



PHT

Newsletter

Issue No.103 / May 2013



**PENANG
HERITAGE
TRUST**

*Persatuan
Warisan
Pulau
Pinang*

PHT

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26 Church Street, City of George Town, 10200 Penang, Malaysia

Tel: 604-2642631 | Fax: 604-2628421

Email: info@pht.org.my | Website: www.pht.org.my

EDITORIAL

With all eyes on the country's 13th General Election it is not surprising that heritage conservation is on the back burner. It is also not surprising that heritage has not been of foremost concern in the public debate about proposals for transportation infrastructure projects. Whether or not these mega-projects will resolve Penang's traffic woes, there is little doubt they will have a huge impact on the survival of existing communities as well as on Penang's endangered hills and forests and its fragile coastal environment. The safeguarding of these aspects of Penang's unique island heritage is integral to PHT's call for a balanced policy approach emphasizing the improvement of public transport coupled with measures to discourage private vehicle use – an approach that aims at moving people rather than cars.

Also lost sight of in recent months is the commitment of local authority to remove swiftlet-breeding farms from the George Town UNESCO World Heritage Site by 31st December 2013. This deadline marks the end of the three-year period for implementation of the Federal government decision complying with Malaysia's obligations under the UNESCO World Heritage inscription. Swiftlet breeding is incompatible with World Heritage listing; removal of the farms is not voluntary or optional. Far from meeting the deadline, however, anecdotal evidence suggests that swiftlet-breeding farms in George Town are on the increase. Moreover, the appearance of a new and more virulent strain of avian flu raises increased public health concerns.

Heritage is about communities, their cultural identity and their sense of place. Penang is special in that it consists of many communities each with a special sense of place, be it the City of George Town itself or Tanjung Bungah or Pulau Tikus or Balik Pulau, not to mention the communities making up Sebarang Prai that PHT plans to celebrate later this year through "The Prai Story" programme devised in cooperation with ThinkCity and MPSB. As for Pulau Tikus, its sense of place is increasingly threatened by haphazard high-rise commercial development projects that are inappropriate for a residential area and take no account of the existing limited road infrastructure. Instead the traditional marketplace central to the life of the community is coming under pressure and local streets are becoming major thoroughfares where the car is king and pedestrians are at risk.

Editor

Staff Profiles

The PHT office has never appeared so busy as it has over the past few months. To assist visitors and PHT members in identifying staff and their responsibilities we are providing below profiles of the office staff. Regrettably Wei Kiat is leaving at the end of April after providing support to the PHT team drafting a Heritage Management Plan (HMP) for the Old Northam Road Protestant Cemetery for GTWHI. Meanwhile, PHT has recruited a communications & marketing officer.

Ho Sheau Fung, Manager

Since 1993, Sheau Fung has been actively involved in Penang's arts and cultural activities; acting variously as festival curator, producer, director, actress, scriptwriter, programme manager and videographer. She worked with the NGO Arts-ED from 2001-2004 and administrated the Arts in Heritage Education Programme, "Anak-anak Kota", aimed at using the arts as a creative education tool to empower young people to explore and discover their cultural and historical identities in a diverse, 'living and changing' heritage environment. Since 2008, she has also been active in many projects documenting the traditional performing arts and trades in Penang and training of volunteered guides for the George Town World Heritage Site.



Ee Vonne Leong, Marketing and Communications Officer

Freshly graduated from Universiti Sains Malaysia, Ee Vonne is the new addition to the PHT family. Originally from Ipoh, she has been in Penang for four years and has developed a strong connection with the island. She joined PHT to understand more about Penang's heritage and also to help strive for its vision.

Goh Wei Kiat, Project Officer

Fresh graduate from Universiti Teknologi Malaysia with BSc (Land Administration & Development), Wei Kiat was involved in LIVE HERITAGE as volunteer coordinator for the last two years. He has also been involved in the inventory part for the project, Revitalizing Intangible Cultural Heritage (RICH), and currently as the support staff for Old Northam Road Protestant Cemetery Heritage Management Plan.



