



PHT *Newsletter*

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**PENANG
HERITAGE
TRUST**
*Persatuan
Warisan
Pulau
Pinang*
PHT

Support Conservation Efforts in Your Community!

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Editorial

Our recent site visit (at time of this print) was at York House. We were very fortunate to have the right person to give us this talk and he actually gave it five times for this site visit because we had to divide the group into different time slots due to the interior layout. York House is an example of the many heritage buildings outside of the UNESCO Heritage Site that are tucked away, surrounded by bustling development. Gladly, it was not forgotten.

In this current newsletter, we wish to highlight the evolution of our dear Sungai Pinang River, formerly known by locals as the dirtiest river in Penang. Sungai Pinang River, the main river that flows through George Town has been severely polluted for years. However, its unfavourable reputation is now a thing of the past as with great efforts the river is now breathing new life and is home to amazing flora and fauna. It took great pains by the authorities to see this realised and involving a great deal of funding. Its current state should be preserved to be an icon of Penang as it is very prominent on the map of Penang.

Ben Wismen, a council member, has started a new event called Breakfast with PHT. This event would take place at the upper hall of PHT, offering the right facilities and space for crowds to come and hear special sharing by our elected speaker for the morning. Not forgetting, this event comes served breakfast of course! In our first session, we were privileged to have a young and aspiring local archaeologist, who we appreciate very much for also contributing an article on Lenggong Valley in Perak.

We are proud to present our new awardee for the Living Heritage Treasure of Penang Award; a poet. If you are looking for reasons why people enjoy poetry, think of the things that make poetry different from other kinds of writing and publishing out there. With poetry you can say more with fewer words and you can convey some meanings that have no words at all. Poetry is a language all its own. With poetry, unlike with a novel or other kinds of writing, you can

freeze one moment in time or one place or person or event and describe nothing but that.

Sometime in July this year, I had a very interesting conversation with a colleague at PHT. We are so amazed by Penang's beauty and heritage from what we see. Had anyone thought how a visually impaired person would imagine that? Thankfully, the solution is here now thanks to the 'Audio Descriptive Walk'. I am glad it has been experimented and there are already compliments from the visually impaired community that can now imagine the unseen. The joys of innovation and technology!

2015 has been a very eventful year for the PHT office. We are happy to see new people and we are thankful to all those that contributed in a very significant way. It is always a pleasure to welcome new members who are very interested in the unique heritage of Penang and are vowing to protect it with us. For our heritage and conservations efforts, the more people involved, this would mean a greater voice. We want to thank all our members for their continued support and faith in us. Speaking for myself, it is constantly a learning process and we are continuously evolving to better serve the heritage community in Penang.

As we can expect many relatives and friends back to Penang end of this year to experience Penang's magnificent charm, I do encourage members to introduce PHT to their friends and family members by signing up as a member to receive news and updates on our activities. Details of our membership can be obtained from our website www.pht.org.my or email us at info@pht.org.my or call us at +604 2642631

On behalf of the Penang Heritage Trust, I wish to express my best wishes to all this coming Deepavali, Christmas and New Year 2016!

The Editor: Trevor Sibert.

SUNGAI PINANG



The family of 10 otters spotted on Sungai Pinang is evidence that the river is becoming cleaner. — Pic from the Facebook page of Chow Kon Yeow, June 21, 2015.

Sungai Pinang is a river located on the southern side of George Town, Penang. It is a major river in Penang, and one of two by the name of “Sungai Pinang” - it flows east while the other Sungai Pinang flows west. The name Sungai Pinang also identifies the area between Sungai Pinang Road and the Sungai Pinang River, including Kampung Rawa.

Sungai Pinang was one of the earliest settlements in Penang in recorded history. Even before Francis Light landed on Penang Island, there were already a number of settlements along this river. Early settlers were believed to be fishermen from the mainland Kingdom of Kedah and from northern Sumatra. They lived along the river where they could easily obtain fresh water. Traders would arrive at the estuary, where they berthed their ‘perahus’ and ‘sampan’ at a small pier near present-day Masjid Maqbul. The mosque itself came later, around the mid-19th century. Kampung Rawa was named after one such community originating from Rawa in northern Sumatra. Masjid Haji Kassim at Kampung Makam was built by the leader of an Acehnese settlement along the river.

The Malays and North Sumatrans were not the only settlers along Sungai Pinang. Joining them were Tamil Muslims as well as Hindus who also formed their own respective settlements. Masjid Jamek Rawana and Masjid Khan Muhammad are two Indian Muslim mosques within the vicinity of Sungai Pinang. There are numerous small Hindu shrines along the river. Some had grown to become temples such as the Sri Rama Temple near Sungai Ayer Itam.

According to oral history, Sungai Pinang used to mark the southern end of George Town, beyond which was Jelutong, then still considered a rural countryside.

Today, the city limits of George Town have extended south, to the Gelugor Roundabout, whereas the Penang metropolitan area now covers the whole island. Sungai Pinang itself is today within the city and is surrounded by modern property developments.

The Sungai Pinang neighbourhood is today part of Jelutong, on the southern side of George Town. This is a mainly working-class neighbourhood. Until recently, it was still a rural enclave, but has since seen progressive redevelopment. A number of high-rise apartments have been built in the area, and it is expected that more is expected to come.

Sungai Pinang begins at the junction between Sungai Air Itam and Sungai Air Terjun, at Dhoby Ghaut. From there, it flows southeast under Jalan Air Itam, then makes a gentle curve south of Gopeng Road. It passes through the Malay village north of Jalan Langkawi and then Lintang P. Ramlee. This is a low-lying area where Sungai Pinang has been known to be prone to flash floods. It passes south of City Stadium, and continues east under Perak Road. Sungai Pinang then passes south of Jalan Haji Kassim. This was a landing site for an early Acehnese settlement. Some of the kampung houses here belong to descendants of the mid-18th century settlers. On the south side of the river is Kampung Jawa, followed by Kampung Rawa. It then flows under Patani Road, south of Jalan S.P. Chelliah. Then it makes a bend and heads south as it passes under River Road. It makes another sharp bend at Adorna Gold before passing under the Sungai Pinang Bridge. This was the historic estuary of the river. Since then, the shore has been extended outwards through successive land reclamation. This area, Muara Sungai Pinang, is presently undergoing urban redevelopment, with the construction of new apartment blocks that will transform the scenery of this area. Sungai Pinang passes under the Tun Dr Lim Chong Eu Expressway. The land on its north and south banks were recently reclaimed. It discharges into the sea close to the Summer Place Condominium.

