
Y.BHG DATO' KEE PHAIK CHEEN

"There is as much greatness of mind in acknowledging a good turn, as in doing it." Seneca

A FUND-RAISING EVENT CAN ONLY BE SUCCESSFUL IF THE ORGANIZATION IT IS SOURCING FUNDS FOR, IS OF GREAT REPUTE AND HAS A HIGH STANDING IN BOTH PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR. THE PENANG HERITAGE TRUST IS ONE SUCH ORGANIZATION. SINCE ITS ESTABLISHMENT IN 1986, THE PHT IS CONSISTENTLY DEDICATED TO ITS VISION AND MISSION OF URBAN REVITALIZATION IN INNER CITY GEORGE TOWN THAT IS FOCUSED ON PEOPLE-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT, PENANG'S CULTURAL DIVERSITY AND AWARENESS, HISTORICAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND ARCHITECTURAL PRESERVATION, COMMUNITY-BASED HERITAGE AND SUSTAINABLE TOURISM INITIATIVES.

NOW THAT WE ARE VYING FOR UNESCO HERITAGE LISTING FOR THE INNER CITY OF GEORGE TOWN, THERE IS URGENT NEED FOR FINANCIAL AND MORAL SUPPORT FOR PHT TO CONTINUE AND EXPAND ITS EDUCATIONAL AND RESEARCH PROGRAMMES AS WELL AS PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES. I AM HAPPY TO REPORT THAT AT THE TIME OF WRITING, ARTS IN HERITAGE-PHT GALA DINNER HAS ALMOST ACHIEVED ITS TARGET OF RAISING RM\$500,000 FOR THIS NOBLE CAUSE.

WE OWE OUR SUCCESS GREATLY TO MANY PEOPLE AND THE FOLLOWING MUST BE ACKNOWLEDGED:

Y.A.BHG. DATIN PADUKA SERI ENDON BTE MAHMOOD, OUR BELOVED PATRON FOR HER PATRONAGE AND PRESENCE.

DYMM SULTAN SHARAFUDDIN IDRIS SHAH IBNI ALMARHUM SULTAN SALAHUDDIN ABDUL AZIZ SHAH ALHAJ, SULTAN DAN YANG DIPERTUAN NEGERI SELANGOR DARUL EHSAN DAN JAJAHAN TAKLUKNYA, FOR HIS ROYAL PRESENCE.

Y.A.B. TAN SRI DR. KOH TSU KOON AND THE PENANG STATE GOVERNMENT FOR THEIR RECOGNITION OF PHT'S EXPERTISE IN HELPING THE HERITAGE DEVELOPMENT OF THE STATE AND THEIR CONSIDERATION OF AN ANNUAL GRANT.

THE FOLLOWING FEDERAL MINISTERS AND DEPUTY MINISTRIES WHOSE RESPECTIVE MINISTRIES ARE INVOLVED IN HERITAGE DEVELOPMENT :-

MINISTERS:-

1. Y.B. DATO' SERI DR. LIM KENG YAİK
2. Y.B. DATO' SERI ABDUL KADIR BIN HAJI SHERIKH FADZIR
3. Y.B. DATUK SERI UTAMA DR. RAIS YATIM
4. Y.B. DATUK DR. MICHAEL TOYAD

AND DEPUTY MINISTERS :-

1. Y.B. DATO' WONG KAM HOONG
2. Y.B. DATUK ROBERT LAU HOI CHEW

FOR THEIR FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION AND PARTICIPATION.

DATO' STEPHEN AND DATIN IRENE YEAP FOR THE USE OF HOMESTEAD, ONE OF THE MOST PROMINENT ICONS OF PENANG ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE, AS VENUE FOR THE EVENT.

Y.B. DATO' SERI DR. LIM KENG YAİK, FOR MEETING THE AIR-CONDITIONING EXPENSES TO PROVIDE FOR OUR 'COOL' COMFORT DURING THE EVENT.

MR. ZARIR CAMA OF THE HONG KONG & SHANGHAI BANKING CORPORATION FOR THE BANK'S CONTINUOUS AND MAGNANIMOUS GENEROSITY IN HELPING PENANG RETAIN ITS VALUABLE HERITAGE. THE HSBC HAS COMMITTED SUPPORT TO THE PHT FOR A MINIMUM OF 6 YEARS FOR THE LIVING HERITAGE TREASURES OF PENANG AWARD. THE BANK IS ALSO THE MAIN SPONSOR FOR THE RESTORATION OF SUFFOLK HOUSE. WE CANNOT EXPRESS SUFFICIENTLY, OUR PROFOUND GRATITUDE FOR THEIR CORPORATE VISION AND SUPPORT.

SHANGRI-LA HOTELS & RESORTS MALAYSIA FOR ITS NARROW MARGIN OF PROFIT IN PROVIDING THE FOOD AND BEVERAGE

THE FOLLOWING CORPORATE COMPANIES AND ORGANISATIONS :-

1. SOUTHERN BANK BERHAD
2. MULTI-PURPOSE HOLDINGS BHD.
3. YTL CORPORATION BERHAD
4. MALAYSIA AIRLINES
5. HENG LEE GROUP
6. E&O PROPERTY (PENANG) SDN BHD.
7. HOO KIM HOLDINGS SDN. BHD.
8. BUKIT JAMBU HOTEL DEVELOPMENT SDN. BHD.
9. KLINIK RAKYAT FAMILY PLANNING SERVICES SDN BHD.
10. IOI OILCHEMICAL INDUSTRIES BHC.
11. IVORY ASSOCIATES SDN. BHD. & TEE AH BAH HOLDINGS
12. EASTERN & ORIENTAL EXPRESS
13. DISCOVERY OVERLAND HOLIDAY SDN. BHD.

FOR THEIR GENEROUS DONATION IN CASH OR KIND OR BOTH.
(Listed at time of printing).

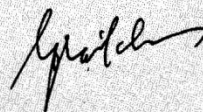
MR. PETER SOON, DATO' JIMMY CHOO, MS. CHERIE THUM, THE PENANG STATE MUSEUM, THE PENANG STATE ART GALLERY AND EQUATOR ACADEMY OF ART FOR ASSISTANCE AND LOAN OF ITEMS TOWARDS THE INSTALLATION EXHIBITIONS.

MRS REBECCA WILKINSON - OUR RESOURCEFUL EVENT CO-ORDINATOR, MS MAGDALINE NG AND MS HO SHEAU FUNG FROM OUR SECRETARIAT, AND MR & MRS M. SAW OF AMANDALING AND TIM & JANE YEE FOR THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO THE FASHION SHOW.

DEDICATED MEMBERS OF THE FOLLOWING COMMITTEES:- MAIN & SECRETARIAT, INSTALLATION/EXHIBITION, MARKETING & SALES, PUBLICITY & PRESS, SILENT AUCTION, AND LOGISTICS. - AN ORGANIZING CHAIRMAN CANNOT ASK FOR A BETTER TEAM TO WORK WITH.

FINALLY, TO ALL WHO HAVE ONE WAY OR OTHER CONTRIBUTED TO MAKE THE EVENT A RESOUNDING SUCCESS, I THANK YOU FROM THE BOTTOM OF MY HEART. TO THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN INADVERTENTLY MISSED-OUT IN MY THANKS, I GIVE MY SINCEREST APOLOGIES.

YOURS GRATEFULLY,




EDITORIAL



Dear Members,

A thousand apologies - having seen all the preceding pictures and hopefully, having received the explanatory note from the Honorary Secretary, Ahmad Chik, we hope we'll be forgiven for the vast span of time that has elapsed between the last newsletter and this one. To those members who called or wrote to complain, please understand that we are volunteers, we have regular full-time employment elsewhere and we are overwhelmed with PHT projects and activities.

In reply to the appeal and apology sent out last month, we have received a few offers from members to help. We gratefully thank you and will be contacting you shortly re. guest editorship for various editions.

THE PHT PARTY : The organisation of the massively successful fund raiser Gala Dinner at Homestead held on 26th March 2005 has kept the Council on their toes for 6 months with changes of venues and dates due to circumstances totally beyond our control. That it *finally* took place at all was an achievement. The incredible effort put in by the Organising Committee and its Chairperson, Dato Kee, is something the PHT will be ever grateful for. We are also indebted to the very warm hearted Dato Steven Yeap for inviting us to use one of the most beautiful historic homes in Penang as the venue. The fund raiser has allowed us to achieve our ultimate goal of having a home of our own, of running projects and of paying salaries for a while. It has also led to a very high- profile exposure for the Trust and all its efforts. Besides the Prime Minister's wife who was the Patron of the night, no less then 5 Federal Ministers and Deputies were present as well as many prominent captains of industry. The press had a field day and our advocacy and advisory roles are well-regarded, the PHT being considered a responsible and mature NGO.

THE PHT BUILDING : After many years of fruitless searching, of not wishing to compromise, of not being entirely comfortable with grudging offers made and unsuitable sites available and most importantly, of not wanting to leave future members and council worrying about where the Trust would operate from, we have FINALLY found our home. For those of you who were unable to attend the EGM held on 7th May 2005, we proudly wish to inform members that with their approval we have appointed 3 Trustees, Khoo Salma Nasution, Dato Anwar Faizal and Laurence Loh and we have purchased No.26 Church Street, George Town, for restoration and use as the PHT headquarters. (Description on Page 7)

The Living Heritage Treasures of Penang Awards were also successfully run. Nominations were sought from the public in November 2004, the judges met in January 2005 and the awards were presented to the 3 winners : Artist and innovator Dato Chuah Thean Teng, Master Chef Lim Bian Yam and Educator and Cultural Expert Cikgu Baharrudin, during the Gala Dinner on the 26th March 05. (Refer to Pages 8 & 9)

The **AGM** was also uneventfully held on 3rd October 2004 with the current Council members serving out their 2nd year.