Ooi Yee Huei, Research Officer

Obtained her BA, majoring in Psychology, from the University of Otago, New Zealand. She joined the PHT team in July 2012 as a cultural surveyor for the Revitalizing the Intangible Cultural Heritage of George Town (RICH) project. Being an amateur in the heritage field, she has found it a great opportunity to learn more about the historical aspects of the place where she belongs.

Vanessa Lim, Administrative Officer

A former interior designer. With her growing interest in the heritage and histories of her hometown, she joined PHT in February, 2012 in hopes of learning more about the stories of Georgetown.



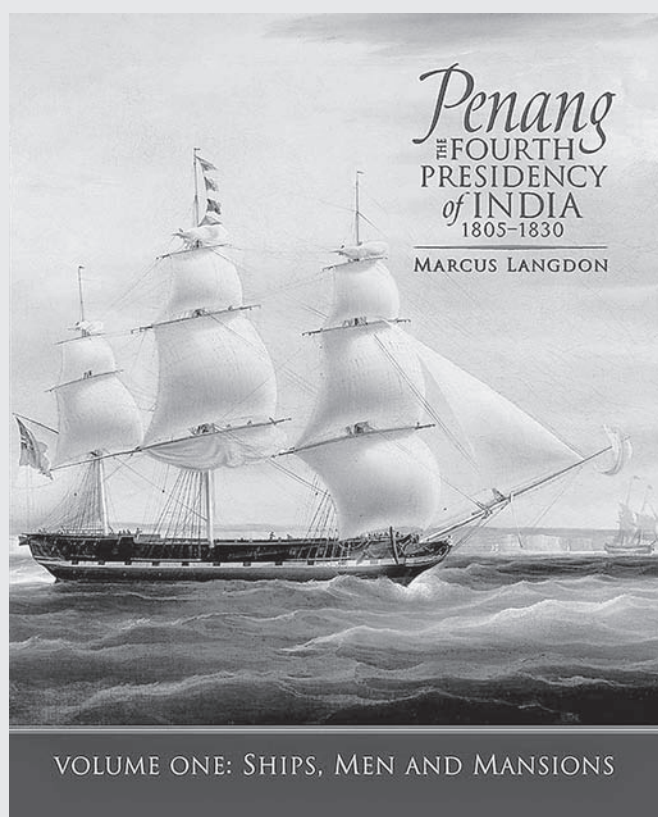
Tong Wing Cheong, Project Research Assistant

Has a B.A. from National Chung Cheng University (2010) with a major in Philosophy, and an M.A. from National University of Tainan (2012) majoring in cultural anthropology and specialising in folklore, folk culture and folk belief. He was involved in the cultural mapping component of the project, Revitalizing Intangible Cultural Heritage (RICH), in 2012.

**May Yap, PAPA coordinator**

In charge of the Penang Apprenticeship Programme For Artisans (PAPA). She is the person to go to for any information about the PAPA programme and is the link between the artisans with apprentices.

Merchandise

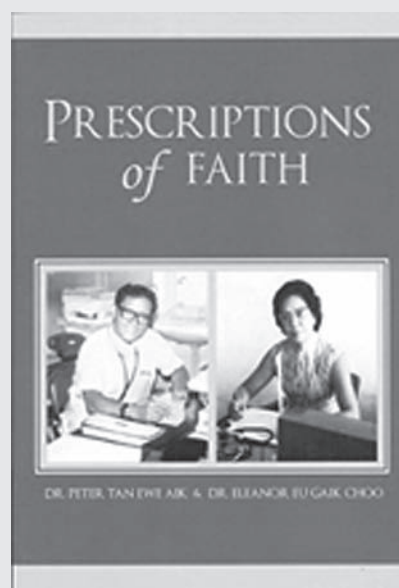


Penang: The Fourth Presidency of India 1805-1830, Volume One: Ships, Men and Mansions
by Marcus Langdon RM150

Prescriptions of Faith by Dr. Peter Tan Ewe Aik &
Dr. Eleanor Eu Gaik Choo RM36



Kapitan Chung Keng Kwee
by Tan Yeow Woon RM70



CHUNG THYE PHIN VILLA, RELAU



Villa newly built in 1930s



Pool view, 1930s

A first-time visit recently to the Relau Villa in the company of **Chung Thye Phin's** grand-daughter Ong Ching-Yin provided three expatriate PHT members with an opportunity to explore this extraordinary heritage site while benefiting from Yin's anecdotes and old family photographs.