For many years, Sungai Pinang was regarded as the filthiest river in Malaysia. At one time it held the dubious Class 5 category, which means it is a dead river unable to sustain any life form. The writer has heard rumors that you could even find old motorbikes and bicycles in the river.

This has now seen change for its reputation in Penang! The good news for Sungai Pinang is that the state

government of Penang began rehabilitating the river since 2008. The goal was to improve it from Class 5 to Class 2 by the year 2015. The first phase of this RM25 million Sungai Pinang Beautification Project involves desilting of the river and the placing of traps to filter out garbage that flows through it. At the same time, a new jetty was built for fishermen and tourists.

The second phase of the Sungai Pinang Beautification involves improving the water quality. The goal is to make the river so clean that it is good enough for bathing. Although the heavy stench that once permeated the air around the river is now much reduced, its water is still murky.

Once declared dead and highly polluted river, I can proudly say that it has been brought back to life. These days, a family of 10 smooth-coated otters has inhabited along Sungai Pinang here. The four adults and six pups are often spotted roaming about as far upriver as the stretch near Jalan Dato Keramat. Smooth-coated otters are not endangered but thankfully are fully protected under Malaysian laws. It is truly exciting because this means the fishes are back as a source of food for these otters.

By Trevor Sibert

Source: Chin, C 2012, *The Resurrection of Sungai Pinang*, *The Star Online*.

SPLENDOUR OF COLONIAL ARCHITECTURE

5 ARCHITECTS, 5 HOUSES

Looming manors boasting century-old Roman features; regal, castle-like mansions with porticos and pediments; elaborately-designed villas steeped in colonial-era charm.

These are among some of the grand structures of the early 1900s that were left behind as legacies by five European architects whose craftsmanship have for generations inspired the work of those who succeeded them.



Dr Jon Lim took close to 30 years to research and compile documents on the grand mansions in Penang and on the five big architects of the 1900s. — Picture by K.E.Ooi

At his “5 Architects, 5 Houses” talk in the MBPP Town Hall today, local architect, lecturer and author Dr Jon Lim showcased the impressive works of the five — Henry Alfred Neubronner, John McNeill, Charles Geoffrey Boutcher, David McLeod Craik and Joseph Charles Miller, all of whom had arrived more than a century ago to Penang, then known as an economic boomtown for both the tin and rubber industries.

According to Lim, the first two decades of the 1900s was known as the golden age for architecture with the rise in demand for luxurious homes among the local elite.

“The architecture in Penang is outstanding and people all over the world have written about the excellent architecture in Penang, in fact, for more than 100 years,” he said.

He pointed out that the last British high commissioner, Sir Gerald Templer, even told the Penang legislative council in 1956 that this legacy by the architects should be preserved and not be destroyed for the sake of the future generations.

“Unfortunately, our city fathers thought investments are more important than legacy,” he said.

Lim, who took close to 30 years to document the works by the architects, including collecting photographs and plans of their works, authored the “The Penang House and the Straits Architects 1887 — 1941” book that was published in March by Areca Books and sponsored by Think City.

“I want to give back to the people of Penang and to tell them how special George Town is,” he said in an interview with the Malay Mail Online today.

According to Lim, one of the reasons why the five architects had picked Penang to showcase their work was because they were given free artistic reign. Penang, he added, had a sense of informality, unlike Singapore.

“This is why we have such a variety of architecture while in Singapore, the designs are more formal and common in style,” he said.

Neubronner, a German born in Malacca who had arrived in Penang in 1899, is said to be the main contributor to the modern bungalow designs of today. “His designs are more avant garde and he built bungalows that were more Anglophile by introducing a certain solidity to the buildings and also designing buildings that are asymmetrical,” Lim said.

One of Neubronner’s known designs is a 1906 bungalow along Cantonment Road that is now a private residence.

He also designed a bungalow for the Raja Kedah along Northam Road (now Jalan Sultan Ahmad Shah) but it was demolished many years ago.

By Opalyn Mok

Source: <http://www.themalaymailonline.com/features/article/the-grand-mansions-of-penang-a-legacy-from-five-european-architects#sthash.YqgnNRpc.dpuf>

SUNDAY BEGINS WITH PHT!

BREAKFAST WITH PHT

BREAKFAST with PHT

Join us for a breakfast discussion with Penang’s young archaeologist as we talk about archaeology, heritage and youth participation. Learn more about her work, her passion and how you can get involved

featuring **Dr Goh Hsiao Mei**
Archaeologist, USM

- 26 July 2015 (Sunday)
- 8.30am to 9.30am
- Penang Heritage Trust #BreakfastwithPHT

For more information and to reserve a space, please contact PHT at 04 - 264 2631 or write to info@pht.org.my

RM 10 (non-members), RM 6 (members)

We kicked-off our first Breakfast with PHT on 26 July 2015, Sunday, hosting Dr Goh Hsiao Mei, an archaeologist with the Centre for Global Archaeological Research, USM. Dr Goh returned from Adelaide not too long ago, with the expertise in archaeology and conducting heritage impact assessment. Her work experience involves various archaeological sites in Malaysia including Bujang Valley, Lenggong and Gua Tambun. She is very passionate about her work, and shares my same concern on the lack of youth participation and interest in these fields.

In fact, Dr Goh is trying to work on several independent initiatives including to promote better awareness and possible guided trails to Gua Tambun and to reestablish the heritage link between findings in Lenggong to the Orang Asal in the area.

Some may have also heard of her as part of the consultant expert engaged by Badan Warisan Malaysia to conduct the HMP for Fort Cornwallis. USM is also engaging her to set up a new facility in Armenian Street, designed as an USM outreach centre for the community.

