



# PHT newsletter

ISSUE NO. 75/ APRIL TO JULY 2002

SUPPORT CONSERVATION EFFORTS IN YOUR COMMUNITY!

26A Stewart Lane, 10200 Penang, Malaysia

Tel: 604-264 2631 Fax: 2628421 • Email: phttrust@po.jaring.my • Website: www.pht.org.my

**PENANG  
HERITAGE  
TRUST**

**Persatuan  
Warisan  
Pulau  
Pinang**

**PHT**

## EDITORIAL

Dear PHT friends,

Once again we have to apologise for the large gap between newsletters. Everyone has had their hands full, the Penang Story Conference in April has occupied the staff and the Council over the last 9 months or thereabouts. It was an overwhelming experience and very much a learning one for all of us. Once again, the PHT has been in the news on a daily/weekly basis. At least for the first quarter of this year we have been relatively non-controversial.

The last two months have been contentious to say the least. Issues appear to crop up faster than we can handle - the demolition of Boon San Tong houses on Beach Street, the threatened demolition of No.25 China Street, the proposed construction of a 9-story columbarium on the historic Shih-Chung school site, the proposed redevelopment of Kampong Mesjid Melayu, the 'up-grading' of Little India, the new buffer zone for the historic core. It has been inevitable that the PHT has been drawn into each of these issues and press conferences have been held regularly to forward our views.

As always, the site visits continue to be an overwhelming hit with members and friends. There have been 6 since the last newsletter, including double visits in the month of June. As always, we would appreciate suggestions from members and offers to host, conduct or write-up on a visit.

We would also like to announce that Khoo Salma Nasution, the Honorable Secretary has regrettably relinquished her responsibilities with regards to the newsletter due to constraints on her time and other commitments. We sincerely thank her for her past input. We also warmly welcome new staff member, Tan Yah Phing, who joined us on 1st August as a Communications & Administrative officer.

Loh-Lim, together with help from Magdalene, is stepping in, on a one-off basis, for this issue. Please overlook any shortcomings, oversights, mistakes, etc. We're trying to get someone more permanent to run the newsletter. Any takers?

L.L.Loh-Lim

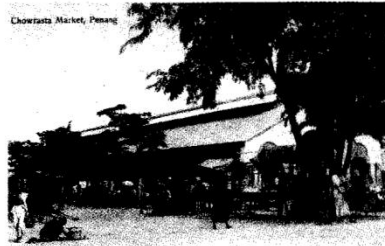
## The Penang Story

International Conference

18 - 21 April 2002

Venue: Sri Mas Ballroom and Seri Perak Room,

Secretariat at Seri Nilam Room, The City Bayview Hotel



### [An Overview by Khoo Salma]

250 participants, 60 speakers from around the world, 50 volunteers.....It was the biggest event organized by the Penang Heritage Trust so far... The International Conference was attended by a total of over 250 participants. It managed to attract 60 speakers/scholars, as well as additional scholars in the roles of chairpersons, rapporteurs and ordinary participants. But the most amazing thing about the conference was the team of over PHT 50 volunteers behind the scenes who with very few hiccups kept running smoothly! All credits to our many sponsors and supporters are fully listed in the souvenir programme...

**A Penang Studies Centre?** The conference managed to pull most of the scholars together in one place to meet each other and also to link up with the people of Penang. We hope that this will result in numerous collaborations in years to come. A strong recommendation coming out of this conference was that 'Penang Studies' should be institutionalised, and efforts should be made to set up a local history research centre. It was also suggested that Malay history has been neglected, and an event similar to The Penang Story - International Conference should be organised in Malay.

**A brief synopsis.** For those of you who missed it, here's a quick run-down of what happened. On the first day of the International Conference, guided tours were organized to provide the scholars and participants with a strong feeling of the heritage and community of George Town. Tours were also taken on the second and third evenings. Altogether 10 different tour itineraries were offered by professional tour guides affiliated to the Penang Heritage Trust. Some of the tours were specially developed for this occasion, and during the tours, scholars were encouraged to contribute if they knew something about the sites.

**STOP PRESS**

SUN. AUGUST 25TH  
SITE VISIT  
DETAILS ON PAGE 10



*On the first evening, the Governor of Penang officiated the launching of the International Conference. The grand Opening Dinner, with cultural performances, was held at the City Bayview Hotel. The highlight was 'The Illustrated History of Bangsawan' specially commissioned for this occasion to contribute towards the revival of a dying performing art strongly identified with Penang.*

*The second, third and fourth days were given to paper presentations by about 60 scholars. Concurrent panels or parallel sessions were organized for most panels, while all the participants came together for the keynotes, special address and round-up. The keynote on the first day gave a brief outline on the interesting points of Penang history, the keynote on the second day concerned the municipal history of George Town, while the special address by the UNESCO regional advisor for culture provided a perspective on George Town's bid for World Heritage. During the afternoon of the third day, roundtables were held on Historical Recovery and Cultural Diversity.*

*On the last evening, the Chief Minister of Penang officiated the closing of the International Conference. The Closing Dinner, with cultural performances, was held at the historic Khoo Kongsi square.*

**Some comments from the scholars....**

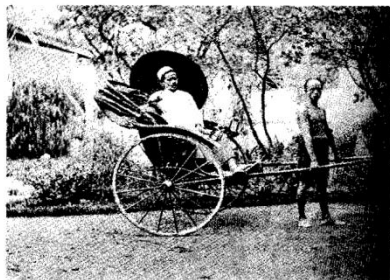
**Professor Wang Gungwu, Director, East Asian Institute, National University of Singapore**

*"I am very struck by the devotion of the people of Penang, and the sense of belonging that the people of Penang have, that led them to be so enthusiastic and so keen to make this story – The Penang Story – better known, not only to the people of Penang... but to the people of the rest of the country and also to the world.*

*But nowhere is it more important ... than for people to feel totally at home where they are, to love the place that they have lived in all their lives, or at least have grown up in, and have associated their family, their roots in. And that is crucial to all our ways of trying to build up a sense of identity.*

*Because later in life, no matter where you go and what you do, that period, where you have a deep understanding of your own society will always stay with you. With that, you not only have a sense of the history of your own locality, (but also) the culture of that locality, the people around you and what that means to you. (And) you carry that with you, the rest of your life..."*

*and "Keep up the good work for Penang. I thought you and your colleagues did a wonderful job organising a most successful conference."*



**Prof. Mary Turnbull,**

*"Congratulations on the success of the conference. The organisation all seemed to go so smoothly, but it must have taken a tremendous amount of work behind the scenes. The proceedings were most stimulating, and it was wonderful also to have the opportunity to get out and about and see so much of historic Penang through expert eyes!"*

**Dr. Geoff Wade,**

*"Many thanks for all the wonderful arrangements during the conference. I don't think it could have been better arranged. Very many congratulations. Hope it pushes forward the bid, and the government's determination to conserve the downtown precincts."*

**Richard Engelhardt UNESCO Regional Advisor for Culture in Asia and the Pacific**

*"...and if you want to share that niceness of your community with visitors, just as you might share the niceness of your home and home-cooking with your friends and visitors, well, that's fine. But to preserve heritage only because you want to sell it to some foreign visitors is completely, completely the wrong strategy – it will never work. It will only lead to the simple deterioration and falsification of the heritage and everyone will end up unhappy and poorer for it.*

*My opinion is that the preservation of heritage and culture has nothing whatsoever to do with tourism. If you are preserving heritage as a tourism product, this is not the preservation of heritage, this is the development of the tourism product; and perhaps you would be more well-advised to develop a theme park from scratch out of concrete...."*



Over 50 papers are available on the website [www.penangstory.net](http://www.penangstory.net)

You can also purchase the papers on CD-Rom (RM 25), the souvenir programmes (RM 5) and the 7-minute video of The Penang Story (RM 10) from the PHT office.

pictures from 'Penang, the city & suburbs in the early C20th' )

SITE VISIT REPORT 31 MARCH 2002



**Beach Street - the premier historic mercantile and banking district of George Town**

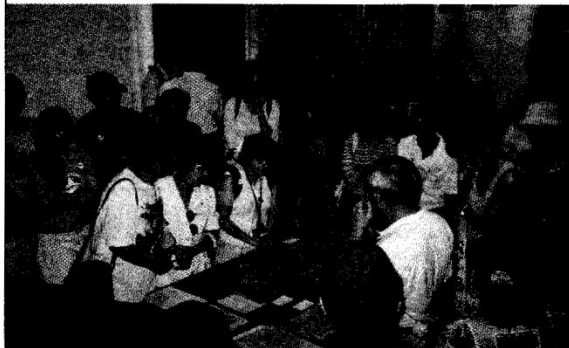
This site visit acted as a trial run for one of the walking tours to be offered during the April Penang Story Conference. 64 members were met by Khoo Salma in the shade of the Chartered Bank building where we were given a brief introduction to the street and its early character.