Again, the Editor apologises, thanks you for your understanding and hopes that the next newsletter (No.85) with a guest editor will be with you without too much delay.

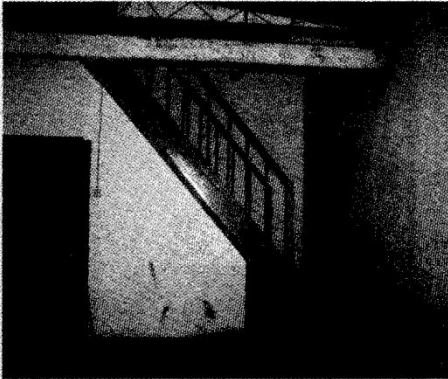
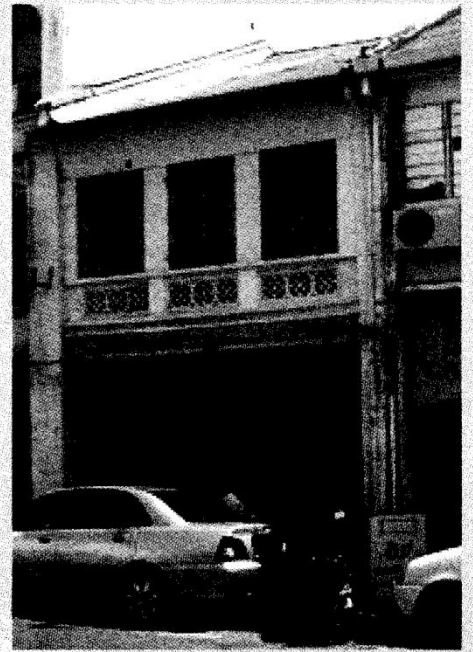
L.L.Loh-Lim

NO 26 CHURCH STREET

A very early shophouse estimated to have been constructed around 1860's. The first transaction of sale is recorded as 1886 and it has been held by one family without ownership change for the last 119 years. No tenants were evicted on PHT's behalf, the house having been vacated for some time.

It is sited within the historic core of the designated World Heritage Site and forms part of the early port settlement.

The building is representative of a very early generic George Town shop house built in the mid 19th Century. It is smaller, lower, more modest, less decorative and flamboyant than the later versions when wealth was more prevalent.



This is the kind of building that is considered more more threatened and endangered because its attractiveness is not so immediately apparent

Its price, size, location and restoration input required makes it aptly suitable for the Trust. With funding from World Monuments Watch and State and Federal funds collected during the PHT fundraiser, the intention is to bring it back to its original look with terracotta roofs and traditional shop facade where goods were displayed and traders lived upstairs.



If all goes well, we should be in our new home by the end of the year.



LATEST NEWS : EGM HELD ON 7TH MAY 2005

ALL PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS WERE APPROVED BY THE MEMBERS UNANIMOUSLY
~ THE COUNCIL IS AUTHORIZED TO PURCHASE NO.26 CHURCH STREET FOR A SUM OF RM280,000

~ THE FOLLOWING PERSONS ARE APPOINTED AS TRUSTEES FOR PHT:

- DATO ANWAR FAZAL
- LAURENCE LOH KWONG YU
- KHOO SU NIN

PENANG HERITAGE TRUST / HSBC

LIVING HERITAGE TREASURES OF PENANG AWARDS 2005

Following press publicity and the launch in November 2004 of the above inaugural awards, a total of 15 nomination forms were submitted by the public. Due to double and triple nominations, 11 individuals in all were nominated for the year. They represented a wide range of skills and expertise, coming from the fields of visual arts, traditional crafts, culinary skills, martial arts, literature and performing arts.

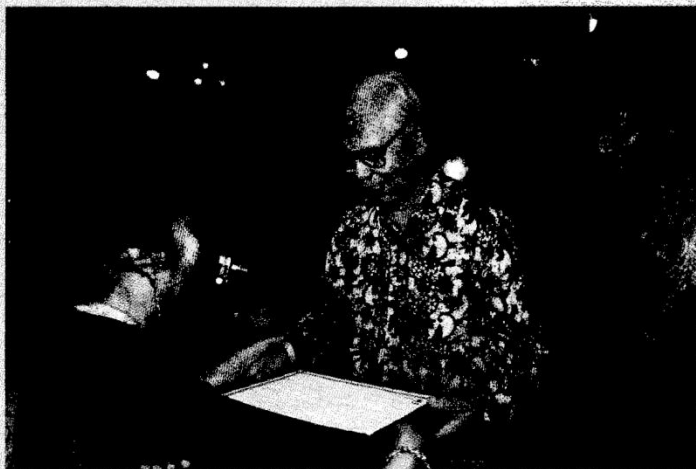
An esteemed Panel of Judges under the chairmanship of retired Chief Justice Tan Sri Chang Min Tat and comprising of Dato Ismail Adam from Badan Warisan, artist and educator Tang Hon Yin, musicologist Prof Tan Sooi Beng from USM, Hari Das Nair from HSBC, Dato Ismail Jawa and Dr Choong Sim Poey from PHT, met in January 2005 and the 3 winners for the year were selected.

They were announced and the awards presented on the night of the Charity Evening 26th March 2005 with presentations made by YAB Datin Seri Paduka Endon Mahmood, wife of the Prime Minister of Malaysia and witnessed by the Deputy Minister of Culture, Arts & Heritage Dato Wong Kam Hoong

WINNERS OF THE LIVING HERITAGE TREASURES OF PENANG 2005

1. Dato Chua Thean Teng - 91 years old - Master of Batik Art / A Pioneer

- ~ The first artist to adapt the ancient craft of batik wax dying into a medium of fine art
- ~ 1st Malaysian to be invited to the Commonwealth Artists of Fame Exhibition in London 1977
- ~ Chua's works hang in major galleries throughout the world



2. Lim Bian Yam - 72 years old - Chef extraordinaire /

- ~ Floral Designer & instructor "Cook with love, eat with gratitude", an apt motto for Penangites
- ~ An author, an editor, a pioneer and innovator, Bian Yam has taught 3 generations of Penangites the





3. Mohd Bahroodin Ahmad – Known fondly as 'Cikgu',

~A Performing artist & choreographer

~A producer

~A cultural expert & advisor

~A story teller

~A tireless lifelong promoter of local performing arts

These treasures are vulnerable and may be lost

~They have to be acknowledged and given due recognition

~They have to be assisted where possible

~Their skills must be systematically documented

~Where possible, their skills should be transmitted



Post-award Activities / Funding will be sought for activities such as: -

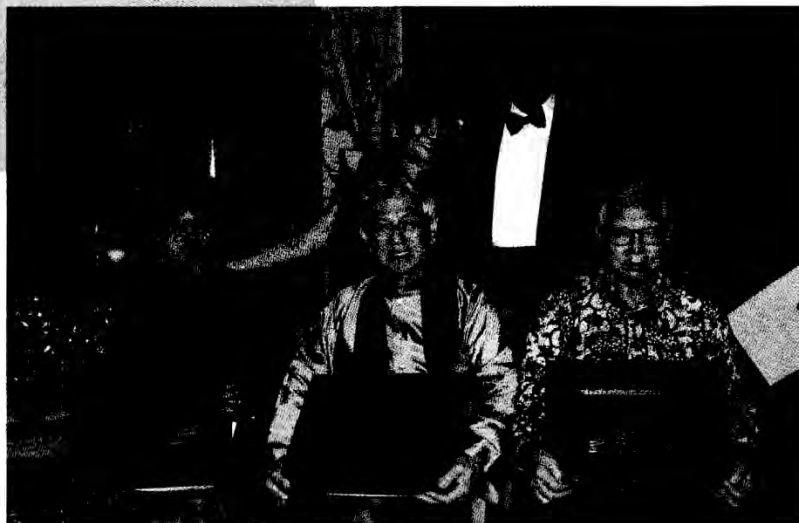
- Promotions exhibitions and marketing for future economic viability
- Publication of the documentation for archiving purposes

Sustainability of our cultural heritage will be the end product.

The Award

- Awardees are limited to a maximum of 3 per year and 8 in total at any one time.
- A Certificate and a Plaque will be awarded at the annual ceremony.
- A Cash Award of RM2, 000 per year for his/her lifetime.
- Full Documentation of skills, techniques & process(es) for transmission of skills and to conduct apprenticeship

L.L.Loh-Lim (Awards Convenor)



SITE VISIT REPORT 28 NOVEMBER 2004 THE LOKE MANSION

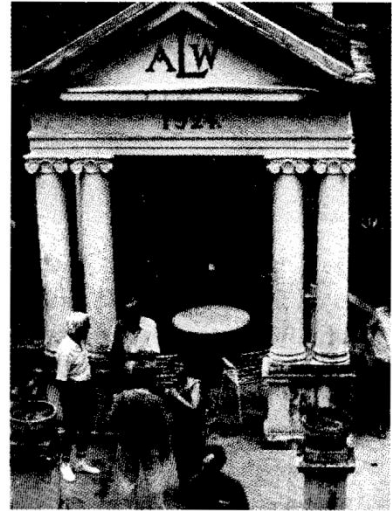
The Loke Mansion site visit stands as one of the most successful in the history of our PHT site visits over the last 5 years. A total of 125 members and friends were given a rare opportunity to enjoy the ambience of one of Penang's most admired buildings, by our hosts the Wilkinsons. Dr Jon Lim who flew in specially from Singapore for the visit, shares his views with us....