Breakfast with PHT will continue to be organised from time to time and we do appreciate you waking up early to have breakfast with us. Stay tuned to notifications via email or Facebook.

Source: Ben Wismen

ANCIENT WALL ART

GUA TAMBUN PREHISTORIC ROCK ART: A NATIONAL CULTURAL HISTORY PRESERVED ON THE CAVE WALL



One of the many visits to Gua Tambun by Dr Goh Hsiao Mei (far right) with interested youth.

(Photo by Dr Goh Hsiao Mei)

Gua Tambun, a rockshelter hidden in the midst of Gunung Panjang limestone massif, is a living “photo-album” which showcases the lifeways of early hunter-gatherers of Malaysia - the meaning of their life, their culture and their world view, back in

2,500-4,000 years ago. To date, the last inhabitants of Gua Tambun still remain unknown, but the study into their art is a means of reconnecting Malaysian to the early cultural history of our country.

Located just outside the border of Ipoh Town, Gua Tambun has appeared to be a pristine site for Malaysian rock art research since 1950s. Gua Tambun is approximately 80 metres long and best described as a rock shelter as it is a ledge located approximately 50 metres above the cave floor.

Prior to 2009, the literature dedicated to Tambun cave is relatively limited and most of them are field reports produced by J.M. Matthew and Paul Faulstich. The former investigation in 1959 identified approximately 80 forms of rock art and unearthed 49 stone implements, said to have been attributed to "Hoabinhian" culture (approximately 10,000-5,000 years ago and varies across different region in Southeast Asia) whereas the latter recorded more rock art and reported the discovery of Neolithic cord-marked pottery sherds in 1984.

In 2009, an extensive archaeological research was conducted by Noel Tan and Stephen Chia and a total of more than 600 forms of rock art scattered through 11 panels across the wall were documented. According to them, the rock art of Gua Tambun can be categorised into 5 distinct groups, namely zoomorphs (animal forms), anthropomorphs (human shapes), geometric features, botanic shapes and abstract shapes. Over the years, these depictions, which daubed in red and purple pigments, preserved our cultural history on the cave wall of Gua Tambun. These depictions mainly comprise of large to medium size tropical animals and ocean creatures, and what makes Tambun Rock Art so exceptional is that it is the only red-purple Neolithic rock art collections that survives in modern times Peninsular Malaysia. Recognizing its cultural importance, this site was gazetted as National Heritage Site in January 2010.

In April 2014, I revisited Gua Tambun and conducted a preliminary Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) in order to identify all strands of threats that may compromise the integrity of this precious archaeological site. That was my second visit to Gua Tambun since 2008 and the results of my assessment were saddening.

"...(i) The physical landscape settings of the cave are severely destroyed due to the illegal digging and quarrying;

(ii) The wall paintings are highly exposed to sun, rain

and water washing, causing the premature deterioration and discolouration;

(iii) The cave is highly vandalized by modern graffiti and some old depictions have been superimposed by modern graffiti;

(iv) The site is under-maintained..."

And the list goes on.

Since then, I occasionally read from the news regarding the call for a petition to the authorities to save the Gua Tambun Rock Art. The responses from general public and the officials, however, were fairly sporadic.

In June 2015, I decided to kickstart the Gua Tambun Heritage Awareness Project (GTHAP) - to save the Tambun Rockart through local conservation effort. It is the first community-driven heritage project launched in Gua Tambun between the collaboration of USM and local community.

The primary objectives of the collaborative Gua Tambun Heritage Awareness Project (GTHAP) are:

- (i) to create momentum for rock art preservation and conservation in Gua Tambun and Peninsular Malaysia through the promotion of heritage awareness;
- (ii) to encourage local involvement and channel local effort in rock art conservation;
- (iii) to offer opportunities for local capacity building through public education and outreach, that include:
 - * rock art interpretation and presentation
 - * rock art site management and conservation
 - * specialised tourist guiding in rock art site
- (iv) to connect people to Tambun's rich prehistoric past; and
- (v) to create a long-term partnership and collaboration among heritage professionals, authorities and local community.

Since the commencement of the project, GTHAP is well received among the local community and supported by several local NGOs. To date, a total of six NGOs (Perak Heritage Society (PHS), Ipoh Echo, Incitement

Ipoh, Perak Women for Women Society, PEKA Perak and Ipoh Guide) and GTHAP work shoulder to shoulder in the effort to conserve the Tambun Rock Art. Together with our local partners, we launched the "Tambun Rock Art Trail", as a means to promote the local heritage awareness and provoke their appreciation for this precious piece of their local heritage.

At present, "Tambun Rock Art Trail" is running once every fortnight and the trail takes approximately 2 hours. The trail includes a slow hike up to the cave, an on-site guided tour and an interactive session. The highlight of this trail is the interactive session that invites all participants to interpret and give meanings to Tambun Rock Art. I always believe that what have the ancient Tambun's men left behind are the stories painted on the wall, hoping that one day, the future Tambun community know how to interpret them. As an archaeologist, I have to privilege to give meanings to these depictions based on our knowledge and expertise. But Tambun Rock Art is indigenously Tambun's heritage, and therefore, we should give way to Tambun community to ascribe their meanings to these depictions - to decode their very own cultural

past, from the eyes of contemporary Tambun society. In the next few months, GTHAP is going to conduct a ten-week community educational workshop among the schools and local community of Perak, and this program is fully supported by a public crowd-fund established through Simply Giving Malaysia. GTHAP pledged itself to connect the local community to Tambun's rich past and we hope that through this educational program, we can introduce the local community of Perak, especially to the young generation - the importance and beauty of their ancestor's masterpiece.