( Tong C.K.Ho)

The present problems of Beach Street are due to the restructuring of the banking sector and the repeal of the Rent Control Act and involve issues of vacancy, dereliction and loss of population.

Dr Tan Chong Guan arranged for us to visit a late 19th Century shophouse -No.55 Beach Street - Lum Choon- a hardware wholesaler where renovation works had been conducted about 10 years ago to accommodate an intimate courtyard coffee corner for the owner, modern offices on the first floor and warehousing of goods in the rear facing Victoria Street.



( Tong C.K.Ho)

The visit proceeded along the middle class shophouses of China Street ending at the newly restored Cheng Hoe Seah at No.83. The President and trustees as well as the new tenants 'Ching Humanist Space' welcomed PHT members with tea and an introduction to the history, the building, the restoration and to the new adaptive re-use of the spaces.

A book store and exhibition space on the ground floor and a simple restaurant on the first has brought new life to China Street and the surrounds.

[All site visit reports  
March / April / May / June 02 - Loh-Lim]

Many congratulations to *Ching Humanist Space*,  
83 China Street on their official opening 20th July 2002.

& their Launching of the **Ching Lotus Art Fund**  
to aid artists and performers when holding events and exhibitions.

The PHT donated RM\$300 to the fund on 20th July and hopes to be able to continue helping in the future.



( Tong C.K.Ho)



( Tong C.K.Ho)

## ***The PATA Task Force Report on Penang July 2002***

*After 8 days of fact finding in Penang, the highlevel PATA Task Force employed by the State Government produced an initial Part 1 Report for the State Government on the tourism potential of Penang.*



*They placed tourism products into 6 distinct groupings for the purpose of their assessment, viz.*

- Heritage/ Culture & History
- Food
- Eco / Nature
- People
- M.I.C.E
- Access & Accommodation

*Of all the diverse tourism products assessed, the Task Force members have this to say:-*

*"...it was our opinion that focus and development on Heritage/Culture/History provided by far, the greatest opportunity for Penang to establish destination differentiation from the rest of the competitive pack"*

*"...given that the apparent strength of Penang is a rich vein of heritage, history and culture, the tourism structure must also take on the role of advocate to government for reasonable policies and incentives to preserve this unique position of Penang"*

*"Our one line conclusion for the future of Penang is:*

***Refocus, repair, renew, regroup and re-prioritize. If not, you will continue to retreat"***

## ***Launch of Traditional Trades Trail***

Sunday June 2nd

Anak2 Kota/PHT

- Nonya Beaded Shoes - Coffee Maker
- Otto Kedai - Tombstone Carver
- Indian Goldsmith - Handmade Joss Sticks



Mr Lee and his wife, making joss the old fashioned way



Mr Nagumani Thana's Goldsmith



Beaded slippers



Mr Ong, the Coffee maker - opposite PHT



Mr Koay, the Tombstone carver

Pick up your flyer from the PHT - walk the trail, buy some traditional goods and enjoy meeting with the artisans

### Education in Heritage Conservation 2002

The Heritage Education Programme has been in full swing over the last few months. Many of you would have seen the flyers at the Penang Story Conference. The PHT is working with Arts Ed where we provide the expertise for the Schools Talks and the Heritage Tours and they provide the facilitators for the Arts Workshops. We've also worked together for Teacher workshops and Trails and to identify traders for the Traditional and Endangered Trades Trail (see accompanying section)



Students heritage walk-about - at the garland maker

The city schools that have approached us so far and where we have given talks are:

Convent Light Street / St Xavier's / Sekolah Padang Polo / Penang Chinese Girls High School / SMK Tunku Puan Habsah / SMK Hutchings / Methodist Girls School / Al Mashoor Girls School / Sri Mutiara / Penang Free School. There are other schools lined up. If you are interested in having PHT come to your school, please contact Magdalene at the office.

In the last 2 months, we've also given talks and slide shows to AIMST (Asian Inst.of Medicine, Science & Technology) in Sungai Petani, to the Penang Tourist Guides Association and to Rotary Penang.

Many heritage tours have been run for school children, some general historic enclave tours, others specialized ones like The Traditional Trades Trail or the Cheong Fatt Tze Mansion Tour or Little India. We continue to be called upon by most visiting school / college groups to Penang, such as Lim Kok Wing Institute, who wish to have an in-depth historical tours of George Town.

PHT has also taken 5 specialised groups of schoolteachers on customized tours as part of the Arts Ed / PHT Education programme. They have come from the fields of History, Geography, Art, Languages and Tourism. The object was to train them to become themselves facilitators for the children.

The PHT has also assisted in and funded the production of a Traditional Trades Trails map and flyers focussing on 6 traders that the children had selected to highlight. We have also funded the production of a video showing all the sample activities available in the area.



Teachers on a heritage walk-about with Teresa Capol

**Heritage Education**

**Making History Come Alive!**

**George Town – Malaysia's largest collection of historic buildings, traditional trades & communities**

**Programs for Schools, Colleges & Universities**

**Arts & Culture at your Doorstep**

**Living & Changing Communities**

~ Invite us to your school to present a talk & slide show on historic Penang ~

~ Ask for Heritage Walkabouts of the inner city, with specially trained guides ~

~ Register now for exciting holiday heritage-projects with artists, photographers, storytellers ~

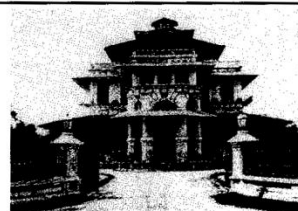
**Contact us for further information at:**  
 PHT: 28A Stewart Lane, 10200 Penang  
 ARTS-ED: 15 China Street, 10200 Penang  
 Tel/Fax: (64-2648)5311 / 618-4770040  
 e-mail: pht@pht.org.my, artsedu2001@yahoo.com

**Supported by:**  
 - United Nations Development Program (UNDP)  
 - First Motor Company Conservation & Environmental Grants Program 2001  
 - Hong Lee Group  
 - Educ. Consultative Council (PECC)

Pick up your heritage education flyer from the office

PHT PRESS STATEMENT released 8th July 2002

The Penang Heritage Trust is concerned about the proposed development on the Shih Chung School site for a columbarium. The history of Shih Chung School as well as its unique architecture makes it among the most culturally significant historical buildings of George Town.



Our position is that:

- 1) It would be an unacceptable compromise for the site of such a highly significant building to be used as a columbarium.
- 2) Approving a columbarium along Jalan Sultan Ahmad Shah would set a bad precedent for other heritage buildings and sites in the inner city.
  - a) Since the late 19th century, new cemeteries and columbariums were only allowed to be established on the periphery of the city. A study should be made as to whether this land-use is allowed for in the Structure Plan.
  - b) We can imagine that the next time another developer is refused permission to build fully or partially redevelop a heritage building, they would be entitled to use their building or surrounding buildings as a columbarium and the plan will have to be approved by the Municipal Council. After a few more instances of this, instead of being known as 'Millionaire's Row', Jalan Sultan Ahmad Shah will become known as 'Columbarium Row'.
- 3) In view of its outstanding historical significance, Shih Chung School should be restored to the highest standards, that is, Grade 1 Restoration. The interiors space should also be maintained. Any extensions or contiguous buildings should not dominate the historic building and should have compatible uses (not a columbarium)
- 4) As an attractive building in a good location, Shih Chung has the potential to be turned into a cultural institution or tourist attraction, such as a private college, a museum, a heritage hotel, or a convention centre. Such a cultural attraction would be a great asset to Upper Penang Road and Penang in general. In the meantime, we should do all we can to negotiate with the owner to find a good use for Shih Chung School.
- 5) On the other hand, if the Shih Chung site were allowed to be turned into a columbarium, then it would be a blight upon Jalan Sultan Ahmad Shah and Upper Penang Road, where many owners have already invested in heritage properties. It may result in lower property prices and loss of customers for the existing heritage businesses, especially in Upper Penang Road. This would result in a loss

### *Whither Suffolk House?*

What can we tell you? PHT has had 2 site visits last year, we've had the wonders of Suffolk House revealed and explained to us, we've observed the encouraging restoration works for Phase 1, the central core and jack roof with renewed floors and walls, we've been amazed at what could be regained from 'noble ruins'. Yet to-day, Suffolk House stands once again, in silence, the workmen have left, the sounds of reconstruction have ceased, the vagrants and drug addicts are starting to find their way back. RM\$500,000 has been spent and no-one seems to be overly concerned.

