



PHT Newsletter

Issue No.105 / July 2014



**PENANG
HERITAGE
TRUST**

*Persatuan
Warisan
Pulau
Pinang*

PHT

Support Conservation Efforts in Your Community!

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

Tel: 604-2642631 | Fax: 604-2628421

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

Editorial

We are hoping to produce our newsletters more frequently for this year. There have been several events taking place, some with our knowledge, some that are happening but not widely exposed. As members of the Penang Heritage Trust, we wish to highlight and bring to your attention. It is our hope that with a greater understanding, it will produce a stronger voice of concern for preservation and sustaining tangible and intangible heritage.

Swiftlet farming has received much criticism due to rising health concerns within the UNESCO heritage in George Town. A lot of effort has been put in to raise the awareness and take preventive steps before it brings untoward hazardous risk that may impact the title of George Town as a World Heritage Site. The State Government has also listened to our pleas and has played a role in addressing this issue.

Loke Villa located on the ever famous Gurney Drive, now apparently made even more famous with the development of retail outlets, malls, fine restaurants and prestigious high rise properties. This mansion is getting lost in the midst of vast development which was once an iconic building on Gurney Drive. The physical aspects of the building are now exposed to the harsh torment of commercial presence, sitting beside the shadows of Gurney Paragon.

Kampung Siam located in Pulau Tikus is at risk of another full blown development that will not only eradicate this local settlement amongst the Siamese but also eradicate a wealth of heritage and culture that has long been established in Pulau Tikus since being inhabited by the Siamese. An investigation has been done and it's findings are of great concern and fear.

Seri Tanjung Pinang Phase II (STP2) would bring about lucrative investment opportunities for investors and the land developer. Land reclamation carries implications for the marine environment, our coastline and varying sedimentation and siltation problems. The coastal land reclamation would greatly impact the people of Penang. The total

area to be reclaimed in Seri Tanjung Pinang Phase II (STP1) and STP2 is more than 1000 acres plus an adjoining 131 acres at Gurney Drive. The STP2 reclamation project will create an island(s) which is more than 85% of the size of Pulau Jerjak, the second largest island in Penang after Penang Island.

Soonstead is an early 20th century mansion along Northam Road in George Town, Penang. It was built in 1919 by one of the early Penang millionaires Heah Swee Lee. There is talk that a new hotel would be built on that land adjacent to the mansion, hence dwarfing it and making it less prominent. This has received great attention from the Penang Heritage Trust and swift investigation had been done with the authorities to obtain greater clarification and hoping the mansion's heritage value will not be lost to yet another commercial development.

There are many more events and articles of interest as you go along in this newsletter.

We also hope to see members continue their support towards the Penang Heritage Trust by renewing your membership and introducing new members from around the world. We welcome you to join in our events and activities that best promotes heritage conservation.

Lastly, on behalf of the Penang Heritage Trust, I would like to wish everyone Happy Penang Heritage Day that was on 7th July 2014!

By Trevor Sibert



A PERSISTENT CHALLENGE

Creighton Connolly is a PhD student in human geography at the University of Manchester, and is currently conducting his doctoral research on the political ecology of swiftlet farming. In this article he provides an overview of the challenges that have been faced in regulating the pervasive swiftlet farms in George Town, and asks the question of why we are still living with swiftlet farms 6 years after they were initially slated to be removed from the inner city area.



Swiftlets swarming outside an active swiftlet farm on Lebu Campbell.

For the past decade or so, the proliferation of 'swiftlet farms' in George Town's inner city area has been one of the most controversial urban issues faced by the state government. This activity has become highly contested throughout the country due to its nuisance aspects and potential health risks, but especially so in George Town due to the impact on the high concentration of heritage buildings here. Swiftlet farming is such a contested practice in part due to the lucrative nature of the trade which contributes roughly RM1.5 billion to the Malaysian economy. Swiftlet farming is thus a promoted industry under the Malaysian Economic Transformation Programme, as it

is seen as a key industry for raising employment and income levels. Nonetheless, swiftlet farming has been declared illegal in many Malaysian cities throughout East and West Malaysia, which thus presents an obvious conflict of interest on the state's behalf, and the government seems unsure just how to handle the issue.

Despite previous optimistic announcements by the State government (as reported in the previous edition of this newsletter), George Town is still not entirely swift-free - even 6 months after the moratorium placed on the industry as of December 2013. According to a personal count carried out in March this year, I found that there were still at least 42 active swiftlet houses in the core and buffer zones - an area of roughly one square mile¹. This marks a significant reduction in the number of swiftlet houses that existed during the last assessment in 2011 (173), but still is not quite 'zero' as the State has announced².