CHATSWORTH HOUSE (1924), NORTH BEACH, PENANG

By Jon S H Lim (Dr)

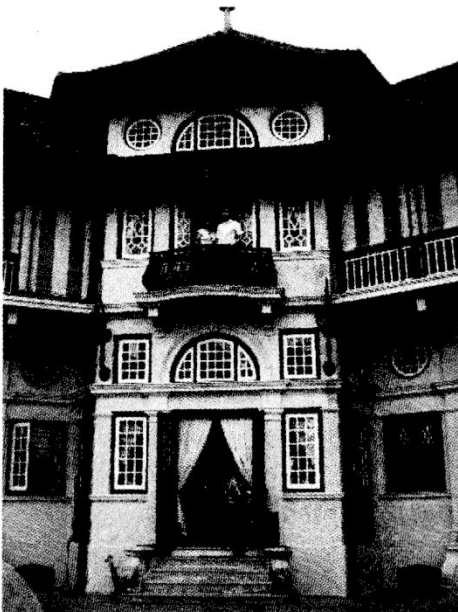
A Site Visit conducted on Sunday 28th November 2004.

The Loke House or 'Chatsworth' (1924) designed by David McLeod Craik, FRIBA for Allan Loke, with the insignia ALW at North Beach, has long fascinated members of the general public in Penang. Crucial in this manor-like country house is the unique 'butterfly plan' that sweeps like a compass from a grotto-like landscape across to the Andaman seas and Kedah Peak in the mainland.



Architect Mr. Craik is practically a mannerist here, including his own house, "Moycraik" at Penang Hill. Of southern Scottish stock, he left school at the age of 16 and received 8 years in apprenticeship and training mainly in London. He is arguably exposed to every facet of English architectural training, including Georgian to the Arts and Crafts Movement. His last attachment ended at Whitehall and the Government Offices in London in 1900. He joined the Municipality of Singapore in 1902, followed by private practice. He left a commendable legacy here by the use of reinforced concrete and cast iron in multi-storey buildings. He joined the Corp of Royal Engineers in the First World War, and after demobilization came out to Penang in 1919.

Historically, the completion of 'Chatsworth' mark the peak of architectural submission made to the Municipal Council in Penang. Local architects then were never poised in a better position for business while the Chinese Chamber of Commerce, seizing upon initiative for its members, opposed proposals for a strict registration of architects then emerging from Singapore. Meanwhile, the few European architects who came to Penang like Mr. Craik provided a rich source of pattern books 'for the picking' by local architects.



The 'V' shape plan at Chatsworth is ahead of its time compared to Singapore. The notion of the picturesque is not to be confused with the 'eclectic' as the former depends on skewed and asymmetrical massing to be seen in perspective. Some Italianate villas by John Nash were also designed this way in the English country side during the early 19th century.



The façade of Chatsworth facing the shoreline is interesting. Here, both wings flare out boldly in the balcony as if compelling the reinforced concrete by some external force. They are perched high above the piazza and gazebos and seem to defy gravity. The extravaganza is anchored by towering pyramidal roof top by finials bearing a typical Craik 'thistle.'

The façade is beautifully embellished with Palladian portals and arcades at the Ground Floor. However, it is the alternating Diocletian windows and circular light vents that convey a 'hyper-active' spatial experience, light and shade. Indeed we must not forget the truncated staircase over the reception space. The space appears 'like a railway accident' and must be seen deliberately so in the spirit of the picturesque. The sentiment is iconoclastic compared to the earlier 'Homestead' (1919) by Stark & McNeil.



Amidst the fine wooden staircase with finials like thistles and pineapples 'adopted' into the Doric Order, are plasterwork wrought by a curious mingling with Art Deco. The faience tiles delineated with Flemish 'C' curves could have come from Minton of London. Meanwhile, one cannot possibly absorb the whole interior but in stages due to the abrupt changes of visual angles. That is the purpose of the picturesque.

The spatial experience at the First Floor reminds us a tropical bungalow. Amidst the fine wood paneling and screens, the confined intimacy comes from the surrounding verandahs, split bamboo spandrels and bamboo chicks – all typical P.W.D. contraptions adapted from British India. In general, the house is well worth a revisit as many details by Craik may have eluded us



pictures curtesy of LLA & PHT

SITE VISIT REPORT 30 JANUARY 2005 THE PENANG TURF CLUB

65 eager PHT members turned up dressed in their Sunday-best (which turned out to be the only good bit about the visit - we have never seen our members looking so good before..) Timothy Tye who was one of the lucky few to go 'on tour' shares his evening with us :

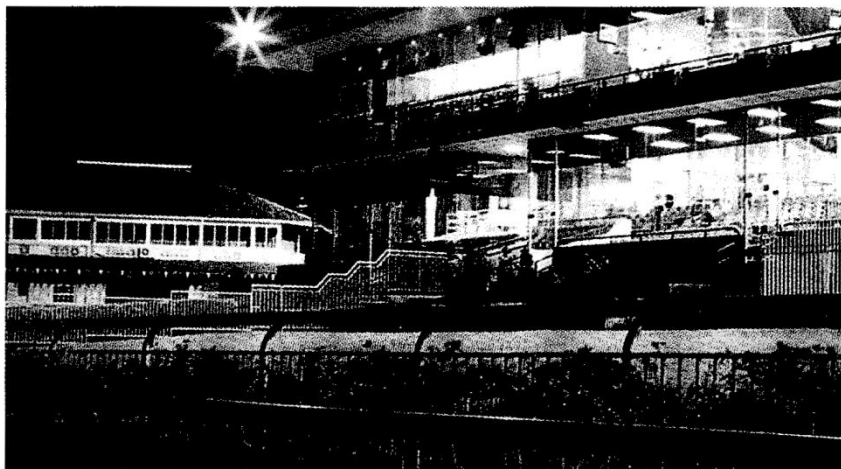
I fed the horses of the Penang Turf Club yesterday. Here's the receipt for RM10 worth of fodder. I thought it was going to be my ticket to fabulous wealth. But when Horse No.8 was absent from the first three placings, I realised my odds of strike it big at the races is pretty dim. I must thank the Penang Heritage Trust for organising this visit to the Penang Turf Club. It was my first visit to this distinguished institution, and from the look of it, it will be quite some time before my next outing there.

As site visits go, this must rank as one of the more unusual. Out of hundreds of members, only 65 were lucky enough to sign up before the list was closed. The rules were quite strict: no cameras, no mobile phones, and to maintain the institution's elite position, there was a dress code in place requiring gentlemen to don lounge suits. Lounge suits? I believe many of us actually had to look that up in the dictionary.

Whatever the requirements, I was determined to make this visit. It isn't everyday that I get to visit the Penang Turf Club. Now that plans are afoot to move the club to Batu Kawan on the mainland, I had better check it out before it moves.

For those lamenting the move, I must remind them that the Penang Turf Club has not always been at Batu Gantong. The history of the Penang Turf Club dates back to 1864. Apart from the Singapore Turf Club, this is the oldest club of its kind in Peninsula Malaysia. The earliest horse racing turf in Penang was on a field along Macalister Road. Imagine it as you drive down the road. As you pass the St. George's Girl School, look to your right and imagine a race in progress.

On the day of the site visit, we arrived at the Penang Turf Club at 2:00pm, sixty-five members decked out in their Sunday best. Every one was sweating under the blazing sun, especially Magdeline, who was practically melting away. I avoided donning my coat at all cost. After paying the entrance fee of RM5, we were ushered into the air-conditioned member's lounge area. It affords a superb view of the race course. Beyond the wooded grounds is the city of Georgetown, and its high rise buildings could be seen peeking out from the distance.



Directly below us was the public gallery. As I surveyed the crowd below in their casual attire, I got the sense of class segregation that is still apparent in this institution.

We were given a lesson on betting. Frankly, it sounded very confusing to me - which pretty much cemented my notion that a career in betting on horses is not for me. But for the fun of it, I put RM10 on Horse No. 8 on Race 1. It had the best odds. I don't really know when Race 1 actually started, because all of a sudden, the horses were running and it was soon finished before I was aware of it. My No.8 horse was nowhere in the first three placings, so the hope of striking it big has to be shelved to another day.

Meanwhile, there was a commotion among the PHT organisers, so I went over to check out. Apparently, the tour could only be provided to ten of the visitors, so the organisers were having a tough time determining who the ten would be. This was a regretful episode, and certainly not the fault of the organisers, as they were not informed beforehand. When the tour began, I was quick enough to simply join in.

Mr Robin Rizal Tan, general manager and secretary of the Penang Turf Club conducted the tour. We began by visiting the prize giving area. Next we were taken to the paddock where the horses were warmed up prior to the race. We learned how jockeys are paired to the horses. Many of the horses are imported, primarily from Australia. Some of the jockeys are also foreign. Before and after a race, the horses are randomly selected for dope tests. This practice is now extended to include the jockeys as well. To test the horses for drugs, blood and urine samples are taken from the horses. To induce them to urinate, the horses are taken to a cold room.

Next we were taken to the grand stand where we have an alternative view of the race course. I could see a fountain down below, so I asked Mr Rizal Tan if that was the fountain of Kapitan China Chung Thye Pin. Chung Thye Pin, the last Kapitan China of Perak, was an avid horse enthusiast. He donated the fountain to the turf club in 1904, when the club was still at its old location at Macalister Road. It was transferred to its present location when the club relocated. I was keen to learn about this association with Chung Thye Pin, as I have recently concluded a research on his father, the Kapitan China Chung Keng Kwee (read Pinang Peranakan Mansion, <http://www.asiaexplorers.com/peranakanmansion/index.htm>). Mr Rizal Tan was not sure about that, but he said it was the only fountain at the turf club. Historian Khoo Salma Nasution happened to also join the tour, so I reconfirmed with her that that is indeed the Kapitan's fountain.