The funds for Phase 2 were supposed to have been set aside in the 8th Malaysia Plan. We were told they were forthcoming, then we were told they had gone missing and now we are told, no-one seems to know anything about it. Perhaps Suffolk House is destined to remain noble, as ruins.



SITE VISIT REPORT 28 APRIL 2002



(Streets of George Town)

**Boon San Tong, Victoria Street - The 'other' Khoo Kongsi**

40 members of the PHT gathered on the steps of the Boon San Tong to be welcomed by Trustee Khoo Khay Hock who gave us a brief overview of the clan house and the building.

Founded in 1878 by the famous Khoo Thean Teik (of Khoo Thean Teik/Farlim estate) it was built in 1907, just one year after the main Leong San Tong Khoo Kongsi on Cannon Square was rebuilt, the same workmen and artisans probably worked on this temple. Although less ostentatious it is nevertheless exquisite in the skill and craftsmanship demonstrated.

The 6 sons of Khoo Kong Oon were responsible for the construction of the building and today, the descendants of 5 sons (the last having joined a monastery) run the temple and other landed property. The main source of income is from rentals collected from about 50 over houses in town.

The temple is sea-facing unlike the one on Cannon Square, and originally was entered through a small and well-hidden passageway from Beach Street. However when Victoria Street came into being due to natural land reclamation, the entrance was changed to Victoria Street.

Council member Gaik Siang then gave us vivid recollections of the area, having been raised in the houses neighbouring the Boon San Tong.

Recent controversy (refer to news cutting) has centred on the demolition of 6 Khoo houses & the passageway entrance on Beach Street.

The evening ended with an impromptu tour of the immediate area - charcoal factories, the 'best' curry mee, other lesser known clan houses - surrounding the kongsi, with Gaik Siang as guide.

SITE VISIT REPORT 23 JUNE 2002

**THE WESTERN ROAD CEMETERY**

The 30 PHT members who remembered the first of the June site visits were given a very informative tour of an unusual site, the 1894 Western Road cemetery. Our guest speaker this Sunday was Dr Justin Corfield, a history teacher from Australia who has done a study which has been published by the British Association of Cemeteries of South Asia, of the British deceased in the cemetery

The cemetery was the second to be opened in Penang for the Christian faithful – the first being the 1789 Northam Road/Francis Light cemetery – and during its early years, burials were carried out at both places. The Western Road Cemetery is very unusual in that unlike other historic city cemeteries, it is still in use after more than 100 years although it occupies prime suburban real estate. The setting is pleasant and the Western boundary is formed by sloping hills. New graves are somewhat overcrowded and disordered but it is generally well maintained by the City Council and a register exists, dating from 1926. There are currently 2 small columbariums on site.

The visit started with the display of a very valuable and rare painting of the cemetery done in 1949 by the celebrated Yong Mun Sen. Dr Tan Chong Guan was kind enough to bring the painting from his collection for our viewing enjoyment.

Dr Corfield then led the group through the front and earlier half of the cemetery pointing out significant tombs such as those of the Browns. Although the exact date of the consecration of the cemetery is not known, the earliest identifiable grave is that of Charles Franklin de Mornay, who passed away at Malakoff estate in Province Wellesley on 27<sup>th</sup> May 1894. Other notable tombs that were visited were the memorial to the fallen Russian officers and men of the 'Zemchug' sunk in the Penang harbour in 1914 by the German cruiser 'Emden' and the famous 'dog on his master's tomb', a testimonial to loyalty.

Dr Corfield emphasized the amazing amount of information to be gleaned from tombstone inscriptions, particularly in the historic Christian cemeteries of the Far East where more tended to be written in order to commemorate the life of the deceased in a foreign land.



Memorial to lost seamen - Anchor from the Russian submarine 'Zemchug' sunk in WW1 (Streets of George Town)

**SITE VISIT REPORT 26 MAY 2002**

*The Penang Teochew Association and Temple, Chulia St, Nagore*

*Shrine & the Bomba Station*

*Most of the Teochews had settled initially as planters in the mainland (note the Sungai Bakap Kee Estate visited in 2000) This particular temple was founded in the very early 19<sup>th</sup> century with the current building erected in 1870. The Teochews are noted for their marvelous skills with 'Chien Nien' - porcelain cut-&-paste shard work- and this temple remains as one of the few with authentic artisan work of commendable standards. The neighbouring Teochew Merchants Association (1930) was the site of the first Han Chiang School*

*The site visit had been arranged due to rumours of imminent plans afoot to conduct renovations to this most authentic example of Teochew architecture and artisan decorative works. 46 PHT members were honoured to be received by the Chairman of the Board of Trustees as well as other members. PHT members were assured that the restoration exercise would seek to recapture the skills of the past.*

*After tea kindly hosted by the Kongsi, we were entertained to a genuine Teochew opera performance by 2 delightful female members who thrilled us with their singing prowess. We were told that ways were being sort to reduce the length of operas as modern audiences were intolerant of their traditional length.*

*The visit proceeded to the Nagore Shrine on Chulia Street, built in the early 19<sup>th</sup> Century, and surviving in its original form. It was built to honour a well known 13<sup>th</sup> Century Muslim saint in Nagore, India. Not wishing to disturb the elderly inhabitants/caretakers, we were given a brief historical background by Salma at the door to the shrine. Then as an extra bonus, it was suggested that we take a stroll down to the historic Fire Station at the end of Chulia Street.*

*This turned out to be an unexpected bonus - the clearly very bored firmen were all too ready to have us examine ancient fire bells and disused fire poles and to climb fire engines. We were also shown historic bullet holes in iron I-beams embedded during the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War. The PHT suggested that a Bomba Museum be set up in the many disused spaces that were originally accommodation for the firemen (now housed in flats at the rear)*

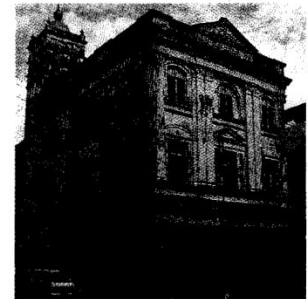
*And as a final highlight we were allowed to climb the narrow stairs up into the bell tower, all 5 floors of it, emerging onto a small terrace balcony which afforded the most spectacular views of the harbour and roofscapes.*



Teochew Association (Streets of George Town)



Nagore shrine, Chulia Street (Gwynn Jenkins)



Bomba building Chulia Street (Streets of George Town)



**Welcome to PHT's new staff & interns** - in addition to Magdalene whom you all met at the Penang Story Conference and who has been invaluable, we wish to welcome :

~ **Tan Yah Phing** who joined us on 1st August as a Communications & Administrative personnel

~ intern **Aishah Valencia** from University of Washington, Seattle; Masters in Public Administration. She'll be working on a Kampong Masjid Melayu study

~ intern **Shweta Banerjee** St John's College, Cambridge University; 2nd BA in Archaeology & Anthropology - study of the Little India revitalization project

~ intern **Yeyen Aga** , architectural graduate from the University of North Sumatra

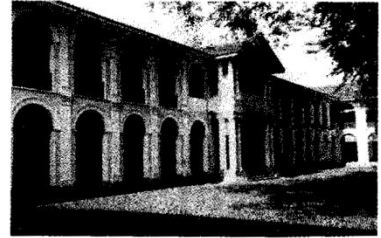


[L to R] Magdalene / Yah Phing / Aishah / Shweta (pic Loh-Lim)



### MARIOPHILE AND THE COLLEGE GENERAL

A total of 52 members and guests enjoyed this rare opportunity to view one of the best kept historical and architectural treasures of Penang. At the base of Pearl Hill and with a sweeping vista of the sea and Butterworth, nestled into the hills stands the early 19<sup>th</sup> century bungalow of Mariophile. In its original form with only a few repair works and addition of artefacts, this building was erected soon after the 1808 College General in Pulau Tikus (demolished in 1984 and currently the site of Gurney Plaza - to be noted that some of the magnificent angšana trees – *pteracarpus indicus* - in the central piazza are part of the original quadrangle landscaping of College General) A historic chapel, dating back to the early days of Mariophile and still in daily use, also stands in its original form next to the bungalow.



Mariophille itself was originally used as a holiday bungalow for seminarians and formators of the seminary. The grounds were extensive – they've now been somewhat reduced and in 1989 new student blocks and other amenities and administrative buildings were added to the site to house the new College General, now moved to Tanjung Bungah from Pulau Tikus. The residents plant and lead a life of quiet retreat and prayer.