Swiftlets swarming outside an active swiftlet farm on Lebu Campbell.

¹These numbers are based on confirmed personal observations of swiftlets entering or leaving a given building either at dawn or dusk, but does not include unconfirmed or suspected premises.

²It is important to note that some of this reduction could be a result of the fivefold decrease in the price of bird's nest since 2011, and a similar increase in property values in George Town - rather than due to direct enforcement action on the state's behalf.

Just last month, the PHT received an email from a fellow resident of Church Street who complained of an active swiftlet house at 36 Church Street, just opposite the Peranakan Museum. They had been aware of large numbers of swiftlets on their street, but weren't aware of the source until one night they witnessed the birds swarming into the rear of 36, through a small entrance hole located adjacent to the car park. This is one of the over 42 active swift houses included in the count that I conducted earlier this year. However, it is only recently that I noticed that the windows at the front of the building had been opened up, and a few birds could be seen flying in and out there as well.

The open windows are likely a result of the MPPP's ongoing enforcement actions on George Town's remaining illegal swiftlet premises. According to one MPPP officer, this tactic of opening up the windows of swiftlet houses is taken directly from the guidelines issued by the Federal Veterinary Department to the MPPP (and other local councils) on how to close down active swiftlet houses. However, this is actually not the correct way to do it, because the birds will still fly in and out regardless. Rather, the most effective method is to close up the windows where the birds would normally enter, which will force them to go elsewhere. Yet, the MPPP does not seem to have a lot of authority when it comes to carrying out enforcement actions, and need to have the cooperation of the building owners to make any changes.

One of the questions that my doctoral research on swiftlet farming in George Town has been focused on is why swiftlet farming still exists on a relatively large scale here, despite being declared illegal over nearly 5 years ago by the deputy Prime Minister Yassin. One of the major reasons that I've identified is that it seems as though there was a major underestimation of the amount of time taken to clear the swiftlet houses from George Town when the last 'grace period' was issued in 2010. As established in the Action Plans which were adopted by the government to achieve their goal of zero swiftlet farms by 2014, the eradication period was supposed to take place in the first two years, with 2013 being used as an 'enforcement period' to take action on the remaining premises. However, it seems as though 2012-13 was treated as the eradication period, and 2014 as the enforcement year, which explains the (more than) 42 remaining swiftlet farms, and continuing enforcement and court action on the MPPP's behalf.

It is such delays that has given observers like Cardoso the impression that swiftlet farming "doesn't seem like an issue taken seriously by the government". This was a feeling verified in an interview that I had with Penang executive council member Chow Kon Yow, where he told me that, though he personally doesn't believe that swiftlet farming belongs in urban residential areas, the government had adopted a fairly relaxed attitude to enforcing the issue, in part due to "different voices" existing within the government. According to Chow, the Chief Minister in charge of Agriculture is "for it one-hundred percent", and even some MPPP officers have their own interests in the industry. This means that taking action on swiftlet premises in George Town has required a strong degree of "political will" on his part, and has been a very long and tiring battle.

One conclusion that I have reached is that if swiftlet farming is ever to truly be eradicated from George Town, there is an urgent need for more scientific research to be done on the potential health impacts stemming from the practice. Currently the only confirmed impact of the practice on the (in) tangible heritage of George Town and other cities like it, which does not have the same urgency for the removal of swiftlet farming, as say a large health epidemic would. It is for this reason that PHT Council Member Clement Liang believes that: "it needs to be a tourist who dies from it - otherwise it won't make a big enough impact. If it's a tourist who dies, then it will get a lot of international attention, and will spark serious action on the issue". Moreover, it is important to continue to put pressure on the government and raise public awareness about the issue. Without this pressure, it would be easy for the authorities to turn a blind eye to the issue with the passing of the 2013 moratorium, and maintain the illusion that swiftlet farming in George Town is in fact a thing of the past.

(This report is part of the project European Network on Political Ecology and benefited from European Commission funding under the Marie Curie Actions - Initial Training Networks - 7th Framework Program - 2011; contract N° 289374 - ENTITLE)

By Creighton Connolly

Heritage Amidst Modernity

We had a brilliant PHT site visit at Loke Villa on March 2nd 2014, with over 80 members and PHT friends came along to enjoy the house. The house seems to enjoy having people in it and it has certainly come to life again after we moved back in after 5 years on China Street. I gave a short talk on what it was like to be back in the house after the completion of Hunza Paragon next door.