Race 2 took place while we were on the tour. When the race was finish, Mr Tan led us to the area where the winning horse was brought up. After that, we visited the administrative office. I noticed a room given away as a museum to keep memorabilias and trophies. We returned to the Grand Stand member gallery, to face a group of enormously disappointed participants who had no chance to follow the tour. They were cooped up at the Grand Stand area, and many voiced their disappointment, as they had joined the visit expecting to be able to join the tour, just like the dozen or so luckier ones. If it's any consolation, we did not see much. As we were prohibited from taking photographs, I am not able to take any shots of the tour.

Timothy Tye

Note: a letter of thanks was sent to the Turf Club for hosting the tea for us. However it also expressed our disappointment over the lack of understanding of the PHT site visit, i.e we were there to learn, not about the intricacies of betting, on which we were given lengthy explanations and tips, but about the history of the Club and the 1930's architecture of the original building and its future plans. We had been promised a briefing by an architect on the Committee but no Committee member had the time to meet with us. We apologise to our members who turned up, for being forced to dress up when quite clearly, everyone else who was in the President's box, was not, as well as not having had a 'real' site visit, and for those of you who lost money.....well, you didn't really believe those tips, did you?



HERITAGE CONSERVATION, NEW ALLIANCES FOR PAST, PRESENT & FUTURE

Colombo, Sri Lanka, July 28-31 2004

A World Monuments Fund Workshop with the co-operation of Sri Lanka ICOMOS

The invited speakers from PHT were Dr Choong and Loh-Lim, and from Badan Warisan, Laurence Loh and Elizabeth Cardoso.



*Geoffrey Bawa's Office,
Colombo*



with Bonnie Burnham, President of World Monuments Watch.

When the President of world Monuments watch said in her opening address that this was the 1st WMF conference held in the region, South & SEAsia, whose people have so much in common amidst their rich cultural diversity, little were we to know

that within the next few months we were to also share in the suffering of the most devastating natural disaster in recent memory. Almost ALL the region's participants at the conference endured the effects of the December tsunamis. Desperate calls were made in those first few days after 26th December in attempts to trace friends, colleagues, peers with whom we had interacted with and learnt from during the conference. Galle, Penang, Aceh, Bentota, Thailand, we were all dazed from the devastation, the loss and the sense of not knowing what to do or how to help.

Our hearts go out to those who have endured so much suffering and we all pray for continued and sustained recovery.

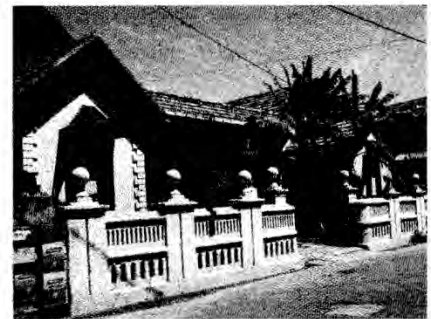
ICOMOS & UNESCO are also looking at the effects on cultural heritage sites in the region and are assessing damage and ways to assist.

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THE 2004 PHT ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

3RD OCTOBER 2004 AT THE CHEONG FATT TZE MANSION

45 members attended the AGM. It was a non election year, the Annual Report was tabled and accepted, accounts were presented and accepted. The Living Heritage Treasures of Penang Award was announced to members to seek their support. The intended Gala Fund Raiser was also presented to members. Volunteers and suggestions were sought.



Galle, Sri Lanka

After tea, Loh-Lim and Laurence Loh presented a slide show on Sri Lanka and in particular on the fortified historic city of Galle, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The genius of Geoffrey Bawa, often said to be the greatest architect of South Asia, was shown to the delight of members, who were particularly taken with his Lunugunga Gardens in Bentota. (We are relieved to know that the walls of Galle helped to prevent greater damage to the historic centre, during the tsunami disaster.)

One of the cultural treasures that have disappeared from Penang is the wandering singing minstrel or the 'lang ting tang' man. They are dead and gone, only the older generations who live in old George Town remember them – solitary nocturnal figure hugging and strumming his mandolin as he walks the waterfront, alleys and narrow streets of the old town. An oil lamp and strips of engraved bamboo hang at the end of the musical instrument, casting long shadow among the folks crowding round, enraptured by his songs and music. The lyrics often composed spontaneously narrating the life and fortune of a client.

Recently an American friend burnt me a CD of Muddy Waters, Complete Plantations Recordings, recorded in 1941-2. (when recordings were just rudimentary) It is incredible collection of beautiful early Blues music sung and accompanied on acoustic guitar by the Black musician Muddy Waters himself. It was recorded in the cotton field at the back of a van in those far off days. Today it is a treasured collector's item among music bluffs. The Blues can be said to be the mother of all modern popular music – be it rock, jazz, country and western or gospel. It is the music of the Blacks/African Americans, raw rhythmic power, poetic, humorous and refine. It is alleviating and therapeutic to their past oppressive background of slavery and pain. Black musicians are unsurpassed; listening to them I realised the Rolling Stones, Eric Clapton, even Elvis Presley sound like kindergarten stuff.

The West is advanced; they love and treasure their artists and musicians. The music and arts are well documented, nurtured and preserved. Today Western Pop music (mainly US and Britain) is the biggest cultural export and influence to the rest of the world, which prompted Lee Kuan Yew to remark, "Who wants to listen to Chinese pop songs/music?" (while commenting on China's emerging impact and influence.) Not so fast Harry Lee! Hear this:

"The 'Ang Mo'(white men) have been coming to our puppet shows recording and filming but the locals are not interested," said Ooi Ah Goh, 88, owner of the Beng Geok Hong Puppet Theatre, in Tok Aka Lane, Penang.



"I won't be surprised one day we have to go to the West to buy a recording of the music and songs of the Chinese puppet theatre," said Ho Meilu (Phd. ethno musicology Candidate, Berkeley University). "What is unique about Penang's puppet theatre is that it is from immigrants and it is unchanged, traditionally old while those of the mother country is always evolving and changing. It would be a treasure for the mainland Chinese to come and study. It is a great lost if this art and music vanish, she said.

This calls to mind the great Tan Tong Tong of Redifussion-fame and undoubtedly the greatest of all the wandering singing minstrels and puppet theatre singers. Sadly, he died quietly in a friend's kampong house off Perak Lane in 1984, leaving behind legends of fans as far as Singapore wondering what has happen to him. The passing of Tan Tong Tong is a sad reminder that we should emulate the West and honour our artists/musicians and not let them die a pauper and unknown, and make sure their art and music lives on. Tan lived in the Teoh or Chang Kongsí (Clan Temple) in Camarvon Street. I am fortunate to live in the same street as the maestro and since young has a lot of opportunity see him sings in the streets and performs in the puppet theatre. Other than his powerful voice and mastery of the mandolin, his lyrics is fringed with wit, humour and caustic remarks, never failing to solicit laughter from the working class audience.

Coincidentally like the Blues singer from the cotton fields of the Mississippi delta, Tan Tong Tong is very dark, almost jet black, very unusual for a Chinese. I regret not having any photo collection of him, as I was not yet into photography during that period. It is also feared that his recordings done at the Redifussion, in Khaw Sim Bee Road are gone like the building and broadcast company. Fortunately four years after his death I met his prodigy and friend the late Teoh Jin Hoe in 1988 and managed to take some photos of the last of the wandering minstrel in action.

At 72, Jin Hoe or Ah Hoe is trim and healthy with a strong baritone voice. He can still out-walk any man half his age. His favorite haunts are kampong lanes and the streets of old George Town. He goes out on foot everyday strumming his mandolin through the kampong lanes and streets of the old city and covers at least 20 km, he said. He charges one ringgit for each consultation and song. Sometimes he goes to Kulim and Sungei Pattani. In the old days he used to travel to KL, Melaka and as far as Singapore.

"I am well-known in Singapore," he says. "The Hokkiens there are fascinated by my music. When they hear me sing, they feel nostalgia for old China."

Being a wandering singing minstrel has not only improved his health, it has promoted his life too. He had been featured in many magazines and newspapers. In 1988, he met the Governor, Chief Minister and other State dignitaries and performed in their presence during the Chap Goh Meh festival.

At 72, Ah Hoe has over 60 years of wandering and fortune singing behind him. Music has kept him cheerful and healthy all these years. Early on in life when he was a young teenager, he was told by his guru that he has a flair for singing and music. He told Ah Hoe that if he wanted to be free, independent and not to be tied down by long hours of manual work, he should be a wandering minstrel. He took the advice and hadn't looked back.

Back in 1988 Ah Hoe said, "Today, I think I'm the only wandering minstrel left in Penang and the world. The most famous Tan Tong Tong alias Or Ba (Blackie) died in my house four years ago. When my time is up I don't think there will be any left in the country," he said.

Sure enough Ah Hoe went to meet his Maker not long after and brought the curtain down on one of the most colourful and unique musical arts of Penang.

Does anyone have pictures of wandering minstrel old Tan Tong Tong?



Friday April 1st 2005
Visit of Filipino Mayors.

The mayors were taking part of an event, the theme of which was: Learning from Malaysia: Building and Enhancing Capacity for Effective Local Governance

22 mayors coming from different parts of the Philippines; City of Iloilo, Province of Guimaras, Province of Aklan attended a presentation by Dr. Choong at the Cheong Fatt Tze Mansion where the work of PHT was highlighted.

Tea was followed by a trishaw ride through the historic city ably guided by Teresa Capol.

Reminder 15th General Assembly and Scientific Symposium of ICOMOS, Xi'an, China 17-21 October 2005

News available at the ICOMOS website www.international.icomos.org/xian2005.

News from ICCROM...