PHT members were greeted on a very wet Sunday afternoon by 2 enthusiastic young seminarians, Lionel and Raymond. Many thanks to the 2 young men for an animated and informative afternoon. We were first shown the art collection of works by Father Charles Reutens, kept at the college, a truly rare privilege.

Mariophille ('lover of Mary') itself currently houses a museum of artefacts outlining the historical background of the Seminary of Holy Angels, now called College General. Founded in 1665 by French Vicars Apostolic Bishops Pallu and Lambert de la Motte in Ayuthia, Thailand, the seminary had been forced through persecution and other circumstances to Chanthaburi, Thailand, then Hondat in Cambodia, followed by Pondicherry in India and finally to Penang in 1808. The ground floor contains paintings and photographs of the early martyrs displayed together with priceless exhibits of early bibles, sacramentaries, sacred vessels and 19<sup>th</sup> century holy vestments used during mass.

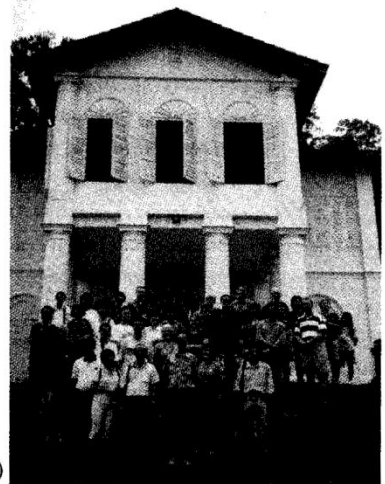
Some early students and formators of the College had been tragically beheaded upon returning to their home countries or mission lands, later to be beatified and canonized by the Church. The grounds contain 2 beautiful sets of statues erected to the two earliest French and 5 Vietnamese martyrs. The Chapel itself contains relics of bones of martyrs and saints connected to College General. The entire experience was a rich and fascinating one for all of us and a revelation of the strength of the French connection in Penang, not often acknowledged.



The evening ended on a social note with tea provided by the College General (including champedak from their own trees). PHT is very grateful for the warm hospitality of the Church, the richness of its contribution to the history of Penang is irrefutable and invaluable. Together with Badan Warisan Malaysia, the PHT trusts it will continue to maintain an open dialogue with the Church, to document, showcase and maintain its inestimable heritage.

PHT members on  
on the steps of Mariophile

(photo -Loh-Lim)





William Daniell 'View from Strawberry Hill, Prince of Wales's Island, 1818 Aquatint 1821 46.0 x 70.0 cm



William Havell View from Penang Hill c.1817 Oil 71.0 x 53.0 cm

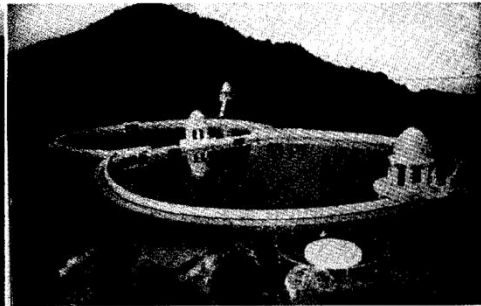
This exhibition of more than 100 original oils, watercolours, aquatints and engravings spanning more than 200 years was curated for 2 reasons:

- to highlight Penang & Malacca's bid for World Heritage Listing and
- to sustain the Penang Museum's on-going efforts to enhance its comprehensive collection of paintings and prints of early Penang

*For those of you who missed the exhibition here in Penang, it'll be shown again at the Petronas Art Gallery, KLCC sometime in October 2002. We'll keep you informed.*



Batu Ferringhi 1900-1920 'Penang in Early Postcards'  
Construction of the coastal Road started as early as 1890 by the Public Works Department (JKR)



Guillemard Reservoir from 'Penang through Old Picture Postcards'

## August 2002 Site Visit - Sunday 25th

The Early Waterworks of Penang  
The Batu Ferringhi Aqueduct and the Guillemard Reservoir

Penang has always been well known for its fresh, clear water from the hills. Sir George Leith, Lt. Governor of Penang in 1804, wrote :

*"There are few places, if any, more abundantly supplied with water, than Penang. Numerous streams of the finest water flowing from the hills in every direction"*

*Join us at 3.30 p.m. sharp opposite the Holiday Inn, Batu Ferringhi (on the hill side) We will take a walk up the gentle hill slope alongside an open aqueduct to the dam at the ridge (not difficult, but sensible shoes required) Dato Lee Yow Ching (Penang's current 'waterman') has kindly consented to be our guide and as an extra bonus, on the way back, we will stop by the 'restricted' Guillemard Reservoir at the top of Fettes Park - to the rear of Pearl Hill. Guillemard Reservoir was opened in 1929, with J.D.Fettes, Municipal water engineer, responsible for its construction. The water supply came from the Batu ferringhi valley.*

**SITE VISIT REPORTS JULY 2002** *By Aishah Valencia 1st August 2002*



Encik Zakaria, one of the descendants explaining the dilemma of the residents

*On Sunday, July 28, 2002, PHT held its' monthly site visit at Kampung Masjid Melayu on Lebuah Aceh. Despite an initial downpour of rain, about 50 PHT members and 30 descendants from the area gathered together to learn about this historical site. This area has been a subject of debate since April 23, 2002 when a consultant of Dr. Hilmi (of the State Islamic Religious Council) alerted the residents that they would have to vacate the premises. According to the council, the homes that they live in are not of historical importance and would be torn down to give way to a new 4-storey pangsapuri. The council states that one of the main purposes of this new apartment complex is to increase the qariah.*



PHT members and host community in front of No. 67 Lebuah Aceh

*Visitors were welcomed by Cikgu Bahroodin's informal discussion about traditional Malay household items and were encouraged to view a number of family-owned artifacts and documents. Several descendants spoke of the historical and heritage significance of the masjid and its surrounding buildings. They also reviewed the current crisis that descendants living in this area now face. Visitors were also invited into a home to taste some deliciously prepared specialties such as bubur arab, kopi arab..... In the end, this site visit provided a great opportunity for PHT members to educate themselves about the importance of this compound and to consider ways that they could help preserve the character and integrity of Kampung Masjid Melayu.*



(Pictures by Loh-Lim)

***Threatened Heritage – July site visit report (by Foo Lee Lee-PHT member and Zakaria Basheer - host)***

*It was not a usual sunny Sunday afternoon on 28<sup>th</sup> Aug. 2002. Despite the downpour, 50 PHT members made it to No. 69, Lebuah Aceh to catch a glimpse of probably the last Muslim heritage enclave in the heart of Georgetown. There was a warm welcome for everyone.*

*Many were amazed to find an urban community secured around the Mesjid Kampung Melayu with its uniqueness in history and to learn of the struggle of its people to preserve their heritage. This was the place where the history of Islamic trade and activities began in Penang. The architectural value of the six houses as well as the fact that they were once upon a time home to religious teachers, qadis, merchants, journalists, painters and even rulers, is beyond dispute.*

*Not forgetting the food of course. Heard of "bubur Arab" and "maggali" anywhere else in Penang? The PHT members will never forget the "bubur Arab" (wheat porridge cook with meat) and also "maggali" (green bean fritters) with "kuchai" eaten with special homemade chilly sauce. Both these delicacies were cooked by two elderly ladies of the community, namely Puan Zainab Yahaya of 69 Lebuah Aceh, from Basheer family and Pn Syarifah Aloyah of 65 Lebuah Aceh, from the Al Habshee family. Some regular PHT members visiting the tenants of Mesjid Kampung Melayu were even requesting for special orders of "kopi Arab" (thick black fragrant coffee). Others who didn't want to miss the opportunity gave it a try as well.*

*It was a memorable site visit for PHT members, pressmen and the community of Mesjid Kampung Melayu, Lebuah Aceh. It is sad to learn that this living heritage will be "threatened to extinction" with the demolition of these houses and indirectly the whole community to make way for the so called "development" by the local authority.*



Members enjoying 'Arab' tea

**The tragic loss of Indo-Malay architecture in George Town.**

*Having recently had the pleasure of jointly researching and writing the history of architectural forms in George Town, for the UNESCO dossier, my eyes were opened to the rich cultural legacy these buildings represent.*

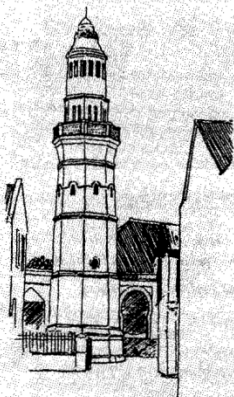
*George Town's settlers first influence in architectural form was taken from the building methods of the indigenous Malays. These shelters raised on stilts, of timber and attap construction, intelligently used the knowledge of the climate and swampy ground conditions. As the settlement developed the multi racial settlers exchanged their knowledge and know-how, developing new eclectic architectural forms. With better drainage and the use of brick as well as timber the early Arab and Sumatran Muslim settlers developed a housing style, derived from the indigenous Malay house, now known as the Indo - Malay bungalow. This evolved and influenced the building methods and styles of many ethnicities and generations of builders, particularly of bungalows around George Town*

