

PHT newsletter

PENANG HERITAGE TRUST * PERSATUAN WARISAN PULAU PINANG
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July 1998

Message from the Vice-Chairman

We seem to be all waiting patiently for things to happen, depending on political commitment and bureaucratic delays, we shall in due course have (among other things),

- a) Federal Conservation Act
- b) Local Plans for the old city
- c) Formal Listing of Protected Buildings
- d) Heritage Conservation Guidelines set up and implemented by the Local Council
- e) Action Plans implemented by the State Govt
- f) a heritage city Management Corporation
- g) Tax incentives, etc., etc.

Meanwhile, we are all aware that some of our very, very important heritage buildings are being endangered by neglect, abandonment, ravages of weather, pilferage, demolition and development.

We anticipate that by the time the Govt decides that Conservation has become a safe and non controversial issue and is ready to implement all these measures, there may very little that is worthwhile conserving.

Whole precincts which were the pride of Penang, known for their beauty and dignity such as Pesiaran Gurney and Jln Sultan Ahmad Shah are now already destroyed beyond recognition.

The previous YDP Dato Tan Gim Hwa, made some very brave statements during his tenure "declaring that the MPPP recognized the special character of Jln Sultan Ahmad Shah" which would be respected in the approvals of future development plans. We were also informed that the MPPP had classified 17 "listed buildings" under various degrees of protection. We now have a chance to see the realization of his "vision"!

We must also note how some of the

"listed buildings" classified under his authority have been developed; "Hardwicke", which was listed as a "grade one" heritage building and approved under the guidelines formulated by Dato Tan, gives us an idea his concept "protection" for such heritage buildings.

PHT
MEMBERS DAY
(coinciding with the International
Day of the World's Indigenous
People)
Sunday 9 August 1998
Time : 5.00 pm
Venue : 1 Pitt Lane cafe
Call Priscilla,
Tel: 016 410 9311

Now that the MPPP under Dr Teng has expressed greater concern for conservation, it is necessary to get further clarification from the MPPP as to the existing guidelines pertaining to buildings already listed and graded by previous councils.

We are now appealing to the public to help us identify these endangered buildings and precincts and also help us canvass for some action from concerned parties: esp the owners and the Authorities.

PHT as the public watchdog and advocate has to take on this role and will undertake the publishing of a list of such buildings so that public attention will make the authorities realize the urgency of this issue.

Among the important Heritage Buildings in the endangered list:

- Suffolk House,
- Chung Keng Kwee Temple
- Hai Kee Chan,
- former Shih Chung School,
- former Runnymede Hotel,
- Leong Yin Khean Mansion,

Would the public write to the PHT with additions and the background to the building to the area?

The PHT also needs to submit our list of buildings and comments to the Structure Plan Review by September. - DR CHOONG SIMPOEY

Sustainable Penang Indicators : Number of Heritage Buildings

The inventory entitled 'George Town: Heritage Buildings of Penang Island' which was compiled for MPPP in 1993 lists 650 buildings or ensembles, and over 1400 individual buildings in the historic city centre. The area surveyed is bounded by Lebuh Light, Lebuh Pantai, Lebuh Acheen and Jalan Masjid Kapitan Kling.

We would like to survey how many of these buildings are still standing, how many have been demolished, how many badly renovated and how many restored. This is for Khoo Salma's indicators project under the Sustainable Penang Initiative. 8

Salma: 'I think it's worth doing. It would only take one Sunday. I will lead the group but I don't want to do it alone.....! . Can I get volunteers to help me the buildings'

George Town on South Australian TV

Michael Sexton, producer of the documentary "Postcards" for Channel 9 Adelaide South Australia, is coming to film George Town in July. Sexton and his team will be in George Town from 16-26 July.

The presenter for "Postcards" is Keith Conlon, a well known figure in Australian radio and TV. According to Penny Ramsay, our correspondent from Adelaide, Keith is also a good jazz musician and one of Adelaide's heritage champions!