Report on the tsunami in the Indian Ocean and cultural heritage

In the wake of the recent disaster in Asia, in common with other international agencies, ICCROM has expressed its grief at the appalling loss of life and its sympathy for the bereaved and the survivors who are still in great need of assistance. A special fund created for ICCROM staff members' contributions to disaster relief has been donated to UNICEF.

http://www.iccrom.org/eng/news/2005_en/various_en/01_0tsunami_en.htm

Restoration: Celebrating Traditional Craft Skills

The National Trust for Scotland and the Robert Gordon University are joining forces to celebrate Traditional Craft Skills at a conference to be held in Aberdeenshire June 13th & 14th 2005. Check out the website www.rgu.ac.uk/restoration

THE PENANG HERITAGE TRUST TOUR GUIDES COURSE

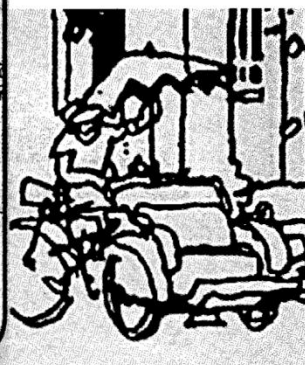
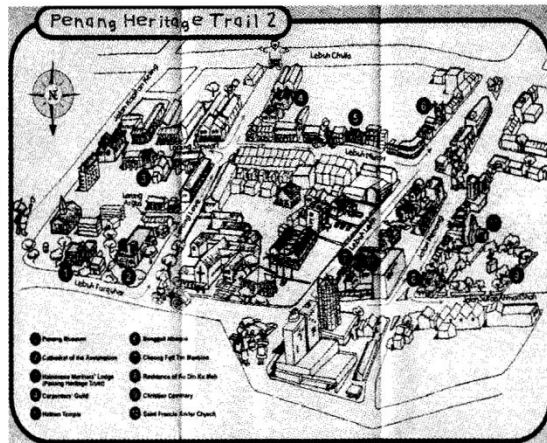
The PHT has managed to get some funding from the Tourism Action Council of Penang to help us in reducing our costs when conducting training for Inner city Heritage Tour Guides.

The course is for 2 full days and involves 3 walking trails and two lectures.

It is open to both registered tour guides as well as any interested parties who just want to learn more about the inner city.

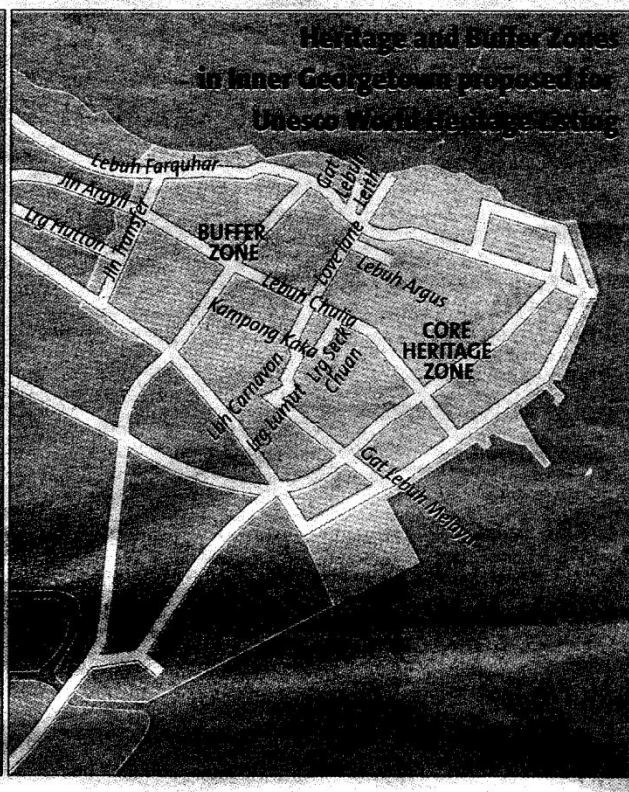
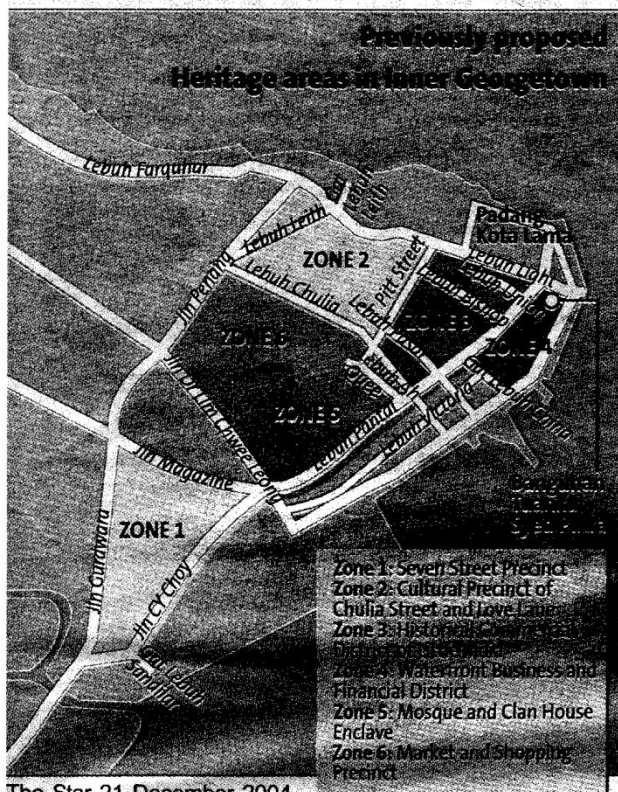
Currently PHT issues certificates of completion and we only call upon those who are registered guides and who have successfully completed the course to conduct our PHT walking tours.

However, we intend to apply to the Ministry of Tourism for the right to conduct courses and issue specialist badges for George Town heritage guides. The course would have to be approved by the Ministry, probably be longer and exams would be involved. Pht views this both as an income generating source as well as a means of producing quality guides for George Town.



Course successfully conducted in January 2005, 23 participants in all.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION IN CASE YOU ARE STILL WONDERING



The Star 21 December 2004

'Heritage' application to be made after amendments

PENANG: Penang and Malacca's joint application for World Heritage Site listing will soon be submitted to Unesco after both states have made minor amendments to their dossiers.

Deputy Culture, Arts and Heritage Minister Datuk Wong Kam Hoong said the ministry was in the process of returning the dossiers to the states for the necessary changes to be made.

"The Federal Government has vetted the application and made some recommendations for the states to adopt."

"Once Penang and Malacca submit the amended versions of their dossiers to us, we will immediately forward their joint application to Unesco," he said after witnessing the presentation of financial aid to needy students at the Bayan Baru market complex here yesterday.

Wong said there were several technicalities in the dossiers that needed to be amended to strengthen the application, adding that it would take the Unesco about a year to assess it.

"Once Penang and Malacca are successfully listed in the World Heritage Site, they must be vigilant enough to sustain the accreditation."

"Otherwise, they may risk losing it if they fail to conform to the stipulated requirements and guidelines," he said.

On whether Malacca's proposed 110m-high observation tower at a gazetted heritage zone in the city would affect the listing, Wong said the tower might be located outside the core heritage area.

In 1999, the two states submitted a joint nomination of the historic core of both towns as the Straits Settlements of Malaysian

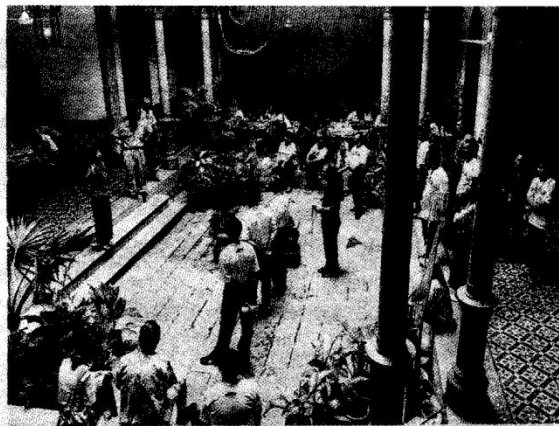
Peranakan culture on the recommendation of Unesco.

On the Internal Security Ministry's recent proposal to convert the 156-year-old Penang Prison into a medical prison, Wong said he welcomed the move, adding that it was necessary to ensure the prisoners were healthy and employable when they were out.

"We will consider the Internal Security Ministry's application for funds to restore the Penang Prison as a heritage building together with its conversion as a medical prison," he said.

Earlier, Wong's wife, Datin Betty Lee Sau Leng, presented donations totalling RM5,900 on behalf of the Association of Wives of Ministers and Deputy Ministers (Bakti) to 17 primary and secondary school students from the Bayan Baru constituency.

As the saying goes, "there's many a slip b'tween cup & lips". We seem to be undergoing far too many... The 'minor amendments' are actually quite hefty, so we gather. We can only hope its not back to the drawing board.



Visitors impressed with island

AFTER taking a trishaw ride around the inner city in Penang, more than 50 participants of a tourism workshop were impressed with what they saw.

They were among more than 200 who attended a two-day workshop on tourism at Mutiara Beach Resort on Tuesday.

The participants visited Fort Cornwallis, the Cheong

Fai-Tze mansion, the Islamic Museum, the Carpenter's Guild and the Church Street Pier.

Among the participants was Honolulu mayor Jeremy Harris.

"I am really impressed with Penang because of the efforts made to preserve its historical sites."

"Penang can do well in tourism because it has enormous potential. The multi-cultural element is an added boon," he said.

It is important that Penang focus on things that are not found elsewhere," he added.

Penang Chief Minister Tan Sri Dr Koh Tsu Koon, who opened the workshop, said the state was willing to learn from Hawaii.

Waikiki (Hawaii) Development's Economic Development

office executive director Manuel C. Menendez III said Penang's tourism industry had tremendous potential, as the island's beauty was still intact.

"It has treasures such as historical buildings."

"You can go to any place in the world for new things but in Penang, you are here for different things," he said.