*Today the abandonment and dereliction of these fine Indo-Malay houses following the AKS repeal and the removal of tenants, is threatening to wipe out the historical, physical record of the early Malay influence on an urban landscape which was later dominated by the more land efficient Chinese shophouse terrace.*

*The Acheen Street Mosque compound therefore, is a unique urban example, not only of this architectural form but also of the harmonious placement of that form within an enclave. Whilst these heritage buildings are not too old to benefit from careful renovation, sympathetic renovations of the shophouses along Acheen Street can provide more space efficient housing units to bring in new Muslim residents to the inner city.*

*To remove these buildings from the urban landscape would be to wipe out the record of the Malay influence in George Town's architecture. This would be a tragic loss for us all.*

*Letter from PHT member Gwynn Jenkins*



**WARISAN KITA DI TANJUNG**

**Youth Workshop 15 - 21 June 2002**

*Following the Penang Story International Conference, the PHT launched a campaign to raise awareness about Muslim heritage in George Town. A Youth Workshop sponsored by UNESCO Participation Programme was held at the Syed Alatas Mansion from 15th to 21st June 2002.*

*Heritage in Youth Education was aimed at promoting civilization models, images and concepts to help young people rediscover their traditional values. Learning through heritage can give young people a renewed sense of identity, a sense of what they can achieve in their lives and how they can contribute to the community.*

*The 6-day programme consisted of talks, site-visits, tours, meet-the-community sessions and workshops focussed on the urban Muslim community, culture and heritage in the inner city.*

*The main facilitators were Khoo Salma, Abdur-Razzaq Lubis, Dr Ariffin Omar, Naziaty Yaacob and Cikgu Bahroodin*

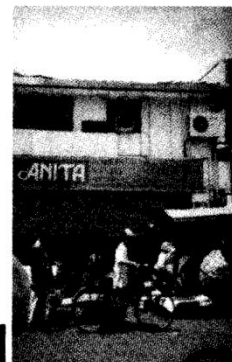
*The objectives of the workshop were :*

- ~ To educate & sensitize Malaysian youth and schoolchildren to cultural heritage in a contemporary context through educational tours and interaction with historic communities*
- ~ To expose a group of young leaders to issues of cultural heritage and identity, as well as contemporary approaches to community development and urban environment challenges*
- ~ To encourage the historic communities of George Town to develop a deeper appreciation of their own cultural heritage, to be aware of their roles as the custodians, interpreters and transmitters of cultural tradition and heritage, and to enhance community participation in tourism*

*[ A report will be available shortly ]*

*The Little India Project [ Shweta Banerjee ] 1st August 2002*

Members of the Indian Chamber of Commerce initiated this project idea in 1989 with the aim of trying to conserve the area and up-grade it for the benefit of the existing Indian community. With the sanction of RM 7.6 million by the federal government, many issues came to the forefront, as there are certain ill-defined and ambiguous terms such as 'development' and 'Indian Culture'. While invited-consultant Laurence Loh in his 'Little India – Project Proposal Analysis' has rectified the initial architectural flaws in the plan, PHT now wants to develop a sociological and conservationist standpoint. This is a good opportunity to bring to light the traditional and endangered trades in the area as well as to develop an interpretation centre for the public to have easy access to the plans for Little India. Research is underway in order to bring alternative views and generate concrete public opinion about the project proposal and its consequences.



(pictures by Loh-Lim)



**Penang's Living Heritage**  
As told by Performer, Cultural Expert, Story-Teller

## Cikgu Bahroodin

At The Museum, Farquhar Street, Penang

10am-12pm EVERY SUNDAY\* - August, September, October 2002  
\*except 1 September 2002

**admission RM 1**

EVERY SUNDAY\* 10am-12pm – August, September, October 2002  
\*except 1 September 2002

**4 Aug, 8 Sept, 6 Oct ? Performing Arts of Penang – Oi! Mai Tengok Wayang!**

**11 Aug, 15 Sept, 13 Oct ? Cultural Diversity – Lagu-tu Lagu-ni Orang Tanjung**

**18 Aug, 22 Sept, 20 Oct ? The Legacy of P. Ramlee – Pusaka P. Ramlee**

**25 Aug, 29 Sept, 27 Oct ? Malay Customs & Traditions – Tepak Sirih Pulau Pinang**

**Mohd. Bahroodin Ahmad @ Cikgu Bahroodin** is a teacher, performer, choreographer, producer and promoter of the Malay performing arts. With over 20 years experience, Cikgu Bahroodin is one of Malaysia's foremost performing interpreters of Bangasawan and Boria today. He is also cultural advisor to the Penang Heritage Trust.

Organised by Penang State Museum & Penang Heritage Trust Tel 04-2642631 Email [phtrust@po.jaring.my](mailto:phtrust@po.jaring.my)

**HERITAGE ALERT**

For the last 2 years, we have had a 'HERITAGE ALERT' system in place. Standard forms are available at the PHT office and members have been encouraged to write in to the Local Authority to alert them of ongoing renovation or demolition works. The system was meant to avert any Local Authority denial of knowledge that said works were proceeding. Over the last 6 months however, many fairly significant buildings appear to have been demolished or were due for demolition, for reasons of being 'unsafe'.

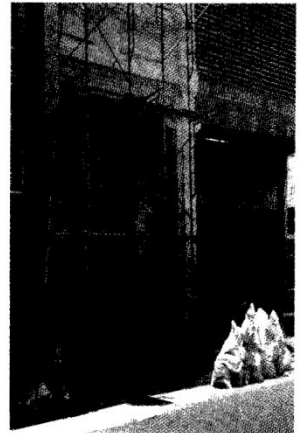
Concerned ngo's and individuals have come together to assess the situation. In the middle of May2002, 25 China Street, 141A Burmah Road, 28 Nanning Street were examples of the above situation. Even more alarming is the fact that at that time, many more buildings have been approved for demolition. To compound the alarm, it has been reliably reported that the MPPP has sent out many more letters to owners to either repair their 'unsafe' houses or demolish them. It is feared, justifiably, that giving the owners a carte blanche such as this, can only result in an epidemic of demolitions in the very near future, with serious consequences for our UNESCO bid

Amendments to the Town and Country Planning Act. If demolition approvals have been granted but have lapsed; the MPPP has the power under the TCPA to review the original application with new requirements. [ refer newspaper cuttings] The Government has now requested the Local Authority to carefully check if a building has historical, architectural or cultural value before granting demolition orders. The Local Authority is also urged to send its engineers to check if a building is actually unsafe or if it may actually be rendered safe quite simply with re-inforcement rather than grant demolition orders on the face of a dilapidated facade.

A Panel of Expert Consultants The PHT strongly urges the State & Local Authorities to put in place a respected Panel of Consultants comprised of acknowledged experts in the fields of planning, architecture and cultural history, who will then be referred to in these matters of applications in respect of historic George Town. The panel would review and advise.

Public Awareness Campaign. It has been proposed that an alliance of like minded individuals and NGO's be formed to raise public awareness of these issues. Some of the activities proposed are( i) press statements (ii) workshops (iii) heritage tours for the press, city councilors and government officers (iv) outreach programme for owners and contractors (v) simple educational brochures for artisans, contractors and owners.

A **Heritage Alert Workshop** is being planned for the near future. We will announce it soon.



dear Dr. Choong, Teresa, Khoo Salma, Magdeline, Loh-Lim,

I just wanted to send you a quick e-mail to let you know that it was a pleasure talking to you all last Wednesday and thank you for the delightful lunch at See Kean Aun.

Although we don't have much chances to exchange thoughts (well, definitely not with all the delicious food around!) I still enjoyed our conversation - It is not every day that one meets people with the energy and enthusiastic which you all possess!

I look forward to meet you all again in some other function at a later date. But in the interim, do feel free to contact me should you need any information on the United States.

Best regards,

Lam Peck Wei

American Embassy, Kuala Lumpur

Public Affairs LRC

Tel: 6 (03) 2168 5085

Fax: 6 (03) 2168 4913

P/s: Loh-lim, I went to the Cheong Fatt Tze Mansion on Sat - that place is simply gorgeous! Walked the heritage trail and I must say that the PHT/Amex map is very detail and most helpful.