Built in the early 1930s by Hakka tin-mining millionaire Chung Thye Phin (1879-1935), the last Kapitan China of Perak, the single-storey Relau mansion is reminiscent of an ancient Roman villa. Its central feature is an open-air swimming pool (Penang's first privately owned pool) in a quadrangle formed by the four wings of the villa. These wings contain rooms with doors opening to the pool. A series of spiral-shaped pillars forms a colonnade around the outer walls of the villa while a similar inner colonnade surrounds the swimming pool. These unique spiral pillars once supported a gabled roof that has collapsed and disappeared leaving the whole structure open to the elements and neglect. All but one of the pillars remain standing although doors and windows have been stripped of their fittings.

Old photographs show a driveway leading to a porte-cochère, angled at one corner of the villa perhaps for reasons of *feng shui*. The porte-cochère is indicated today by the position of two pairs



Ong Chin-Yin with Brian & Carolyn Walling
examining spiral pillars

of spiral pillars separated from the outer colonnade. It is curious to note -- and this is confirmed by old photographs -- that although each of the villa's rooms had individual external doors from the outer colonnade and from the poolside inner colonnade, only one or two rooms had windows. At one end of the pool is the kitchen wing with storerooms and servants' quarters. This wing had a flat roof with balustrade reached by a narrow wooden staircase that is precariously still in place. According to Yin there was a slide from the rooftop into the pool.

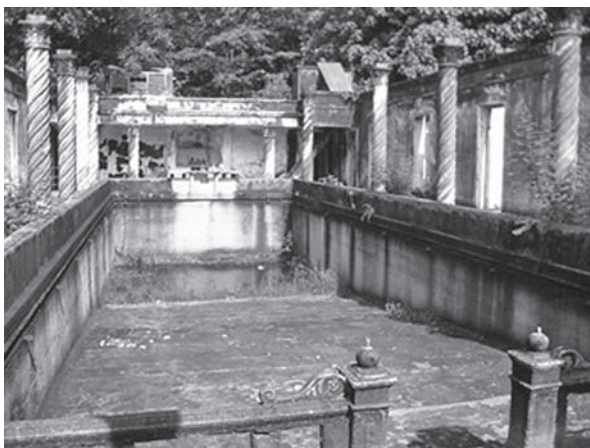
Although now surrounded by urban high-rise development the villa's location in the 1930s was very isolated and must have been a magical getaway. The property includes a waterfall and stream overlooked by the villa. On the opposite side of the stream across a footbridge and up a flight of steps is a "garden house" where Chung Thye Phin entertained his friends and business associates. Now painted red this charming little building has been converted into a Taoist temple. Following is an extract from a book by Yin's cousin-in-law, Boyd Manderson – not yet published:

"Grandfather indulged himself with this house when the Great Depression of 1930 moved him to retreat from his business affairs and spend more time with his many families. Now, more than seventy years after his death, not much was left. Once it was a hundred acres of carp ponds, pony tracks, durian and mango trees and carefully manicured English gardens. The house, built on the side of a hill, by a stream and around a swimming pool, was far from civilisation, far enough to be a civilisation of its own making. It was a lodge in Nirvana, so that was what grandfather called it."

Now owned by the MPPP the site is adjacent to a public park that appears to be seldom used. While the villa itself has been fenced off for safety reasons, there is evidence of an attempt to encourage visitors to the surrounding property by providing two small pavilions, information signs and picnic tables overlooking the stream. There is little sign of regular maintenance, however, and the natural beauty of the waterfall and stream is marred by litter.

As reported in the last issue of the **Newsletter**, the Chung Thye Phin Villa was designated by PHT as one of Penang's seven **Most Important Endangered Heritage Sites**. The MPPP should make a serious effort to promote the Relau Villa and its property as a heritage site for visitors, illustrating the lifestyle of Penang's pre-war local business and social elite. The villa itself could be properly restored and the roof replaced. Alternatively it could simply be stabilized and maintained as an interesting architectural ruin. Either way, the pool (even empty as it is) would require the installation of a safety barrier.