The Star March 2005

The Star 8 April 2005

MEMBERS, CONCERNED ABOUT MANY ISSUES - THE EFFECTS OF THE TSUNAMI ON US, LONG LOST RELATIVES' TOMBS, ABANDONED BUILDINGS, WANTON DESTRUCTION OF TREES - CONTINUE TO WRITE TO PHT FROM NEAR & FAR ...

Dear PHT

Forgive me for asking at what is probably a difficult time, but perhaps when you have a moment you could be kind enough to let me know how George Town coped with the tsunami. We've not heard much about Penang in the UK, though (sadly) there's plenty on Banda Aceh and Phuket, not to mention Sri Lanka, India and the Andaman and Nikobar Islands.

Best wishes

Arthur Percival (member in UK)

Dear Mag,

Can you give us a summary of the effects of the tsunami on Penang? We saw film of a huge wave ripping along the sea wall in front of the E&O Hotel, and heard that hawkers on Gurney Drive were affected. We would appreciate any information you might have. Many thanks. With our sympathy to all those affected by this terrible event -

Sincerely,

Jasmine and Michael Stein
(Herndon, Virginia, U.S.A.)

Dear Salma: + Magdeline =

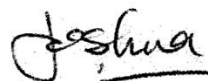
My apologies for this belated note to thank you for all your help while I was in Penang. The pointers you provided made my sojourn more meaningful and I was delighted to have the photo of my grandparents. There were 7 children, my father being the fifth.

My sister, the one in Italy, was in London and tried to see a copy of the book. She wasn't able to but a rare book dealer suggested going to the British Museum. She was able to find the book, not the abridged version, which had a sort of who's-who entry on my grandfather.

I wish to take this opportunity to say thank you to Magdeline Ng for her help and for putting me in touch with you. I've derived much pleasure from the Streets of Georgetown Penang. I'll be sending a cheque in the amount of US\$50 for the good work being done by the Penang Heritage Trust.

Kind regards,

Joshua Waller



RE. SHIH CHUNG SCHOOL

First the columbarium and now, collapse.

Have you highlighted it in Kwong Wah Jit Poh?

Has anyone tried to contact the owner of the building about what's happening? What do you think you'll get from this person or representative of this owner? Do you have the contact to initiate a public response?

Seems like everyone has given up on this collapsed historic building. I have no idea what can be done unless a body like PHT picks it up in protest of owner's neglect and negligence and a heritage lost.

Can the Chinese clans and guilds be mobilized like they were mobilized into protesting the Japanese Government's approved textbooks which distorted their History of WW2 atrocities?

Law Siak Hong

Dear Loh-Lim

My family has found it difficult to find all details of our relationship with Francis Light. My family name is Light and all the males have Light in their name right back to when the first Miss Light married a Cousens. This would have been the beginning of the 19th century. For example my brother is Peter William Light Cousens and my father was William Light Cousens. We must have descended from Francis Light's son Francis Lanoon and from his son Richard Rollo Light. From there it becomes unclear because I think the Miss Light that married Mr Cousens must have been one of Richard's daughters but I can't find a record of her. So I hope there may be information in Penang because it seems a lot of the family stayed in the area including Penang. I will certainly be in contact when I get to Penang and with the Anglican Church. Thank you for your information.

Cheers

Sally Cousens

Why kill another tree? Let it Live !



Will this tree survive?



A crane takes down another large tree to make room for 40-storey towers.

Letter to the editor – Star (19 April 2005)

(A query to "developers" and politicians from a foreign resident who loves Penang!)

In theory it is all well-thought out and agreed to. In practice it keeps going wrong. Why? Prime Minister, Dato' Seri Abdullah Badawi has said it, just like Tun Dr Mahathir said it before him and in Penang, Chief Minister Dr Koh Tsu Koon has echoed both: **smart developers don't cut trees!** Trees protect the environment from landslides and tsunamis alike, they provide shade, shelter and embellish residential areas.

But the construction company building the Tanjung Cove Resort in Tanjung Bungah is not listening. It has already bulldozed several huge trees and may callously do away with this 50 year old beauty (photo), not because it is in the way of the resort's 4 sky scrapers but reportedly because the owner of the site wants his very own bungalow right on the seaside, right there where this majestic tree dwarfs the seven storeys of the building next to it. I would like to beg him to change his mind. Let the tree live ! It took generations to grow to a hundred feet. And if the house must be built right there, it will only take a month to re-design it around the tree. An architectural challenge, maybe, but quite possible with some innovative thinking. It may even win a prize. Some people will pay through the nose to have a house with a huge tree in the courtyard.

Time and again we see Malaysian "developers" cutting into hillsides or razing beautiful natural landscape, until it is a flat, lifeless and dusty wasteland. All that so that they can mechanically construct square boxes like kids playing with blocks. Surely there are better ways of building. Insisting on bulldozing the land until it's absolutely and drably horizontal makes it totally uninteresting for future inhabitants. Why not use some imagination and take advantage of natural contours? And why is there such total disregard for political guidelines? Do Penang State building guidelines actually allow for 40 storey towers to be constructed so close to the public beach? What is the Chief Minister doing about all this destruction right at his doorstep?

Surely the Tanjung Bungah community, including the buyers of those expensive apartments, would appreciate the presence of ancient trees, rather than see flat wasteland with some saplings that will take 20 years to mature.

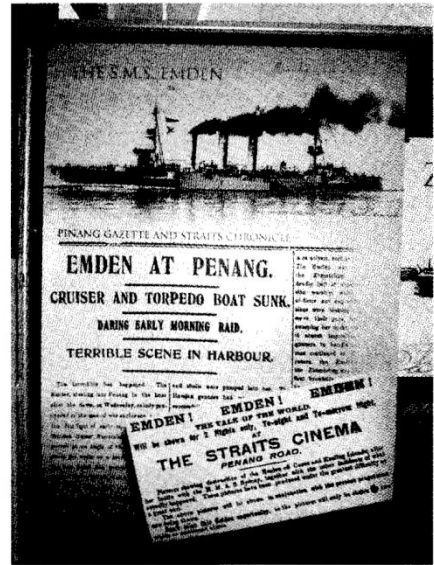
Annelies

Dawn, on 28th October 1914, and Penang awoke to the thunder of big guns coming from the harbour. Eye witnesses running out onto the grass in front of the E & O Hotel could just see the Russian cruiser Zemtchug under attack where she lay at anchor beyond the point of Fort Cornwallis.....

NAVAL BATTLE IN PENANG HARBOUR

Public Talk by Dr. John Robertson, 29th January 2005

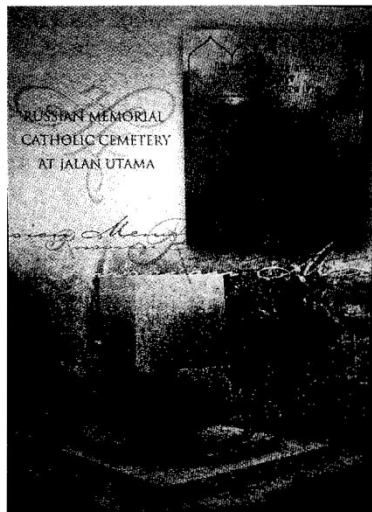
It was just after dawn on 28th October 1914 and Penang was awakened to the sights and sounds of a naval battle off the Esplanade. The First World War had burst upon the Settlement with the sinking of the unsuspecting Russian cruiser Zhemchug by the German cruiser Emden. Recalling this dramatic event in a public talk sponsored by PHT at the Caring Society Complex on 29th January 2005, PHT member Dr. John Robertson kept an audience of Penang residents spellbound with his description of the circumstances that had brought the European conflict to Asia and led warships of the contending navies to battle in Penang harbour. Dr. Robertson's talk was supported by informative power-point illustrations and specially prepared art-work posters.



Dr. Robertson told how as a former naval person himself he had become interested in this long forgotten episode. Participation in a PHT visit to Pulau Jerejak had drawn his attention to the simple grave of two Russian sailors who lost their lives along with over 80 others when Zhemchug was sunk. Dr. Robertson was determined to find out more and over the next few months his research took him to museums and libraries in Malaysia and Britain, including the Imperial War Museum in London. In addition to the graves on Pulau Jerejak, he found that local reminders of the battle included an anchor from the French destroyer Mousquet which was sunk by Emden off Muka Head as the German cruiser made good her escape from Penang. This anchor is in the car park of the Penang State Museum. Dr. Robertson also mentioned the unusual Russian memorial surmounted by a ship's anchor in the Western Road Cemetery.

Dr. Robertson's account of Emden's exploits was enlivened by the insights he gave into the personalities of Emden's chivalrous commander Captain Karl von Müller and his other officers as well as the personal friendship he had for the captain of one of the British warships pursuing him. In sum, Dr. Robertson's presentation which was followed by a lively discussion was a tour de force appreciated by all who attended.

Leslie A.K. James



DR John Robertson is a retired UK National Health Service Consultant, his present interest is heritage and travel, he is also a member of PHT.

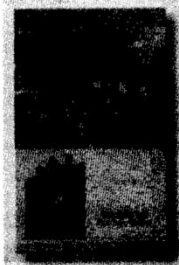
SUNDAY 3 OCTOBER 2004

RAJA BILAH AND THE MANDAILINGS IN PERAK: 1875-1911

By Abdur-Razzaq Lubis and Khoo Salma Nasution
 Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, pp278

RAJA Bilah was a prominent leader of the Mandailing community, a group of Sumatran migrants in Perak.

This in-depth historical work traces the early days of Raja Bilah's career, his involvement in the Selangor Civil War and his later successes as a British appointed Penghulu in Perak. Illustrated with Raja Bilah's original letters, old photographs and maps, the writers meticulously bring to life a remarkable man, who lived through a period when British influence was making itself felt in all spheres of life.