A visit from Lam Peck Wei and Jesse Morgan from the US Embassy on 17th July 2002. The Embassy had assisted us with some funding for the Penang Story Conference. PHT maintains contacts through projects such as the Education Project (Ford Motor Company), the Heritage Trails (American Express) and World Monuments Watch



## ~ URBAN BLIGHT ~

*In the last 12 or 18 months, members of the PHT have observed with growing concern the general decline of basic municipal services in the inner city of George Town. Litter is often not collected; drains are clogged; stray animals are common; broken pavements remain a constant danger to pedestrians and building material and debris remain where they are dumped.*

*Our concern has turned to alarm by the rapid depopulation of some precincts. Many vacated houses have been damaged and occupied by squatters and drug addicts. Some of these houses have also been vandalized. Walls tiles, beautiful carved doors and windows have been stolen for the antique market.*

*Even though the PHT has alerted the authorities on many occasions both by letter and verbally nothing seemed to have been done to remedy the situation. It is our fear that unless something is done fairly soon, the process of urban blight will take hold and will soon create pockets of slums in the inner city which will affect the character and security of the whole area. This will result in the forced exodus of residents and businesses out of the inner city creating yet more urban blight.*

**A FIRST MEETING OF CONCERNED NGO'S** We feel that only concerted effort by the community can have any hope of arresting the decline. As a first step the PHT organized a short, informal exploratory meeting of like-minded organizations and individuals. This took place on 30th June with representatives from Pertubuhan Akitek Malaysia, Badan Warisan Malaysia, Malaysian Nature Society, Penang International Hoteliers Association, Penang Tourist Guides Association, Nanyang Folk Culture, PHT and a City Councilor. The meeting started with a short slide presentation by the PHT to show the extent of the problem and was followed by an open discussion and exchange of ideas. A short discussion followed where all present agreed on the acuteness and urgency of the problem. It was noted that both PAM and PIHA had been separately lobbying with mixed results

The formation of a loose coalition of NGO's and individuals was agreed upon with the object of working with MPPP officers and city councillors to improve services and conditions. All parties were unanimous that to be effective, the group must create a win-win situation for all stakeholders including MPPP. A confrontational approach was to be avoided at all costs.

### Dove-tailing efforts with the Local Government Consultative Forum

The existence of the LGCF (Local Government Consultative Forum) was noted. It was 2 years old and had been set up with the objectives of gleaning ideas from NGO's & professional bodies with regards to improving the services of MPPP & MPSP. The existence of the urban blight situation is testimony to the ineffectiveness of the LGCF.

As many of the items under discussion were part of the efforts of the LGCF and as a meeting had been called for the 26th July, it was felt that the best results would be achieved by using this forum to gain exposure for the problem and to obtain co-operative efforts from the local authority representatives present and address the professional level of MPPP.

The Main Issues Involve:

- a) Rubbish disposal and collection
- b) Clogged drains and flooding
- c) Stray dogs and cats .
- d) Abandoned residential terrace housing, vandalism
- e) Misuse of terrace housing for ware-housing, swallow breeding.
- f) Derelict and unstable houses
- g) Poor design and maintenance of pavements (handicap access)
- h) Obstruction of five foot ways/streets goods, tables
- i) Street name signage, no maintenance, indiscriminate name changes

On 26th July, the slide presentation prepared by Loh-Lim and Gaik Siang was presented to the whole of the LGCF with representation from both the MPPP and the MPSP. Dato Dr Teng chaired the meeting. Dr Choong presented the power point. Beach Street as a pilot show case area was forwarded .

Reasons - it is George Town's premier historic mercantile street; it is currently facing problems due to the restructuring of the banking sector; it has a pre-existing 'revitalizing' committee in place.

It was also agreed that the LGCF have a 3 monthly reviews of progress.

Alternate chairmen of relevant MPPP standing committees will be approached in order to have an overview of the problem.



**If you are interested to help or be involved in this effort to make our city more liveable, please contact Ahmad Chik**  
(Call Magdalene at the PHT office)



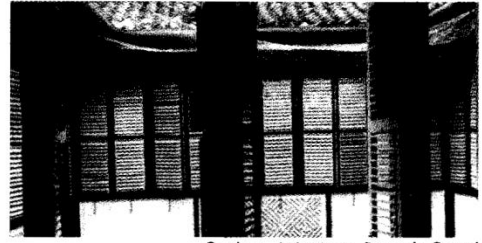
## Inaugural South-East Asian Regional Meeting & Workshop of National Trusts (and like-minded organisations)

8th to 10th August 2002 Kuala Lumpur

Badan Warisan Malaysia (The Heritage Trust of Malaysia) will organise the meeting and workshop in collaboration with UNESCO and with the support of the Australian National Trust.

An enormous challenge to cultural heritage trusts is how to position themselves to cope with rapid changes in technology and different social perspectives. This inaugural Meeting and Workshop for National Trusts and like-minded organisations of the Southeast Asian region is intended to provide a forum to come together to discuss issues and develop new and strategic alliances, to consider how to effectively engage in the challenges arising from economic and societal changes and a world increasingly pressured by new development initiatives

The **aim** of this Meeting and Workshop is to focus on the **management of heritage resources and the mobilisation of these resources** by National Trusts and like-minded organisations. It is hoped that through the process of the workshops, participants will explore and promote sustainable management of heritage resources on both localised as well as national scale.



Badan Warisan Rumah Penghulu

Through this exchange of experiences and insights, it is hoped that the Meeting and Workshop will:

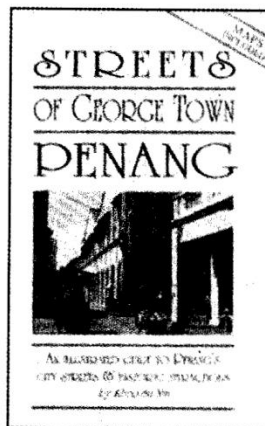
- Provide participants with the keys to management skills including the ability to work with professionals from other disciplines and with communities
- Build professional relationships
- Gain access to examples of best practice from the region and further afield
- Sustain local as well as regional co-operation with other similar organisations
- Identify follow up activities for this knowledge to be shared within their organisations as well as with their partners
- Provide opportunities to explore how both the private and public sectors can be challenged into moving towards a new paradigm in heritage management in the region and to consider opportunities for building capacity.
- Provide the basis for a compendium of "best practice" examples of cultural impact assessments.

**Reprinted by popular demand,  
NOW AVAILABLE AT PHT  
OUTLETS & BOOK STORES**

A street-by-street guide to monuments and memorials, associations and places of worship, historic residences and commercial buildings, shops and coffeeshops, wet markets, traditional crafts and occupations, cultural and festival venues & more.

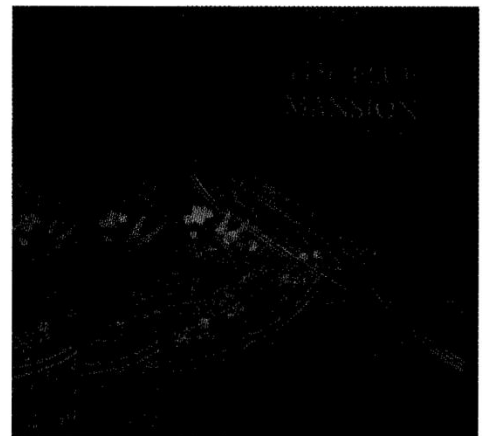
*Richly illustrated with over 280 colour photos, this guide is meant for every visitor who has ever enjoyed George Town's charming streetscapes, and every Penangite who wishes to rediscover his or her own hometown.*

Still at original price, RM 35 per copy  
Bulk order, call Mr. Yeap, 04-2620123  
Overseas order, email lubisksn@tm.net.my



Khoo Su Nin, Streets of George Town,  
Penang: An Illustrated Guide to Penang's  
City Streets & Historic Attractions,

Janus Print & Resources, Penang: 1993  
ISBN 983-9886-00-2; Format 150 X 210mm;  
soft cover, 192 pages; 282 illustrations



**The Blue Mansion 'The Story of  
Mandarin Splendour Reborn'**

*The book about the man, the house, the restoration...72 pages  
full colour...floor plans, elevations and sections. ...available  
at the Cheong Fatt Tze Mansion, PHT, MPH and other  
specialist bookstores. RM340/- Inquiries: Tel: 2270076*



**WORLD MONUMENTS WATCH**  
**100 Most Endangered Sites 2002-3**

A WORLD MONUMENTS FUND PROGRAM AMERICAN EXPRESS

Since 1965, the World Monuments Fund has worked to safeguard the heritage of mankind by encouraging the conservation and preservation of culturally and historically significant works of art and architecture worldwide. WMF works with public and private sector partners to provide financial and technical support for project planning and management. To-day with affiliates established in Europe - in Britain, France, Italy, Portugal and Spain - the WMF sponsors an on-going program for the conservation of cultural heritage worldwide. WMF promotes the use of monuments and sites as focal points for responsible development programs, which guarantee the preservation of the sites and their productive community roles. The World Monuments Watch, a global program launched in 1995 on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the World Monuments Fund, aims to call public attention to critically imperiled sites and direct timely financial support to their preservation.