Text and photography by Leslie A.K. James
Old photographs courtesy of Ong Chin-Yin



Pool view today



Chung Thye Phin Villa today

LIGHT AT END OF THE TUNNEL?

Statement by Penang Heritage Trust, 8th April 2013

PHT welcomes the State Government's publication on 25th March of the **Penang Transport Master Plan** with its balanced approach to resolving the problem of traffic congestion. The Transport Master Plan public survey showed clearly that the people of Penang prefer the balanced approach.

PHT wholly endorses the State Government's commitment to improving public transportation so that it will be the people's main choice when travelling. The State Government's aim to achieve 40 per cent public transportation usage by the year 2030 is also laudable.

PHT is concerned, however, that the recent award by the State Government of contracts for highways infrastructure development is not consistent with the Master Plan's balanced approach to solving Penang's traffic problem.

In justifying the award of these contracts the State Government's focus appears to be on infrastructure (highways and cross-harbour tunnel) without promoting measures of any substance to discourage individual car usage (e.g., car-free days in certain areas, conversion of certain streets to pedestrian malls, increased charges for on-street parking, restricted vehicle access during peak hours).

PHT appreciates that the distribution of powers between different levels of government may present a challenge for the State Government in implementing its preferred public transportation policies. Nevertheless, abandoning the commitment to this option at this time in favour of focusing on infrastructure mega-projects is most unwise. Instead, PHT urges the State Government to redouble its efforts in cooperation with the Federal Government to implement public transportation solutions that will ease traffic congestion and benefit the people of Penang.

With respect to the contract awards, PHT is concerned that they appear to put the cart before the horse - a feasibility study should have been done first (costs of which could be included in the successful tender). Other matters of concern about the contract awards include

- a) The need for a tunnel. The Transport Master Plan indicates this should be assessed only in 2025 to 2030, not that the tunnel should be completed in that timeframe as recently announced.
- b) The lack of a Detailed Environmental Impact Assessment (DEIA) for the future 740-acre land reclamation. It is within the powers of the State Government to insist on this especially when such reclamation is clearly causing damage to Penang's coastal and maritime environment.

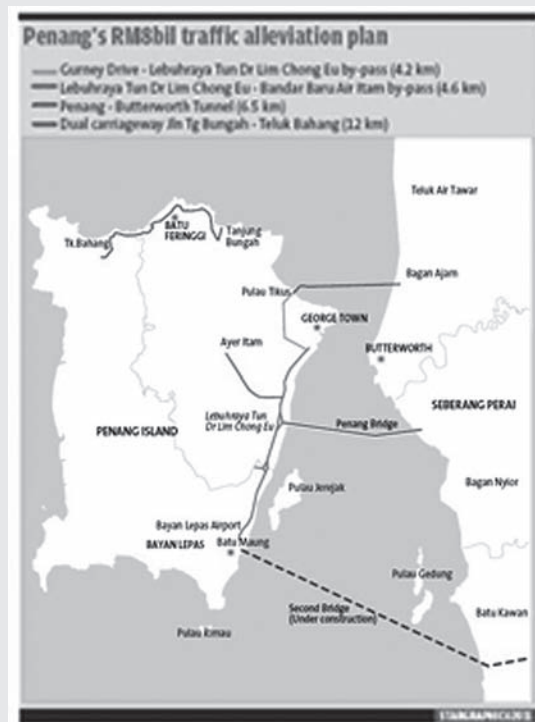


Photo Courtesy by The Star Publication

- c) DEIA conducted by consultants appointed by the developer. Funds should be placed with the State to appoint an independent consultant. (This should apply to TIAs and HIAs as well.)
- d) Whether the State is paying for acquisition of private land for the highway projects.
- e) Why the least urgent project, the proposed Tanjung Bungah to Telok Bahang highway, is accorded first priority.
- f) Whether development is to be allowed along these proposed highways and if so at what privileged density. The objective should be to alleviate traffic not open up more areas for high-density development thereby increasing traffic.

In conclusion, PHT supports the position taken by the Penang Forum and the Consumers' Association of Penang (CAP). At the same time, the Penang Heritage Trust advocates a sustainable vision for Penang that includes public transportation solutions that will not only ease traffic problems but also protect for future generations Penang's unique heritage of cultural landscapes, historic communities, forested hills and coastal areas.