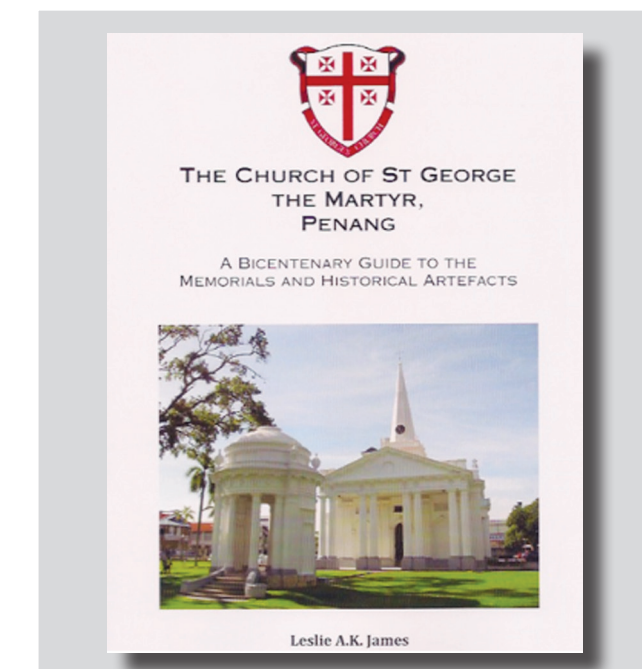
"Tambun Rock Art is not just plain old rock-paintings - it is aesthetically and spiritually powerful and it is the UNTOLD stories of our human past."

* For more information and updates of GTHAP, please find us on Facebook: Gua Tambun Heritage Awareness Project, or drop us an email at: tambunrockart@gmail.com

By Dr Goh Hsiao Mei

OLDEST ANGLICAN CHURCH IN MALAYSIA

BICENTENNIAL CELEBRATIONS IN 2019



St George's Church which is preparing to celebrate the Bicentenary of its consecration in 2019 has recently published a booklet entitled A Bicentenary Guide to the Memorials & Historical Artefacts researched and written by PHT member Leslie James. The booklet is available for sale at the church for RM15, with all proceeds to the benefit of St George's Church.

Source: Leslie James

SEBERANG PENANG STORY LECTURES: Early Views of Province Wellesleyby **Khoo Salma Nasution**

Date: 16 August 2015, Sunday

Time: 9.30 am-12.30pm

Venue: 1st floor, Sri Ananda Bahwan Restaurant. 2985 Jalan Bagan Luar, Butterworth (Near the site of Butterworth Fringe Festival, Jalan Jeti Lama)

ABSTRACT

“From Pinang [island] one sees its broad stretches of bright green sugar-cane and the chimneys of its sugar factories, and it grows rice and coconuts”, wrote Isabella Bird, describing the view of Seberang Perai or Province Wellesley in 1883. Prehistoric remains testify to long human habitation leading to a Buddhist-Hindu period. Carved out of the Kedah kingdom in 1800, the landscape of Province Wellesley was dramatically transformed into cultivated rice-fields and plantations in the nineteenth century. Using almost one hundred photographs, paintings and maps, the speaker attempts to trace the development of Seberang Perai in terms of early explorations, land and water transport, urbanisation, agriculture and industry.

SEBERANG PENANG STORY LECTURES: James R. Logan, A Polymath on a Province Wellesley Plantationby **Dr Gerrell Drawhorn**

Date: 15 August 2015, Saturday

Time: 9.30 am-12.30pm

Venue: 1st floor, Sri Ananda Bahwan Restaurant. 2985 Jalan Bagan Luar, Butterworth (Near the site of Butterworth Fringe Festival, Jalan Jeti Lama)

ABSTRACT

James Richardson Logan (1819-1869) has a monument erected in his honor in front of the court house in Penang. But who was this man and why did

the government abhor him while locals of all races loved him? And what was his special connection to Seberang Prai? Logan was a lawyer, newspaper editor, a plantation owner, a philanthropist, a geologist, a climate change theorist, a linguist, a cultural evolutionary theorist, an explorer, and one of the first to collect cultural information on the orang asli. He was the editor of the Pinang Gazette and the founder and editor of the Journal of the Indian Archipelago and Eastern Asia, better known as ‘Logan’s Journals’. In addition, he was one of Province Wellesley’s largest landowners. This talk will open a window on Logan, his era, and the significance he may hold for understanding science and politics in Malay Settlements during the Victorian period.

Penang Heritage Trust Site visit to The York House at 121 Halaman York

Date/Time: 3.00pm onwards (different sessions), Sunday, 2 August, 2015

The architect of York House, J.C. Miller was trained at the Glasgow School of Art, which was at the forefront of the Scottish Arts and Crafts movement. The 1930s in Malaya was a period of boom and busts, witnessing a rapid transition of architectural fashions. According to Dr Jon Lim, The York House, designed in 1936, was probably the last great mansion built by a European architect before the war. Neo-Georgian, Indian Art Deco and South African influences can be observed. It was regarded by Miller’s colleague as “internally the best finished house in Penang” of the late 1930s.

This Penang Heritage Trust site visit was led by architectural historian Dr Jon Lim, who gave the talk on Saturday August 1 on “Five Architects, Five Houses”. Those that attend the talk were able to get a fuller background of the architect and his architecture, and get a discounted rate for the site visit. The house is now the premises of The Learning Garden, which has kindly allowed the Penang Heritage Trust to organise this site visit.

Penang Story Lectures: Townhouse, Shophouse Melaka-Penang World Heritage Site

Penang Heritage Trust organized the Penang Story Lecture: Townhouse, Shophouse Melaka-Penang World Heritage Site on 2nd August 2015, Sunday. This is the second event of GTF organised by PHT, part of a two-day architecture series.

Date: Sunday, 2nd August 2015

Time: 9.30am – 12.30pm

Venue: MBPP Town Hall

Abstract

The UNESCO World Heritage Site of Melaka and George Town “reflect a mixture of influences which

have created a unique architecture, culture and townscape without parallel anywhere in East and South Asia. In particular, they demonstrate an exceptional range of shophouses and townhouses”. Mr Tan Yeow Wooi talked about the construction and conservation of a broad range of Penang shophouses, including their cultural and stylistic influences. Ms Tan Siok Choo spoke in depth about the uniquely historic 18th century three-courtyard townhouse in Melaka belonging to the family of Tun Tan Cheng Lock and his son Tun Tan Siew Sin, as well as the spiritual significance of this peranakan ancestral home.