DUE TO THE PERSISTENT EFFORTS OF THE PHT, WMW HAS LISTED GEORGE TOWN TWICE, THE FIRST TIME FOR 2000-01 AND THEN AGAIN FOR 2002-3

**WE ARE THRILLED TO ANNOUNCE** (although the news is embargoed - for members only - till the official award ceremony) **THAT WE HAVE BEEN AWARDED US\$80,000 TO AID US IN OUR EFFORTS TO SAVE THE GEORGE TOWN HISTORIC ENCLAVE.**

THE SPECIFIC PURPOSE IS TO RESTORE A SHOW-CASE BUILDING FOR THE USE OF PHT AS AN OFFICE AND FOR COMMUNITY SPACES.

*We are currently negotiating several possibilities. If members know someone who wishes to have us fund the restoration of his building in exchange for a long lease or better still if someone wishes to donate a building to PHT, please let us know.*

PENANG STATE, MALAYSIA  
 a.d. 1786-1940

> Established as a British trading port in 1786, the Malaysian city of George Town boasts one of the largest ensembles of pre-war buildings in Southeast Asia. Numbering nearly 5,000, the structures-houses, shops, schools, churches, mosques, temples, and shrines-chronicle the architectural history of the town and provide a vivid cultural portrait of its ethnically diverse population.



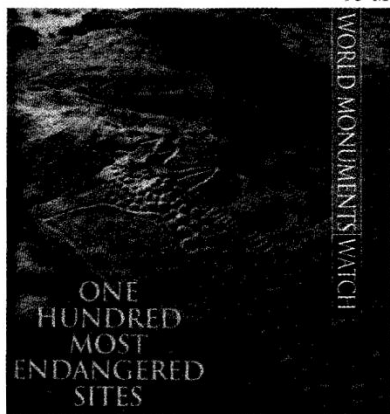
GEORGE TOWN HISTORIC ENCLAVE  
 PENANG STATE, MALAYSIA  
 1786-MID-20TH CENTURY SITE NO. 50

The capital of Penang Island, George Town has maintained its original city plan but, like most historic urban centers, it is facing development pressures-new buildings scheduled to replace old, conversions of houses into offices, and the ever-present threat of developers vowing to demolish architectural treasures.

Many of the city's vernacular buildings had been protected by the Rent Control Act of 1966, which made the eviction of tenants difficult. In January 2000, however, the act was repealed, allowing building owners to raise rents, in some cases ten-fold.

Thousands of tenants have moved out and hundreds of business have closed. While the local Municipal Council has been willing to consider historic preservation since the mid-1990s, it has been slow to put conservation laws, heritage guidelines, and local planning in place. Now vacant, many of the historic buildings, which have fallen into ruin through lack of tenant maintainance, are slated for demolition. Since the town's inclusion on the 2000 list, a survey of its remaining historic structures has been undertaken and a plan for restoration and conservation of a suite of buildings has been developed. However, funds are needed for its implementation and for preservation advocacy.

Listed in 2000  
 Angela M.H. Schuster  
 Director of Publications  
 World Monuments Fund  
 95 Madison Avenue



## Penang Heritage Trust Tours

Members might be interested in knowing that the PHT is now called upon to conduct all 'authentic' heritage tours of the inner city. To those who did not know, PHT organised specialized training courses for tour guides to acquaint them with the 'finer details' of the architectural, historical and cultural aspects of the inner city. We've developed specialized tours, offered by no-one else within the travel trade.

Over the last few months, we've been asked to take the High Commissioner of India, Her Excellency Veena Sikri and her family around George Town; Skywalker Television Facility House S/B have used us for their 'Best of Malaysia' series, focussing on Little India. Some of you may have caught the episode which was broadcasted on 20th June 2002. Right Angle Media Pte.Ltd has also done a George Town special with us and this will be broadcasted in Singapore soon. PHT will also be conducting very special heritage tour for 20 VVIP Puan Sri's visiting Penang later in the month.

Besides the schoolteachers and students tours as part of the education programme, the PHT is also asked to conduct tours for design and architectural students, such as those from the Lim Kok Wing Institute, USM and ITM.

We are all indebted to Teresa Capol and her very staunch team of dedicated guides who were also invaluable during the Penang Story Conference Tours.



Teresa at the beginning of a heritage tour



A PHT tour at the Cheong Fatt Tze Mansion

## BADAN WARISAN MALAYSIA VISITS PENANG / THE PHT

23rd - 24th March 2002

BWM organised a weekend site visit for more than 20 of its members to Penang. The PHT was of course involved in the planning and in helping to ensure that our visitors had an enjoyable and informative weekend in Penang. Lim Huck Chin, Elizabeth Cardosa and Laurence Loh were instrumental in drawing up the very tight and very full programme - they are all not just Badan members but also PHT members and Penangites.

Most of the visitors stayed at the Cheong Fatt Tze Mansion and their first day involved:

- Chung Keng Kwee Temple where we were met by Mr Owen Chung himself
- the Fort Cornwallis restoration where the group was briefed by the contractor/PHT member Najmuddin
- A tour of the Convent Light Street by Loh-Lim, after passing the controversial Town Hall and the Court house
- Lunch at Hameediah in Campbell Street
- Afternoon walking tour of George Town ending at the Sun Yat Sen house where the group was met by Khoo Salma
- the Khoo Kongsi restoration
- dinner hosted by Jimmy Lim at his 'The Bamboo Grove' Perak Road, PHT was invited

On the 2nd day, Sunday 24th, the equally demanding programme started at:

- Suffolk House with a tour by Laurence Loh
- a site visit to Leandros Lane in Pulau Tikus to have tea and visit a restored suburban Straits eclectic timber/masonry house with Rose and Trudy Ganendra
- Lunch and site visit to the Cheng Hoe Seah with Tan Yeow Wooi on hand to explain the adaptive re-use
- Evening visit to Mariophile
- final tea at Cheong Fatt Tze before departure.

We include here excerpts of a short letter from one of the visitors to Penang:

*A huge, immeasurable thanks to you for your contribution to the Badan trip. Yes, we realize we pretty much robbed you of the weekend, but in some small way, at least, I hope you enjoyed revisiting and talking about the sites. I think everyone had a terrific time, departed well informed and entertained and, despite the heat and tortuous pace, are asking, "When's the next Badan trip to Penang". We'll leave that for a while, I think.*

*Now, if PHT are looking towards a Malacca visit, let us know. We'll put together a Horror Show (with some good things thrown in, of course) they'll never forget. Don't put it off forever, there may be nothing left there soon! Many, many thanks again.*

THE STAR MONDAY April 22 2002

■ Reports by CHOONG KWEE KIM, SIOW YUEN CHING, NG SU-ANN, Y.S. LIM and ONG JU LYNN

# Unesco: Conserving heritage pays

PENANG: Rent control legislations are being repealed in former British colonies across the world but some places have made "spectacular success" in expediting regulations for heritage conservation, a Unesco official said.

Richard Engelhardt, the Unesco regional adviser for culture in Asia and Pacific, said the repeal of that statutory limitation was running out about the same time in many former British colonies. "Some places handled it by taking advantage of this situa-



Date: April 18 - 21, 2002  
Time: 8am - 5pm  
Venue: City Bayview Hotel, Penang



Engelhardt... 'we are imbedded in a globalising world'



A BEAUTY... a tour guide briefing participants of the Five Great Clans tour at the Tan Kongsi on the first day of the Penang Story International Conference on Thursday.

## PHT finds historical proof of houses in Acheh St

By DERRICK VINESH

PENANG: Five of the six houses in Acheh Street which have to make way for an apartment project, were in existence since the 19th century, Penang Heritage Trust secretary Khoo Salma Nasution said yesterday.

She said the houses and another two shophouses were found in a 1893 survey map of Acheh Street, which bore the name F.W. Kelly as the superintendent of survey.

She said the map was obtained by AR&T Heritage Consultancy Sdn Bhd from the Survey Department Archives.

Khoo said the detailed map shows the six houses on footprints Nos. 65, 67, 69, 73, 73A, 75B, while the shophouses were footprints of No 77 and 79 Acheh Street.

"Comparing the footprints and the existing buildings, it can be inferred that all the buildings were already there in 1893 with the exception of 73A which was probably rebuilt between 1920 and 1930 on the same footprint," she told a press conference.