Media Coverage

12 NATION The Star, TUESDAY 9 APRIL 2013 The Star, Tuesday 9 April 2013

NGO: Details of tunnel project vague

People still in the dark about undersea plan, says Chant



GEORGE TOWN: The proposed 6.5km Gurney Drive-Bagan Ajam undersea tunnel project has come under another round of criticism from a non-governmental organisation (NGO) here.

Penang Citizens Awareness Chant Group (Chant) member Khoo Kay Peng questioned the state government on its contingency plan should the construction cost of the tunnel escalate.

He said people were still in the dark about the whole project although the tender had been awarded.

Khoo asked at a press conference here yesterday if the tunnel would be able to get enough traffic and toll collection to maintain it.

He also asked what would happen to the compensation agreement between the state government and Consortium Zenith BUCG, which was awarded the tender, if the project was aborted during construction.

"The public expects meaningful feedback on the project. The technical details, project alignment, layout, impact and implication and land reclamation have got to be explained thoroughly."

"The public dialogue organised by the state should not be in the form of informing or selling the public the project," he said.

He said the state should also reveal the tender documents in accordance with the state's Competency, Accountability and Transparency (CAT) policy.

Chant adviser Prof Dr Jimmy Lim talked about the impact on the Gurney Drive seafront promenade should the tunnel be built there.

A public forum on the tunnel and its impact will be held at the E&O Hotel Penang in Farquhar Street by the group at 8pm on April 16.

The speaker for the forum is architect and town planner Dr Peter R. Jensen from Australia.

The undersea tunnel is one of the four infrastructure projects announced by the state government.

The mega package consists of the 6.5km Gurney Drive-Bagan Ajam undersea tunnel, the 4.2km Gurney Drive-Lebuh Raya Tun Dr Lim Chong Eu Bypass, the 4.6km Lebuh Raya Tun Dr Lim Chong Eu-Bandar Baru Air Itam Bypass and a 12km Tanjung Bungah-Telok Bahang paired road.

Seeking answers: (From left) Khoo speaking to the group advisors Prof Lim and Yan Lee after the press conference in Chulia Street.

The Star, Saturday 2 February 2013

By DALJIT DHESI
daljit@thestar.com.my

Don't demolish heritage buildings



ONE of the attractions in London is its historical sites and heritage buildings. My last trip to London for an assignment was late last year and the first one was in 2004.

What actually amazed me is that London has not changed much throughout the years. It's still rich in history with well-preserved historical sites and heritage buildings.

Some of my friends who have worked and studied there can attest to this. Despite some new infrastructure projects here and there, the city remains enchanting as ever.

The same can be seen in Europe, even in some Asian countries like India, China, Vietnam or Laos.

What saddens me is that Malaysia, in the name of development with the exception of a few, has sacrificed its heritage buildings through the passage of time.

One of the reasons tourists flock into the country is to enjoy the various cultures and historical sites and buildings that Malaysia has to offer. Many pre-colonial and heritage buildings over the years have been demolished. There are some pathetic state.

Tourism is an important sector and substantial foreign exchange earner to countries like Malaysia. The relevant authorities should restore, refurbish and preserve old buildings which have strong heritage with some dating back to more than a century.

I have heard tourists lament about their disappointment that many historical sites have not been well kept and heritage buildings had made way for modern buildings. It's a sad truth.

In the last five years many kopitiam – traditional breakfast and coffee shops found in small towns – have emerged in cities and in shopping malls. This is because people appreciate the ambience and the food served at these traditional outlets and its also nostalgic to many as it brings back fond memories during our childhood days.

Tradition and history go side by side. More effort should be spent to enrich the country's history, and to restore or preserve heritage buildings.

The Government should be given a pat on its back for its effort in improving infrastructure, society and developing the country to where it is today.

It should not at the same time "offer heritage buildings and historical sites as sacrificial lambs" for developers to feast on.

The recent move by YTL to reopen Hotel Majestic in Kuala Lumpur after 28 years is a move which other developers and business operators should follow. The hotel was built in 1932 and is rich in history.

It's time the authorities put more effort to refurbish old buildings that are steep in history.