22 SUNDAY PEOPLE 2004 OCTOBER 24 NEW SUNDAY TIMES
 Reviews by RAZLI IBRAHIM

RAJA BILAH AND THE MANDAILINGS IN PERAK: 1875-1911
 By Abdur-Razzaq Lubis and Khoo Salma Nasution
 Publisher: Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, 278 pages

Review by
LEONARD Y. ANDAYA

ALTHOUGH the title of this book suggests a very specific micro-history of one of the ethnic groups in Malaysia, the contents provide an unexpectedly rich and interesting account of an important period in Malay history seen from the local level. The initial impetus for this study was the discovery of the "Penghulu Papers", which contains the personal correspondence of three generations of a prominent Mandailing family in Selangor and Perak between 1875 and 1911.

The story begins with Raja Asal, who emigrated from Sumatra to escape the Padri Wars in the early decades of the 19th century. But the bulk of the narrative concerns his son, Raja Bilah, who was a leader of the Mandailings in Perak. Raja Bilah was appointed penghulu; thus, his correspondence included letters with well-known British administrators and Chinese leaders, as well as ordinary people.

The preservation of a private family's correspondence over such a long period is in itself a rarity in the history of the region. Equally important is the fact that the Penghulu Papers brings to life a period known in Malaysian history as the British "Forward Movement". The serendipitous coincidence of the time frame of the Penghulu Papers and the British colonization of the Malay Peninsula makes the papers a particularly valuable complement to the official version of the history then.

Rupert Emerson, C.D. Cowan, Emily Sadka, Eunice Thio, Chai Hon Chan and others have provided a detailed study of the colonial administrative structure, which include descriptions of the func-

Private letters, public concerns



tions of the Malay penghulu. In this book, Abdur-Razzaq Lubis and Khoo Salma Nasution have skilfully culled those letters which deal with various aspects of a penghulu's life. Even though they are interested in the Mandailing as a specific ethnic group, the activities of Raja Bilah as their penghulu in Lower Perak are very likely representative of other penghulu in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Raja Bilah dealt with matters of land claims, illnesses and diseases, relations with the Chinese mining community, Islam and wars. Not only was he part of a

larger administrative structure, but he was also the leader of customary practices and was consulted in matters dealing with debt, marriage, the pilgrimage, and many other personal matters that required advice from a wise elder of the group. The correspondence provides a rare glimpse of the life of the ordinary Malays, Chinese, and what the British termed the "foreign Malays" (which included the Mandailing) during this important transitional period in the history of the Malay Peninsula.

The authors have succeeded in combining a number of sources to produce this study. The Colonial Record Office files on microfilm in Kuala Lumpur provided some of the detail not already covered by previous scholars. Khoo and Abdur-Razzaq have judiciously combined Indonesian sources written by Mandailing scholars with the more accessible articles and books in English to offer a Mandailing cultural explanation for some of their practices in their new homeland.

They argue, for example, that Mandailing irrigation techniques applied in the Kinta area in Perak enabled the community to produce a surplus of rice to feed the ever-growing Chinese mining population. The techniques learned in the gold mines in Sumatra were also applied successfully in the tin mines in Perak. In discussing these techniques they cited two French mining engineers and reproduced the sketches which were made in the late 19th century. There is much of interest in this book,

including wonderful reproductions of old photographs and of more recent ones taken by Khoo. These illustrations help bring to life many of the comments made in the Penghulu Papers. Khoo's interest in preservation is apparent in her nostalgic photographs of the now decrepit old Mandailing houses and of a mosque which has the old tiered roofs instead of the Mughal-style bulbous domes. Old photographs of the Mandailing families provide a wonderful pictorial history of this ethnic group in Malaysia and demonstrates the possibilities of using photographs in the reconstruction of the country's more recent past.

The authors have also used a source called the "Riwayat Tuan Abu Bakar", about the experiences of a young Mandailing who was born in KL and died sometime in the 1950s. He travelled throughout the peninsula and wrote of his experiences with the Mandailing communities he encountered, and supplemented his comments with some simple but interesting sketches of his travels. This 829-page Jawi manuscript was transliterated into Rumi, with the help of the Toyota Foundation, but it remains a text waiting to be studied.

As a professional historian, I would have liked to see a consolidation of the sections and a far more comprehensive index with entries for mining techniques, relations with colonial administrators, Chinese, Orang Laut, and Mandailing cultural practices. This book provides not only a detailed and interesting historical account of the Mandailing community, but also a rare indigenous viewpoint of events during the extension of British colonial rule in the Malay Peninsula in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. One hopes that other family letters will come to light to provide scholars with the opportunity to piece together more on the lives of the ordinary people in the making of this country.

■ Dr Leonard Y. Andaya is Professor of Southeast Asian History, Department of History, University of Hawaii.



Inner City Trails of George Town

PHT regularly conducts different heritage trails with your own personalized PHT trained guide. These may be tailor suited to your needs, ranging from the Historic Enclave to Little India, from the Street of Harmony to the Sun Yet Sen Trail or from Traditional Foods to Endangered Trades. We are in the midst of putting a Muslim Trail on track and we have maps of many of the trails. These are walking tours although trishaws may be arranged; costs depend on numbers. Call Mag at 04-2642631

NEW SUNDAY TIMES



IN APPRECIATION: Raja Nazrin being given a souvenir copy of the book *Kinta Valley* by husband and wife team Abdul Razzaq and Khoo after the launch yesterday.

Kinta Valley history on record

IPOH, Sat. — After eight years of slogging, the efforts of Khoo Salma Nasution and Abdul Razzaq Lubis were rewarded today.

Their book, *Kinta Valley: Pioneering Malaysia's Development*, was launched by the Raja Muda of Perak, Raja Nazrin Shah at a hotel here.

The book, published by the Perak Academy, details the history of the Kinta Valley. Among the guests at the

launch and preceding visual presentation was Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Tajol Rosli Ghazali.

Met after the book signing, Khoo said: "We have to recognise the importance of our heritage. Our identities and traditions were developed through the years and have made us the pluralistic community we are now."

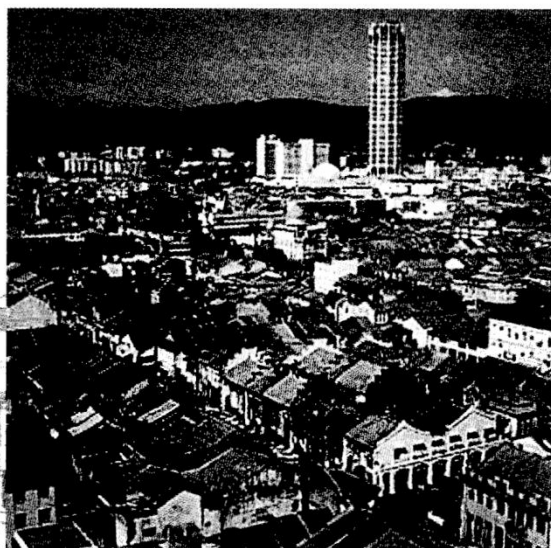
■ See Focus 4, 5

Our ex-Hon Secretary, Salma has been busy since relinquishing her post with us. We congratulate her & her husband on their achievements (see what can be done when you are NOT busy with PHT work?)

Historical Penang [An article giving expression to Alex Koenig's disappointment with Penang, as interpreted by Kim Gooi]

Old time visitors to George Town, the capital of Penang, have always come away impressed. Established by the British in 1786 as its stronghold and trading post in the region, it is everything a thriving city should be: a historic environment of residences, shops, religious buildings and civic spaces; varied ethnic groups occupying distinctive neighborhoods; overlapping streetscapes with vibrant street life.

While such sentiments might be true some years back, the city today is fast losing its charm as its residents moved out and whole neighborhoods of old houses are abandoned and left to decay.



Accelerating this process is the repeal of the rent control act in January 2000, greedy developers eager to wield the hammer and build commercial high-rise, government neglect, corruption and lack of foresight and planning. "It is a rotten apple still shining outside but if you look inside, the old buildings are abused and awaiting destruction. At night it is a dead city as even the poor have been evicted," said Alex Koenig, German town-planner, who had spent over 20 years in Penang. [Now based in Berlin Alex returns to his warm second home on the island every year to escape Europe's winter.]

It is now visible that George Town is turned into a hotchpotch of high-rise, old and new office buildings, haphazardly thrown together, he said. According to Koenig, any attempt to shift existing urban population into new housing estates away from the urban center, with the intention to demolish wholesale existing urban fabric for commercial redevelopment has regularly resulted in disastrous urban plight and popular unrest all over the world.

Penang's famed Campbell Street was once the cultural and commercial hub of the city, official said. Its Sino-Portuguese shop houses with graphic Chinese character signs had been celebrated in postcards and brochures. Despite a major RM2.2 million facelift in 1998, the street once crowded with late night shoppers is now deserted by 7 pm. The street has become symbolic of the ills of the city, bad politicians and impotency of the city planners. Today traders complained of faulty lampposts, exposed electric wires, broken floor tiles and damaged rubbish bins. The supposedly semi pedestrian mall with wide pavement and planted trees, cobblestone-like street is clogged with illegally parked vehicles but empty of shoppers. There hasn't been any maintenance and traffic enforcement, they said. It is a classic example of an expensive superficial facelift coming to nothing once the city is empty of its people and street life.

Ooi Kean Huat, 50, laments the passing community life of old George Town: "I grew up in the inner city and remember the street is full of passing hawkers, from the Indian Muslim 'mee goreng' push carts, Hokkien noodles, tok tok mee (wanton noodles) to fish ball soup. From morning till night, we hear the shouts of the hawkers from the bamboo clacking of the tok tok mee to the clinking porcelain chimps of the fish-ball sellers." Today the same facelift is repeated in another corner called little India and the adjacent heritage area of Pitt street and Amey Street – unique in its close proximity of churches, mosques, Chinese temples and clan houses and Hindu temple. For the past two years pavements are widened, streets dug up and replaced with cobble stones and drains covered.