GRATEFUL FOR YOUR KINDNESS**MARCO BATTISTOTTI (1966-2015)**

Mr. Marco G. Battistotti was the General Manager of E&O Hotel of Eastern & Oriental Bhd since January 7, 2011. Mr. Battistotti oversaw all aspects of the hotel’s operations and management as well as that of the re-opened Lone Pine Hotel at Batu Ferringhi. He has garnered over 25 years experience in the hospitality industry worldwide. Mr. Battistotti also previously served as the General Manager of G Hotel in Penang.

With great sadness, we announce the tragic death of hotelier Marco Battistotti. As general manager of G Hotel (formerly), he was most supportive of Penang Heritage Trust, getting the hotel to co-sponsor our conference and occasionally provide guest rooms for our speakers. He was a remarkable gentleman who will be remembered for his kindness and generosity of spirit.

By **Khoo Salma**

MEMORIAL FOR FRENCH CATHOLIC SAILORS AT ASSUMPTION CHURCH



Photos of the consecration at Church of the Assumption, Penang, on April 9, 2015.
(Photos by City Parish, Penang)

The Bishop of Penang consecrated a Memorial for French Catholic sailors who had perished during World War I at The Church of the Assumption in Penang on April 9, 2015.

Two days prior to this commemoration, the Penang Diocesan Pastoral Institute held a talk by Dr John Robertson, the author of *The Battle of Penang*. In his talk, he spoke on the history of the French warship, *Le Mousquet*. The destroyer *Le Mousquet* was sunk by a Russian cruiser in October 1914, off Muka Head in the Battle of Penang. Forty French Catholics perished. Subsequently, a requiem Mass for them was held at the Church of the Assumption by Fr Louis Duvelle on 18 November 1914.

To commemorate this historic event, Bishop Sebastian decided to consecrate a memorial in honour of the 40 dead sailors, some of whom were Vietnamese nationals and also in honour of Fr Duvelle.

About 50 people witnessed this historic occasion. Apart from the parish priest, Fr Nelson Chitty, Msgr Michael Cheah and Fr. Joachim Robert were also present. Fr Joseph de Dinechin, MEP who is based in Singapore, was specially invited to witness the occasion. A representative from the French Embassy, Captain (Navy) Pierre Mesnier, the Defence Attache, was present, together with some members from the Alliance Franchise. The Russian, German and French counsels attended, as well as parishioners from churches in Penang.

Capt Mesnier thanked those who had turned up to witness the occasion and those who had helped in organizing the event. He particularly mentioned Dr John Robertson, to whom he was grateful, for

working hard to ensure that due honour was given to the French sailors who had perished. Finally, he thanked the Bishop for providing a space in front of the church, where the memorial is located.

Bishop Sebastian said that the battle took place during WWI during a time when the major nations of Europe were fighting for power and land in the region and highlighted the importance of the Catholic missionaries; the French, the Germans and others; in setting up educational and medical services in Malaya.

After the speeches, Captain Mesnier laid a wreath at the memorial and gave a salute to honour those who had died. Bishop Sebastian then said a prayer and blessed the memorial.

By Trevor Sibert

GRANDMOTHER OF JESUS

FEAST OF ST ANNE



Huge crowd: Pilgrims lining the streets for the St Anne's Novena and Feast Day candlelight procession in Bukit Mertajam. Filepic from *The Star*, 27 July 2013

St Anne's Church, Bukit Mertajam held its annual celebration of the feast of St Anne that attracts over 100,000 pilgrims from Malaysia as well as neighbouring countries like Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam, Indonesia, the Philippines and Australia. The celebrations are held for 10 days and include the actual feast day feast day will be on 1 August 2015.

The celebrations include a candlelight procession, a nine-day novena and adoration of the Blessed

Sacrament. St Anne's Festival ranks among the most popular festivals in Penang. This religious event draws hordes of visitors each year as thousands of pilgrims from around the world flock to the 19th century, St Anne's Church in Bukit Mertajam. A novena, procession and prayer are all part of the St Anne's Festival in Penang. This colourful and lively celebration is the perfect time to soak up some local culture.

If you are travelling to Penang, St Anne's Church is a must visit whether it is during the festival period or not. The church is one of the premier landmarks in the region renowned for its exquisite architecture. Named after the mother of Virgin Mary, the site comes alive during the festival period, affording you a taste of authentic local traditions and customs.

The candle light procession is held on the church grounds against the stunning backdrop of the white church building, under starry skies. The atmosphere during the event is lively and resembles a fairyland of lights, a truly enthralling site that will be etched in the memory of those who come to catch a glimpse of the festivities.

By Trevor Sibert

SUSTAINABILITY



The beauty of Hotel Penaga.

(Source: <http://www.penang-hotels.com/hotel-penaga/>)

The restoration and redevelopment of Hotel Penaga has used recycled materials wherever possible. The roof tiles have been salvaged from demolished buildings in Penang. The timber for structures and floors has been sourced from demolished colonial period buildings throughout the Peninsula. The reconstructed 'antique' furniture is from southern China where old pieces are refabricated.

Elsewhere, new materials are generally handmade, like the encaustic cement patterned floor tiles from Vietnam and Indonesia, where they still use 80 year old presses and techniques. Carpets are either handmade bamboo mats from east Malaysia, patchwork kilims from Turkey, patchwork cow skin or sisal from India.

The garden is planted with mostly indigenous Malaysian species, and planting is designed to reduce heat and glare, increase soil permeability and provide as much greenery as the space would accommodate. The swimming pool is salt water to reduce chemical use.

Water for the garden comes from roof runoff. Our tank capacity is 10,600 litres stored under the garden. The kitchen separates biodegradable material for composting.

Water is heated using a combination of Solarmate MMS60 solar panels (Transfer only) <http://www.solarmate.com.my/product.html> and Seers Hybrid Hot Water System (Hutton).