**OPEN LETTER TO YB CHOW KON YEOW,
Chairman Local Government, Traffic Management & Environment**

URGENT ACTION NEEDED TO END SWIFTLET FARMING

In view of the continuing lack of action against swiftlet farms in the George Town UNESCO World Heritage Site and the adjacent urban area, Penang Heritage Trust would like to bring to your urgent attention the new strain of deadly bird flu H7N9, and the deaths from H5N1 of thousands of swiftlets in Vietnam.

The population of farmed swiftlets in George Town is continuing to explode. There is still no regulation by authorities despite the State authorities saying that the swiftlet farms have to be out of the UNESCO WHS by the end of 2013. The deadline for the eradication of swiftlet farms from the WHS has been delayed since 2008.

It is of greater concern now that swiftlets are proved susceptible to the bird flu virus H5N1 and are being killed in their thousands in Vietnam, where the virus has also killed a five-year-old boy. (**The Nation**. Bangkok. April 12th 2013). This is extremely worrying news especially with the swiftlet population embedded in the human population here in George Town.

Penang Heritage Trust is also concerned that the new strain of deadly bird flu H7N9 is being ignored by authorities despite the fact that MPPP figures show 104 swiftlet farms in heritage houses within the boundary of the World Heritage Site alone.

China is reportedly monitoring its bird migrations. Are the authorities here doing the same? Migratory birds are common in Penang and the island provides shelter and rest to many of them as they fly through. State, MPPP and GTWHI, along with the Veterinary Department and the Health Department, must not ignore concerns for the safety of this now thriving heritage city, its human residents, working population, and tourists who are filling hostels, hotels and restaurants.

The 1GP -- **Guidelines for Swiftlet Farming** -- state categorically that swiftlet farms must be at least 50m from any residence and should not be in any residential areas, near schools, playgrounds, clinics or hospitals. Our children and the elderly are especially at risk. The Guidelines also state that swiftlet farms must be at least 10km from airports. Swiftlets farms are visible alongside the runway of Penang International Airport and their swarms are often seen spiralling near or above the airport.

Penang Heritage Trust urges authorities to immediately begin the eradication of swiftlet farms from the George Town WHS and then begin the regulation of the swiftlet farming industry in Penang.

Khoo Salma Nasution
President,
Penang Heritage Trust
15th April 2013



Penang: An inside guide to its historic homes, buildings, monuments and parks

By Keith Hockton & Howard Tan, MPH Group Publishing Sdn Bhd, Revised edition 2012

The first edition of this guidebook on the built and natural heritage of Penang came out in 2011 but was not widely distributed. The revised edition was published in 2012 and I had looked forward to it as no one has yet written a similar book illustrated with colour photographs.

Being a revised edition, I had expected that any major mistakes made in the first edition would have been rectified. I was horrified, however, by the number of serious factual errors the revised edition contains. I would have thought that an established publishing house like MPH would have attempted to verify all the authors' assertions with the Penang Heritage Trust at the very least!

This review shall focus on the seven most glaring mistakes to illustrate what a mine of misinformation this guidebook is, especially to the unsuspecting first-time visitor to Penang.

Page 157 contains the worst mistake in the entire book. The photograph depicts Wesley Methodist Church (formerly the Fitzgerald Memorial Church) on Burmah Road, and not the Roman Catholic Church of the Immaculate Conception as labelled! The actual Church of the Immaculate Conception is on Burmah Road in Pulau Tikus. The authors also claim that the local Eurasian community which settled in Kampong Serani (Eurasian Village) in Pulau Tikus was originally Thai-Portuguese from Phuket when in fact they were a mixture of Thai-French and Thai-Portuguese, hence the proliferation of French Eurasian surnames in Penang found nowhere else in Malaysia.