The State Islamic Religious Council (MAIPP) had on April 23 informed some of residents living in the six houses that their premises would soon be demolished to make way for two L-shaped apartment blocks.

Khoo claimed MAIPP's architectural planning consultants had informed PHT that the houses did not have historical significance and were not originally Malay houses.

Apart from historical evidence, she said, the premises, which are located within the Kampung Melayu mosque settlement, had rich architectural heritage.

... in his speech, ardt said the Penang if cultural diversity and nic development, was 'fing global narrative : 20th and 21st centuries ould qualify as a World age Narrative. his is an important con for World Heritage ription," he said. ngelhardt said he found question about "what ang will get out of World tage inscription" strange it suggested an "introvert- pessimistic, and backward- mentality that was damentally selfish".

other special places in this country can contribute the unique genius of Malaysia to the creation of a brave and better new world for all humankind," he said. On the advantages of an inscription in the WH List, he highlighted three points - tourism promotion, increase in property value and the ability to attract and keep valuable human resources. "People with high levels of

Barcelona is Europe's preferred city of work and residence for bankers and computer software developers." He said property values, do not lose value, in fact their value continue to increase." On Penang's chances of getting inscribed, he said some towns on the WH List that he added. The Penang Story is a joint project of Penang Heritage Trust and Star Publications (M) Bhd. The sponsors are

## Council issues stop-work order

By SYLVIA LOOI

PENANG: The Penang Municipal Council has decided not to allow the demolition of the 150-year-old historical building at China Street here.

The council, which had earlier granted a permit to the owner to demolish the building, issued a stop-work order on Wednesday, pending a reassessment by the council's engineering department.

Council development planning committee alternate chairman Hung Siat Hee said that someone in author-

ity had instructed that the demolition be stopped pending a reassessment by the department.

It was reported recently that the department had acted on its own when it approved the demolition of the historical building.

Hung was then quoted as saying that it was not necessary for the department to seek the committee's approval for the demolition of every building in the state unless it felt that was necessary.

Penang Heritage Trust (PHT) had also raced against time to try to save

the building from being reduced to rubble and dust.

PHT president Dr Choong Sim Poey had appealed to the council to revoke the permit given to the owner to demolish the historical structure.

Hung added that if the building was found to be structurally sound by the department, the owner would be asked to maintain it.

When contacted, PHT secretary Khoo Salma Nasution thanked the council for the timely intervention.

## Stop the demolition, PHT urges council

By PRISCILLA DIELEBERG

PENANG: The Penang Heritage Trust has urged the Penang Municipal Council to issue a stop-work order on the demolition of a building in Beach Street which is part of the George Town heritage enclave.

A letter was sent to council secretary Ooi Chin Loo yesterday informing him that the developer had started demolishing the building without the council's approval.

"We urge the council to issue the stop-work order immediately, otherwise there will be nothing left of the building, which is the 19th century entrance to the Boon San Tong Khoo Kongsi and which also carries the kongsi's address," read the letter.

When contacted, PHT secretary Khoo Salma Nasution said the building was one of six shophouses in the World Heritage Nomination Core Zone.

She said the council had given its approval for the demolition of other five buildings, but not for the No.301 house.

Khoo Salma said PHT believed that it was an administrative oversight that the developer's redevelopment plan was approved after PHT sent a letter to Chief Minister Tan Sri Dr Koh Tsu Koon in March 2000 highlighting the cultural significance of the buildings.

She said PHT feared that the demolition might affect the integrity of the Category 1 building and George Town's bid for the World Heritage Listing.

"It is also a public access road and is the access to a backlane. We wonder why permission was granted to the developer to build a building on this site and close up the back lane."

"The piling for the new development project may also affect the structural integrity of the Boon San Tong Khoo Kongsi and the Eng Chuan Tong Tan Kongsi across the street due to the underground water table," she said.

# Preserving Acheh Street as Malay heritage site

By SIOW YUEN CHING

PENANG: The state Islamic Religious Council has been accused of overlooking the historical significance of the six houses in Acheh Street.

## Council denies oversight in demolition of shophouses

PENANG: The Penang Municipal Council has denied any administrative oversight in the demolition of the six houses in Acheh Street, Penang Heritage Trust secretary Khoo Salma Nasution said in a recent statement.

In a statement, the council said that the redevelopment of the site was approved following proper procedures.

"The planning approval for the project was based on this plan, the buildings numbered 291, 293, 295, 297, 299 and 301 Beach Street would be demolished and redeveloped."

"Therefore, Khoo Salma's statement that the council had approved the demolition of the first five buildings and not No. 301 (which is the entrance to the Boon San Tong Khoo Kongsi) is not true," the state-

ment said. The council said that in the process of applying for planning approval, the state-appointed consultants AR & T Heritage Consultancy Sdn Bhd had stated on April 1998, that all conditions had to be met before demolition could be carried out.

"Some of the conditions were that the facade and entrance of the demolished buildings should be preserved and not demolished," the statement said, adding that the developer would also have to ensure that building plans followed the guidelines for redevelopment in the core heritage zone.

When contacted, Khoo Salma said there was a need for an investigation on how the whole project was handled, and appealed to Dr to discuss with the residents there before making a final decision on the project.

finance of the centre with the claim-heri- ter no system of ho ewals and all is nts must be here are many as in this partic- me said. contacted, the consul- firm said it had no com- nts. In a related development, the DAP urged the state govern- ment to take urgent action to save George Town's heritage enclave from further destruc- tion.

Tanjung MP and state DAP-chairman Chow Kon Yeow said the government and the council must awaken from "slumber" as recent develop- ments had shown a lack of urgency and a sense of power- lessness in enforcing the con- servation list for heritage build-



HISTORIC PAST... residents of the six houses stories of their ancestors to the visitors

STAR JULY 3 '02

STAR JULY 6 '02

STAR JULY 11 '02

**The PHT has one of the lowest NGO subscriptions - RM3 a month - but we do depend on them to keep going.**

**So, if you enjoy the site visits & the newsletter, if you appreciate the projects that have been conducted, if you share in the vision for George Town and if you believe that we're doing a good job but that a lot more needs to be done...**

**DON'T FORGET**

**to pay up your subscriptions**  
**Admission : RM50**  
**Annual subs: RM36**  
**Overseas postal surcharge RM14 annually**

**PENANG HERITAGE TRUST COUNCIL**  
 TERM SEPTEMBER 2001 - 2003

President : Dr Choong Sim Poey  
 Immediate Past President : Dato Nazir Arif  
 Vice-President : Mr Ahmad Chik  
 Hon.Secretary : Ms Khoo Salma Nasution  
 Hon.Treasurer : Ms Catherine Loh  
 Council Members : Ms Loh-Lim Lin Lee  
                           Ms Teresa Capol  
                           Ms Lim Gaik Siang  
                           Dr. Tan Chong Guan  
                           Mr Kim Wong  
                           Mr Teoh Poh Huat

*The Arts and Culture Information Centre is run by the Penang State Cultural Council. A monthly calendar of events, information on performance venues and other services are available at <http://www.exoticpenang.com.my/arts>*

*This mail-list at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/arts-penang/members> will serve to provide regular email information on new and upcoming arts events in Penang. Anyone may join. Please pass this information on to others who may benefit from joining our mail-list.*

*Inquiry for local and international arts and culture events and booking of tickets:  
 9.30 - 5.00 Monday to Friday  
 9.30 - 2.00 Saturday  
 Ground Floor, Dewan Sri Pinang, Lebuh Light, 10200 Pulau Pinang.  
 Tel: 04-2642273 ; Fax: 04-2642081 ;  
 Email: [artspen@tm.net.my](mailto:artspen@tm.net.my)*



*Inner City Trails of George Town*

PHT regularly conducts 3 different heritage tours:

**Tuesday**  
 Little India, Spice Trail

**Wednesday**  
 Heritage Trail 2 & Cheong Fatt Tze

**Thursday**  
 Street of Harmony & Historical Enclave.

*Those interested can contact Magdeline at Tel 04-264-2631, at least a day before the tour. The fees are RM50 per person (3-10) and RM40 per person for larger groups (11 & above). Customized tours are available upon request.*



Penang Heritage Trust  
 Persatuan Warisan Pulau Pinang



**KENAIR**  
 THE RELIABLE TOUR

**These last about 3 hours .**  
**Special customized trails may also be arranged ~ Traditional Foods Trail / Sun -Yet Sun Trail / Traditional Trades Trail / Muslim Heritage Trail etc.**

**Special rates may also be arranged for Government officials , V.I.P. visitors, students and those on official business**