This is a new Malaysian product that activates heat exchange from the immediate environment to heat water <http://www.seers.com.my/comparison.html>.

We have five heaters, model number SI-500I. Clarke uses standard coil heater tanks.

Every room has a choice of ceiling fan or inverter air-conditioning, for guests to make their own choice.

We have 99 solar photovoltaic panels from Sanyo (Model: HIP-200NKHB5) that can generate a total output of 20.79kWp that is sold back to the national grid. Wherever possible, lighting is from LED bulbs to reduce demand and rooms are served by a system that automatically cuts off power if guests are not on the premises.

The hotel has been given a Gold rating by the Green Building Index, a first for a heritage building. It takes into account social factors like living conditions and safety on site for workers, for whom we have provided humane conditions. We had up to 100 labourers and tradesmen on site at any one time, under the expert guidance of our contractor, Mr Ooi Ban Huat of O & N Trading and Supply.

Hotel Penaga is the first heritage restoration in Malaysia with a green rating.

Source: <http://hotelpenaga.com/sustainability/>

CITY OF DREAMS NIGHTMARE FOR SRI TANJUNG PINANG RESIDENTS



The City of Dreams project site

This statement by a group of Seri Tanjung Pinang residents hammers home the point as to why land and property development-for-infrastructure swap deals are a bad idea.

Such deals compromise the development regulatory process by presenting the land reclamation or property developments projects as done deals – because they are needed to finance the infrastructure projects.

City of Dreams is intricately linked to the land-for-tunnel/highways swap deal.

Better not to have swap deals and instead separate the land reclamation/property development and infrastructure projects. Assess the technical, financial and environmental feasibility of each project separately.

The residents are claiming the City of Dreams project is going to be 156 units per acre. If true, how is this even possible?

We are a group of residents of Seri Tanjung Pinang at Denai Endau 7, 9, 11, Lengok Endau and Jalan Bayu who are extremely concerned with the project dubbed as City of Dreams (CoD).

Planning Permission (PP) has been applied by Consortium Zenith BUCG Sdn Bhd (CZBUCG) and granted by MPPP on 17 February 2015 to build this 40-storey project comprising two blocks of serviced apartments both 32 storeys tall on top of a seven-storey car park and wellness facilities which in turn sit upon an underground level, housing electrical and mechanical facilities.

The project will be constructed primarily upon a piece of government reserve land known as Lot 702, Seksyen 1, Bandar Tanjung Pinang, DTL, Penang approximately measuring 3.67 acres which is part of the reclaimed land under Seri Tanjung Pinang (STP) Phase 1. The project as approved will have a total of 572 serviced apartments, which translates into a density of 156 units per acre.

We, the concerned residents who have our homes within a stone's throw from CoD, strongly oppose this extremely high-density high-rise project immediately adjacent to our neighbourhood, which only comprises three-storey landed houses.

The site on which CoD is to be built is the one and only remaining open space within our neighbourhood – a green field on which we and our children have been playing football and flying kites.

Across the field is the green expanse of the one and only remaining mangrove forest on the northeast coast of the Penang Island. It is a few acres wide and has been formed naturally at the extended estuary of Sungai Balik Batu and is home to a complex ecosystem of flora and fauna and for the migratory birds. But soon we will lose both altogether to some hard cold concrete structures.

Close to a hundred objections were put in by us against the PP of this project. We are disappointed that only 10 of our residents were recognised by MPPP as the affected owners.

We are even more disappointed with what went through during the objection hearing held by MPPP on 10 February 2015 and the MPPP's decision granting the PP as applied by ignoring totally our grounds of objection. The grant of PP on 17 February 2015 was only communicated by MPPP to us via its letter dated 5 March 2015.

We have filed appeal against the grant of PP on 6 April 2015 in the Appeals Board but until the date of this press conference have not received any notice of case management or hearing. On the other hand the developer, Zenith Ewein Sdn Bhd, has announced its plan to commence work on CoD in the second half of 2015 as reported in The Edge Financial Daily on 13 April 2015.

As at today, preliminary works of hoarding up the site and total clearing of the Penang Outer Ring Road (Porr) reserve land part of which to become access to the site have been carried out.

Through our lawyers, we have sent in our written request dated 9 April 2015 to the Building Department of MBPP to withhold approval of the Building Plan of COD and issuance of the Commencement of Work (CoW) order pending disposal of our appeal but we have not received any reply thus far.

To our surprise, we then discovered that the Building Plan had been put in on 9 March 2015 – before many of us even knew of the grant of PP and efficiently approved by the Building Department of MBPP within a month on 7 April 2015, i.e. the next day after we filed in our appeal and two days before our written request.

The turn of events has left us with no choice but to call for this press conference and pursue all necessary legal actions to preserve the status quo until disposal of our appeal. We urge the MBPP to accede to our request immediately so as not to issue the CoW order until disposal of our appeal in the Appeals Board.

We know that the Penang State Government through its various administrative arms has played a central role in this project as can be confirmed from YB Lim Hock Seng's response to a written question by YB Yap Soo Huey in the State Assembly last week –

- from agreeing to give CZBUCG as payment in kind 110 acres of land in Bandar Tanjung Pinang for the construction, feasibility study and detailed design works of a RM6.3bn integrated road transport project via an agreement signed on 6 October 2013
- to signing as the land proprietor of Lot 702 through the Penang Registrar of Titles in the PP application submitted by CZBUCG in October 2014
- to approving the PP on 17 February 2015 in a rather extraordinarily efficient fashion.

According to YB Lim Hock Seng, Lot 702 (3.67 acres) worth RM135.08m had already been given to CZBUCG as part of the said payment in kind for

the feasibility studies for three proposed roads which were 97 per cent completed.

As revealed recently by one of the six parties bidding to be Project Delivery Partner (PDP) in another part of the Penang Transport Master Plan (PTMP) as reported by The Edge Financial Daily on 31 March 2015, the PDP chosen will be awarded the reclamation rights to the 1,500-acre Middle Bank, similar to the land swap deal with CZBUCG, which had been tasked with building the undersea tunnel and the three roads.