Traders are lamenting the loss of business and residents complaining of mosquitoes and stench from the covered drains. "When you empty the inner city of its inhabitants, you destroy not only the culture but all the net-working as well," said Ong Seng Huat, a Chinese researcher from the inner city.

Ironically the state government has applied to UNESCO for George Town to be recognised as an old Heritage City and listed as such. In April 2002 it invited Richard Engelhardt, UNESCO Regional advisor for culture in Asia and the Pacific, to the island to highlight its application.

An international conference on Historical Penang "The Penang Story" was also organised. It was attended by an impressive list of over 60 scholars from all over the world. Research papers of great diversity and depth were presented. Some of the interesting titles: Conserving the living culture; Free Ports and other Freedoms; European Freemasons and Chinese Sworn Brotherhood in Penang; Built Environment in an Urban Kampung in Penang; Chinese Clan Jetties; Japanese Prostitutes In Penang; Doubtful Associations- The Boria/Mohurru Festival/ Transported Prisoners/Chinese Secret Societies and the 1867 Riots. It is most refreshing to know there were so much interest and studies on Penang in the academic world. On April 21, speaking at the closing of the international conference, Engelhardt highlighted Penang's uniqueness – its old inner city community life of various ethnic groups living in close proximity. He said Penang could qualify on this uniqueness not seen elsewhere. With the state chief minister in attendance and the presence of the tourism chief, Engelhardt warned pointblank: "But it must be a living city with community life intact not any theme park with spruced up facades of an old city."

Way back in 1986 the German government had finished restoration of Bhaktapur town in Nepal's Katmandu valley. The project took 12 years and Bhaktapur is today designated a world heritage site. Penang applied for German assistance. Penang was selected in 1987 over many applicants all over the world, recalled Alec Koenig. The restoration of old George Town could easily come to RM100 million, all financed by a German cooperation programme as assistance to local cooperation, he said.

Historical streets and mansions were selected as model restoration; 85 shops and residence houses were to be rehabilitated by appropriated action – dilapidated house replaced, renovated or repaired. The tenants to be dealt with case by case, whatever is suitable. The entire Aménian Street was earmarked to house the local traditional artisans, arts and crafts shops. The entire project was projected to last a decade.

"In 1992 a national heritage inventory was started to identify the heritage and historical buildings but it came to nothing with developers lobbying against it," Koenig said sadly. They had the notion that any building marked in the inventory would not be made profitable anymore, he added. The new building directives that came into being in 1990 after the change of the state chief minister were against renovation and conservation. The Aménian Street project was stalled.

"In August 1991 I saw a memo from the state government to the Municipal council secretary saying: 'All activities relating to conservation had been strictly forbidden'," claims Koenig. It seems everyone has a hidden agenda and nobody is willing to listen to the lonely voice of the experts. Today George Town hopes to be listed as Unesco World Heritage Site.

"They got the chance more than a decade ago. It's a bit late now with all the damage done and more chaos to follow," said Koenig sadly. "It was for me a shocking experience to see one of the greatest historical cities of Asia being willfully ruined and plundered. Most heritage has been wiped away and it will be impossible to regain it."



TAKEN FROM 'THE HINDU' & SENT TO US BY LESLIE JAMES - A MODEL FOR SUFFOLK HOUSE?

Colonial grandeur
The house of Kirkpatrick



Outside — a Palladian-style north front and an Indian-style south front.

This stately home in Hyderabad now a women's college that James Achilles Kirkpatrick and princess Khairunnissa lived in, has come up for restoration. GUNVANTHI BALARAM looks at how it made it to the 'World Monuments in Danger List'.

The house of Kirkpatrick, long latticed corridors and a grand durbar hall. There is a staircase too that continues in two graceful sweeps. For those who know the saga of the Hyderabad princess Khairunnissa and James Achilles Kirkpatrick, the Scottish bureaucrat who built the 1803 British Residency now the Osmania University Women's College in Hyderabad, the noisy chatter of co-eds in the complex cannot muffle the resonating drama of the past. I was told the story as a child by my mother, who had studied at the college. Much later, William Dalrymple filled in the melodramatic details in *The White Mughals*. As I recently journeyed through the tattered and terribly grand mansion now emptied of classes and waiting to be restored, I felt as though the tears in the walls and the cobwebs trembling on the ceilings were whispering of the endless love of Kirkpatrick and Khairunnissa, a romance that shook not merely the Deccan but all of British India.

Kirkpatrick's arrival

The familiar story of the glaring conquest of India is one we have all been brought up with, but the story of the Indian conquest of so many Britons is not so familiar. Kirkpatrick was among those British officers who were enchanted by India, especially by the culture of the Mughal court and absorbed into it. He arrived as Resident in Hyderabad in 1795 as a "cocky young imperialist intending to conquer India", as Dalrymple notes, but proceeded to promptly fall in love with Khairunnissa, the lovely teenage granddaughter of Nawab Mahmood Ali Khan, whose family had, for some strange reason, thrown them together. Governor General Wellesley's wrath notwithstanding, the lovers ended up getting married, with James secretly converting to Islam and becoming a secret agent for the Nizam against the British! **The house that Kirkpatrick built so carefully for his Begum on the banks of the Musi is among the most splendid pieces of colonial architecture in the country. Designed by Lt Samuel Russell of the Royal Engineers,** it was paid for by the Nizam, who had adopted James as his son and named him Hashmat Jung. It boasts a Palladian-style north front and an Indian-style south front, long latticed corridors, a grand durbar hall, and a lovely staircase that divides at a landing and continues in two graceful sweeps and is documented in Philip Davies' *Splendours of the Raj*. It now has 41 acres of unkempt gardens that meander down to the Musi. In the grounds are also a graveyard where a couple of subsequent Residents and others are buried, the remnants of old bastions and a charming model (the size of a large doll's house) of the Residency as it originally looked.

Shortlived joy — Khairunnissa .

It was within these precincts that James and Khair lived out the final years of their short-lived, eventful but very happy marriage (which ended in 1805, when James died unexpectedly while on a visit to Calcutta. Khair had stayed behind in Hyderabad and never saw her husband's body. She arrived at his grave in Calcutta only some weeks after he was buried). It was in this house that Khair gave birth to their two infants, William George (Sahib Allum) and Catherine Aurora (Sahib Begum) — a portrait of the duo by George Chinnery, which now hangs in a private collection in England, is considered one of the finest works of art to have come out of the Raj. It was from here that Khair's tots, were, to her undying anguish, sent away just a few days before James' death to be raised in England. She never saw her Sahib Allum and Sahib Begum again. The widowed Khair was soon seduced by James's assistant, Henry Russel, and kept, like Madam Butterfly, as his mistress at Masulipatnam on the coast until she died a few years later at the age of 27.

THE RESTORATION

Today, the stately home that James and Khair and their infants lived in has come up for restoration; the result of a longstanding campaign to save the structure by a group of local heritage lovers led by Bilkiz Alladin, writer, activist and Hyderabad high society hostess. Alladin penned and staged a play, "For the Love of a Begum", some years ago to raise awareness about the historical building, and was instrumental in getting the World

Monuments Fund in New York to raise a donation of \$1,00,000 in 2002 for its restoration.

"I invited Elbrun Kimmelman, an active associate of the World Monuments Fund, to visit the erstwhile Residency and have it included on their World Monuments in Danger List," Alladin says simply. "Elbrun recognised its heritage value the moment she set foot in the building and before we knew it, she had had it listed! Soon after, the Fund organised a grant of \$1,00,000 from American Express for its restoration."

Over the last several months, a small team led by conservation architect Vasanta Sobha Turaga has been involved in documenting the building and devising a comprehensive conservation plan for the place. The chemistry department of Osmania University has also played a significant role in the process by training some of its lab-technicians and a group of architecture, engineering and chemistry students in the principles and practices of working on historic buildings and conservation processes. "The idea," Turaga says, "is to create a set of professional conservationists who will go on to work on other restoration projects in the community."

According to college principal Sulochana Reddy, the restoration work is expected to begin later this year. But the academician, whose office is located in an imposing room on the ground floor of the former Residency, is unwilling to hazard a guess as to how long the work will take.

In the meantime, the authorities should take more trouble to publicise the importance of the building, says historian and heritage activist Vasant Bava, former Andhra Pradesh chief secretary, founder of the Institute for Deccan Studies and author of The Last Nizam. "The erstwhile Residency represents a crucial link in a long period of Indian and British history, and deserves to be projected as an important cultural site for both scholars and tourists," Dr. Bava insists. "It concerns anyone who wants to understand the past, and relate it to the present. Apart from its romantic origins, it was the scene of major events in Indian history, having been, among other things, attacked during the Mutiny of 1857. The place was once the symbol of the power exercised by the British in the Indian states.

We would like it to be remembered also as an example of Indo-British understanding in the post-Independence era."



**[DOESN'T ALL THIS SOUND LIKE
DEJA VU RE SUFFOLK HOUSE?]**

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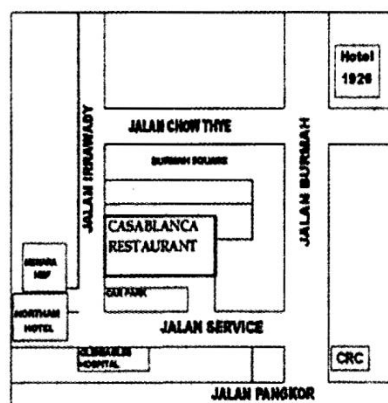
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