The runner-up position belongs to the "Tunku Kudin House" (sic) entry on page 50. The address is incorrect as it belongs to Kedah House, the official residence of the Sultan of Kedah in Penang! Tunku Kudin's official palace in George Town was Cinnamon Hall at 206 Kelawei Road and long demolished. The ruined building in the photograph, however, is not Cinnamon Hall but Udini House, a seaside villa built by Tunku Kudin

on Odinni Estate in Gelugor. The house was originally named Odinni House and the current spelling only came about after World War 1. Today, some people refer to it as "Tunku Kudin's House." The house was sold in 1910 to the Raja of Setul, Tengku Baharuddin bin Tunku Meh, more commonly known as **Ku Din Ku Meh**. Ku Din Ku Meh completely renovated the house and added a new kitchen and servants' wing, an aviary and a deer park. The house was compulsorily acquired by the Federal government for re-development but was instead handed over to the Malaysian Marine Police which allowed it to fall into ruin. The authors' allegation that Tunku Kudin's family had no interest in preserving the house is completely baseless. Members of the family are still very interested, but they can do nothing as it is Federal property. The descendants of Ku Din Ku Meh filed an unsuccessful lawsuit against the government in 1990 to challenge the acquisition and to buy it back as they wished to restore it to its former glory.

The write-up on the Penang War Museum on page 179 is completely spurious! "The Folly of Fortress Penang" published in **PHT Newsletter** Issue No.99 of March 2011 provides more historically accurate information. Firstly, the site was not a true fortress but a naval gun emplacement



emplacement complex on Punjab Hill in Batu Maung protecting the South Channel from enemy warships. Secondly, construction began in 1937, not in the early 1930s as stated in the book, and it was completed in 1939. No anti-aircraft guns were ever installed at the site and no more than 135 British and Indian officers and men of the 8th (Singapore) Heavy Battery of the Hong Kong-Singapore Royal Artillery were ever stationed there to man a mere six artillery pieces. No evidence exists to substantiate the popular myths that the Japanese used the complex as a military base, a POW camp, an execution site and as a 'comfort women' brothel! The retreating British had destroyed the complex's armaments and equipment and reduced much of its facilities to a ruinous state to deny the Japanese its use. The Japanese had no use for it as it was too remote and did not fit into their overall defence strategy.

The "Boon Siew Villa" (page 62) is the former Donnybrook Annex that once stood within the grounds of the adjacent Donnybrook House on 36 Northam Road (today's Jalan Sultan Ahmad Shah). The authors have incorrectly attributed the address to Donnybrook Annex. The Annex was designed and built by local architect Chew Eng Eam for Lim Cheng Kung, son of Phuah Hin Leong, replacing an earlier structure on the site. The Annex bore the address of 36A Northam Road and served as a residence for Lim's accountant. The house faces Transfer Road and not Larut Road as per the book! As to the authors' claims of "bad feng shui", originally the portion of Transfer Road facing the house was a brook linked to the canal from the Prangin River, hence the proliferation of water-themed names of houses in the vicinity like Donnybrook and Brook Lodge. The brook once flowed under the now disappeared North Bridge connecting the two sections of Northam Road and into the North Beach behind Donnybrook Annex. This body of flowing water should have had some positive attributes for believers of feng shui. It is curious that there is no mention of a French WW1 bronze memorial statue depicting a French infantryman wearing an Adriatic helmet set close to the main door and visible from the road.

The origins of the memorial and how it came to be erected there is still a mystery.

The authors are unaware that the "Goh Chan Lau" or Five-Storied Villa (page 63) was well known to the British colonials in the first quarter of the 20th century as Raffles-By-The-Sea or the Bellevue Hotel. The original owner's name is misspelled as **Chen** Tek Soon instead of Cheah Tek Soon who had Tek Soon Street named after him. Millionaire Goh Say Eng had married the niece of Cheah who had inherited the villa. It was eventually sold to Tye Kee Yoon who turned it into a hotel. The fifth floor of the building used to house the nascent P'i Joo Girls' School. By the 1920s, Tye's hotel had failed and the building was leased to the Government English School. During WW2, the building was looted and damaged. In the ensuing post-war repairs, the two uppermost floors were removed and the elaborate porte-cochere was replaced by a simpler porch before being leased to the Shih Chung Branch School founded by Tye and other Chinese millionaires, until its closure in 1994.



Shih Chung Branch School Penang

The existence of the Cathedral [sic] of the Assumption on Bishop Street [sic] according to the photograph caption on page 128 must surely be one of George Town's best-kept secrets! While it is true this was once a Roman Catholic cathedral from 1955 to 2003, the Church of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary (to give it its official name) in the photograph is really sited on Farquhar Street between Love Lane and the Penang State Museum as correctly stated in the main body of the text.