It was also revealed that while waiting for the reclamation of Middle Bank to be completed, the PDP chosen is welcomed by the state government to “scout around” state land and acquire it to help kick-start financing the TMP packages.

That revelation makes us wonder if Lot 702 was also given as a kick-start financing tool for the projects involved and not as payment in kind due for the feasibility studies done (only 97 per cent) for the three proposed roads.

The people and voters of Penang have very high hope and expectation of its current state government. When it comes to performing its duties and exercise of powers under the Town and Country Planning Act 1976, the MBPP must uphold and ensure conformity to established principles and guidelines in order to achieve proper, structured and sustainable development of Penang.

The Selangor state government has recently demonstrated good governance in listening to its people – by saying no to or reducing the damaging portion of some mega projects that tend to only serve certain commercial interests but which would adversely affect the environment and quality of life of many; look at the cancellation of Kidex and the development of the PKNS Sports Complex in Selangor.

Not only that the Penang State Government shall emulate Selangor in listening to its people, it shall also live up to its own slogan of CAT.

We therefore urge the Penang state government, which holds the key to this project, to answer the following questions in a manner compatible with a competent, accountable and transparent state government:

1. Is Lot 702 specified to be part of the 110 acres as payment in kind in the agreement dated 6 October 2013?
2. When is/was the payment due for the feasibility studies of the three proposed roads under the agreement?
3. If Lot 702 has been alienated to CZBUCG, when was it done?
4. Is the state government willing and ready to provide us a copy of the agreement to us if we are to apply under the Freedom of Information Enactment?
5. In the Draft Local Plans 2005-2020 of Penang Island, our neighbourhood is zoned as Established Housing Area (“Kawasan Perumahan Tetap”) whilst Lot 702 is zoned for “institution”. Has there been any change to that? If so, when?
6. What considerations did the State Planning Committee take in coming out with the density of 156 units per acre for CoD? Did they know the site is sandwiched between a neighbourhood of three-storey houses and a plot of mangrove forest currently?
7. How much green open space was originally provided for in the Master Layout Plan of STP Phase 1? How much is left currently?
8. Isn't Lot 702 stated to be for low-density residential development in the DEIA Report on STP Phase 2?
9. Where will be the permanent access for CoD? When will it come into existence?
10. The PP as granted provides that part of Lot 721 will be used as temporary access (50 feet wide) to the building site. Does that not infringe the zoning of Lot 721 as open/recreational space (“kawasan lapang/rekreasi”) under the draft Local Plans thereby further depriving us of the very limited green/recreational space we can enjoy?
11. Will any part of Porr reserve land be used as the permanent access for CoD? If so, will there be any conflict with the state government's duty to carry out the Porr project as specified under the Penang Structure Plan 2020?

12. Apart from stipulating in the PP that the conditions for approval (under “Kajian Penilaian Kesan Kepada Alam Sekitar (EIA) Ruj no AS(PP)E04(6) P-2/90(56) dated 7 June 1993) must be fulfilled for this project and stating generally that the project must preserve the quality of environment so that a sustainable development can be achieved, has any EIA study been conducted for this high-rise and high-density project (with an underground level as well) on a part of reclaimed and seaside land as required under the Penang Structure Plan 2020 gazetted on 28 June 2007?

Before everything is too late, we urge the Penang state government to look for an alternative plot of land to build CoD or review the PP granted. It must realise that the project will not be a sustainable development if built on Lot 702 and will not be fulfilling many of the Sectorial Bases (“Dasar-dasar Sektorial”) envisioned in the Penang Structure Plan 2020. It shall not ignore the ABC of planning laws.

The need for the state government to fulfil its contractual financial obligation for some other proposed public works shall not be taken as the paramount reason to have approved the project of CoD on Lot 702.

We would also like to seek information and clarification from MPPP the role played by SPC (if any) in the approval process and why the PP for CoD departed materially from the established guidelines and principles laid down and applicable to all planning approvals.

We sincerely believe the established guidelines which are within public knowledge are fundamental to a certain, predictable and transparent planning approval process to ensure Penang remains a highly liveable city and should be applied consistently throughout.

Finally, we wish to also record our gratitude to YB Yap Soo Huey, our State Assembly representative, YB Teh Yee Cheu and YB Zairil Khir Johari, who have voiced their concerns and stated their objections against CoD to the authorities concerned. We hope they will continue to do their best to support us in this cause.

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List of Reference Materials

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Borang B under Section 22(6) Town and Country Planning Act 1976

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16. Article by Goh Ban Lee, as a senior research fellow at the Penang Institute, in Penang Monthly dated 13 August 2011 – "Clarifying the role of politicians in development control"

Source: <http://anilnetto.com/economy/development-issues/city-of-dreams-nightmare-for-seri-tanjung-pinang-residents/>

OTTOKEDAI

WANT TO RELIVE THE GOOD OLD DAYS OF THE 'OTTOKEDAI'?



Ottokedai is housed in a small art deco heritage building along Victoria Street. — Pictures by K.E.Ooi

GEORGE TOWN, July 28 - More than 50 years ago, before there were supermarkets or 7-11s - the ottokedai played an important role as the neighbourhood convenience stall. Especially around the inner city of George Town. The ottokedai is a tiny little store, usually a small extension to a building or found under a tree that sells newspapers, sweets, snacks and toys.



Goh Hun Meng decided to name his design and crafts shop as Ottokedai, the name of the place of his happy childhood memories.

By Opalyn Mok


Source: <http://www.themalaymailonline.com/features/article/want-to-relive-the-good-old-days-of-the-ottokedai#sthash.4siniMUg.dpuf>

CONGRATULATIONS CECIL RAJENDRA!


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 The Hokkien Puppeteer	 The Lantern Maker <i>Deceased 2014</i>	 The Menora Dancer	 The Teochew Puppeteer	 The Rattan Weaver
			 The Master Jeweller	

Source: Penang Heritage Trust Website

CECIL RAJENDRA DECLARED LIVING HERITAGE TREASURE OF PENANG



Poet and civil rights lawyer Cecil Rajendra receives the award presented to him by Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng (second from right) and national laureate Pak Samad (right). — *The Malaysian Insider* pic by Niam Ming Hong, September 3, 2015.

Acclaimed poet and civil rights lawyer Cecil Rajendra has been declared a Living Heritage Treasure of Penang. The award was presented to him by Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng and national laureate Datuk A. Samad Said aka Pak Samad at a pared-down ceremony at Upper Penang Road.

"Penang is proud of Cecil. His contributions not only touch the heart but also the soul of the nation, to remind us that we have to stand up if we want the nation to move forward.

"People like Pak Samad and Cecil play an important role in our nation's destiny," said Lim in his speech.

Pak Samad recited a poem, to the delight of the audience.

Cecil said he was honoured to receive the award.

Cecil was born in Penang and educated at St Xavier's Institution in George Town.

The Living Heritage of Penang Award is conferred by the Penang Heritage Trust Fund.

By Niam Ming Hong

Source: *The Malaysian Insider*, 3 September 2015

Source: <http://www.themalaysianinsider.com/citynews/georgetown/article/cecil-rajendra-declared-living-heritage-treasure-of-penang/cecil-rajendra-declared-living-heritage-treasure-of-penang#sthash.MS7RXoup.dpuf>

CECIL RAJENDRA'S WORKS TO BE CELEBRATED IN CONJUNCTION WITH WORLD POETRY DAY



As part of World Poetry Day, Penang-based lawyer-poet Cecil Rajendra's literary career will be celebrated in Penang this Sunday. The event also marks the 50th anniversary of his first poetry book *Embryo*, which was published by London's Regency Press. — *Filepic*

His poems tackle pertinent issues like the environment, politics and power.

FIFTY years ago, Penang-based Cecil Rajendra, one of Asia's most prolific poets, wrote his first collection of poems called *Embryo*.

"It was selection of romantic poems. I was a first year law student in London when it got published," says Cecil over the phone from Penang yesterday.

The lawyer-poet made history when London's Regency Press decided to publish it, being the first Malaysian poet to have his poems published in the literary capital of the world.

This Sunday, just a day after the World Poetry Day, Cecil, 74, will be celebrated in an elegant evening of poetry and music at Eastern & Oriental Hotel's Grand Ballroom in Penang. The event called Celebrating Cecil Rajendra, marks the 50th anniversary of *Embryo's* publication and promises to be a night of literary culture and much festivity. The event is organised by the Friends of Artistes Liaison and entry is by donation (for enquiries, email: foalpg@gmail.com).

The evening's music will be provided by The Rozells and Gypsy Eyes, while poetry recitals will be part of the programme. Nazriah Alaudin, Ooi Kee How and James Lochhead will be presenting poems by Cecil, the late Usman Awang, Fadzillah Amin, Pablo Neruda and Adrian Mitchell.

"For the music, I have rewritten the lyrics of popular tunes such as *Young Once* (*Young One* by Cliff Richard), *Penang Hill* (*Blueberry Hill* by Louis Armstrong) and *Amazing Haze* (*Amazing Grace*). The songs are meant to be satirical in nature," he reveals.

Beyond the stage, there will be an exhibition of books, paintings and posters inspired by Cecil's works called *50 Lyrical Years of Passion*, curated by Lee Khai from the Penang Museum. The launch of *Personal & Profane - Selected Poems 1965-2015*, a book (published by Clarity Publications) of selected poems by the poet, will also take place during this Sunday's event.

"The new book (*Personal & Profane*) has poems that lean on topics like family, love, human rights and the environment. The timeline spans 50 years of my work," he says.

Back in 2013, Cecil also authored the biography of the late Rose Chan, Malaysia's Queen of Striptease. Called *No Bed of Roses*, the book shed a different light on Chan, delving into her philanthropic works and her personal life.

Cecil, who studied at St Xavier's Institution, University of Singapore and Lincoln's Inn in London, was the first recipient of the Malaysian Lifetime Humanitarian Award for his pioneering legal aid work and inspirational poetry. He is a consultant to the Penang Legal Aid Centre.

He has been writing poems for over 50 years and has published over 22 collections.

His work has been published in over 50 countries and translated into several languages.

Several of his poems, such as *Statistics*, *When The Tourists Flew In* and *The Animal And Insect Act* have found their way into the curriculum of human rights, tourism, Third World, environmental and development studies.

He also received a Human Right Awards from the Malaysian Commission on Human Rights and was recently granted a Danish International Visiting Artist (DIVA) award by the Arts Council of Denmark.

By Dinesh Kumar Maganathan

Source: *The Star*, 18 March 2015

PENANG GETS ‘SMOKE SIGNALS’



Open defiance: A youth seen puffing away at the George Town Unesco heritage area despite a No Smoking signboard warning of hefty fines for offenders. — ZAINUDIN AHAD / The Star

GEORGE TOWN: The Health Ministry has advised its Penang department to declare George Town Unesco heritage enclave a cigarette smoke-free zone tomorrow.

State Welfare, Caring Society and Environment Committee chairman Phee Boon Poh said the state Health Department would meet today to discuss the implementation of the cigarette smoke-free policy.

“Members of the Cigarette Smoke-Free Penang committee will be attending the meeting ,” Phee said yesterday.

Phee said efforts were now focused on creating awareness of the policy rather than denying smokers their right to smoke.

“We also need to look at foreign and local tourists who may not be aware of the matter,” Phee said

when contacted in Lyon, France, where is attending the World Summit on Climate and Territo-ries.

“Practising a healthy lifestyle will help save on public healthcare but this is not to fill up the coffers by fining smokers.”

It was reported that the cigarette smoke-free policy would be enforced on July 1, after an application was sent to the ministry to gazette the George Town Unesco heritage enclave as a smoke-free zone.

A check on Wednesday found smokers puffing away at the heritage zone in George Town.

Deputy Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr Hilmi Yahaya could not be reached for comment.

BY CHRISTOPHER TAN

Source: The Star, 3 July 2015



Newsletter Editor~ Trevor Sibert

Production~ Penang Heritage Trust Office

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