The “Standard and Chartered Bank Building” (page 97) is yet another misnomer by the authors. There was never a “Standard and Chartered Bank of India, China and Australia” - only a Chartered Bank of India, Australia and China, today’s Standard Chartered Bank.*



*Standard Chartered Bank, Beach Street
Photograph courtesy L.A.K. James*

The statement that “Malaya and Singapore were at this stage (c. 1930) administered by the same Government and were part of the Straits Settlements and not separate countries” is a complete misunderstanding of how Malaya was administered before 1946! Malaya was more of a geographical entity rather than a political one in 1930. Penang Island, Province Wellesley (Seberang Perai), the Dindings (in Perak), Malacca and Singapore constituted the Straits Settlements, a British Crown Colony. The rest of the Malay states in Malaya gradually became British protectorates. The system of government and laws in the protectorates did differ, sometimes substantially, from the Straits Settlements, especially in the area of personal rights and citizenship, due to the protectorates having a measure of autonomy.

This guidebook is of a handy size and provides an easy-to-read quick reference for tourists and locals alike. The reproduction quality of the photographs, however, leaves much to be desired. The authors’ intentions were commendable and selection of sites for inclusion, excellent. Had it been properly researched and edited, it would have quite nicely complemented Khoo Su Nin’s

excellent **Streets of George Town, Penang**. MPH or the authors ought to take another good honest look at the book and seriously consider revising it again with the assistance of the Penang Heritage Trust.

Reviewed by Andrew Hwang

**Note: The Standard Chartered Bank was formed by a merger of the Chartered Bank of India, Australia & China (informally known as the Chartered Bank) with the Standard Bank of British South Africa in 1969. It is Malaysia’s oldest bank, the Chartered Bank having opened a branch at the current site on Beach Street in 1875. The present building was completed around 1930. Editor*

NOTICE MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Reminder for membership renewal with increase in subscription for 2013:

Admission: RM50
Annual subscription: RM60

Students (18 and above)
Admission : RM30
Annual subscription : RM30

Overseas postal surcharge:
RM14 annually for Asia, Australia, New Zealand
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Please send cheque or visit
Penang Heritage Trust
26 Church Street
George Town, 10200 Penang

MYSTERIOUS STATUES

In his book review in this issue of the **Newsletter**, Andrew Hwang draws attention to the statue of a First World War French soldier in the garden of the 'Boon Siew Villa' on Northam Road. This appears to be a war memorial. We would welcome any information or explanation as to its provenance.

Paul Gerarts writes below enquiring about another mysterious statue in George Town.

Who is this?

Walking along Penang Road, I noticed this little statue on the roof of a coffee shop at the corner of Kampung Malabar and Penang Road.

The present owner bought the house and was surprised to hear there was a statue on his roof, and he was unaware who it represented.

I have been asking around, but up to now no-one seems to know.

Do any readers of the PHT Newsletter have an idea or can help to identify?

Paul Gerarts
Volunteer Heritage Guide GTWHI



Media Coverage

Penang councillor: Stop 'over-building' in congested areas

The Star, Tuesday 12 March 2013

GEORGE TOWN: High-density projects should generally not be allowed in crowded housing areas, Penang municipal councillor Dr Lim Mah Hui said.

He said "over-building" should not be permitted in congested areas.

"Proper planning is needed," he said in reference to a protest led by Penang Citizens Awareness (Chant Group) member Yan Lee on Saturday against the "Moulmein Rise" project comprising a 27-storey commercial project in Lengkok Moulmein.

The site is before the Pulau Tikus main market here, one of the oldest facilities in the state.

Traders and residents are also against the closure of a car park there.

Dr Lim stressed that he was not

part of the council committee that approved the controversial project.

"Too much high-rise development in any area without proper planning will only cause more problems for residents and those who patronise the areas," he added.



Newsletter Editor~Leslie A.K. James

Production~ Vanessa Lim

Unless specifically stated, the views and opinions expressed in the articles are the author's own and do not necessarily represent the views and opinions of PHT