It has been a long nearly 7 years, since the start of work on the site of the old Uplands School, St. Josephs Novitiate, next door and PHT knows well when it all started! PHT came to our assistance when the disturbance began and the first effects of de-watering on the Loke Villa site began to show. There were threats to sue PHT at the time but these disappeared after the road between the Hunza Paragon site and the Regency collapsed.

At the time it became impossible to live in the Villa with the construction along side. Noise, damage and with items falling into the vicinity of the Villa caused constant frustration and stress, and we moved completely into our newly restored home on China Street, whilst continuously maintaining the Loke Villa.

The Loke Villa ('villa' because it is by the sea) is also known as 'The Butterfly Mansion' because of its shape, like the opening wings of a butterfly, and 'The Sun House', because of its many windows, fixed upper round glass windows, and doors. These certainly let the sunlight in but means there are no wall spaces for hanging any artwork!

I want to emphasise that the Loke Villa was built by, and is still owned by a local Chinese family. Many people, especially expatriates and visitors, assume that because it looks like a 'grand British house', is an 'Art's and Crafts' style house designed by a Scottish architect (David McLeod Craik, who also designed St. Joseph's Novitiate), that it was built by some colonial Englishman. These great homes in Penang all built in and around the 20's were built by wealthy Chinese families.

I grew up in many lovely large and old properties as a child. The estates that my father worked on always provided wonderful and large colonial houses for our family. I cannot emphasise enough how much of a privilege it is to have been so lucky to have lived in homes like those and that of the Loke Villa.

These old homes were designed to take in the weather, the views, the way in which the light & sun hits the

walls, the breezes...without the use of electricity & air-conditioning. As their immediate surroundings change, these houses have been adapted e.g.. Air-conditioning added, false ceilings added to make the rooms 'smaller', gardens concreted over, their grounds developed etc. Certainly many of the old plantation houses have gone forever, a real shame.

At the Loke Villa, only the bedrooms have been installed with air-cons, and so we have been left with all the high ceilings, the original tile work, the old Italian marble floors, the wonderful light fittings, the lovely windows and their fixtures, and doors which we open every morning and don't close until we go to bed. The gorgeous original bathrooms are still intact, shabby chic for sure but oh so elegant. All of us, my children included, realise the great privilege of living and maintaining this wonderful home.

It would be great if everyone just stopped for a while, when they look at the idea of moving into an 'old' house. Stop, look and feel, and then decide to please maintain or restore the original features. These will not only help you cope with our hot barmy weather, but also ultimately help you save on energy and conserve features that once ripped out, will never be seen again. Our original heritage homes and houses are now so far and few between. It is so sad to see them being overly restored and stripped of original features.

The editor has asked me some specific questions and I have put the answers below.

1. What is your personal experience living in the Loke Villa; favourite room, part of the house?

Our favourite spot is downstairs, in the main living room come dining room. With all its windows & doors open, it is breezy all day and looks out at the green on each side. The design of the house with it's open 'butterfly wings' means that all the neighbours are kept out of our direct view!

Unfortunately we can no longer use the front lawn(where we used to spend all our time) looking onto Lorong Kelawei, as the exhaust fans from Paragon create constant noise pollution & make it hard to relax & converse here for any length of time.

The worst part of living here is the constant traffic noise (aggravated now by the one-way system which has increased traffic on Gurney Drive), and the noise (extreme exhaust fans) and light pollution by the developments on both sides of the property. These

are constant aggravations that create stress, long term aggravation, headaches & disturbed sleep. This is however, and sadly, becoming 'normal' in many parts of Penang.

Also highly frustrating is the amount of illegally parks motorcycles & cars(mainly employees and visitors to the development next door) that block the entrance to the house, & prevent MPPP from keeping doing maintenance & rubbish collection in the public areas along the whole of Lorong Kelawei. Constant damage to the electric gates & original walls of the Loke Villa property is also an issue. These issues did not exist before and it is fair to say that all the residential properties on Lorong Kelawei have been impacted by the LOOC Residence & the Paragon Developments.

2. Where do you hope to see Loke Villa 100 years from now with all the development taking place along Gurney Drive?

We definitely hope to see it still intact & in its original state. If maintained there is no reason why it cannot be. It is a building that stands the test of time & will be admired forever. Even now it is one of the last 'original' & intact villa's on Gurney Drive. To have it around still in 100 years, would be a huge achievement by the owners, & its value, style & beauty would never diminish. If anything it's value & uniqueness would increase as time goes on.

3. What was the biggest event that ever took place in Loke Villa, a grand wedding, a party?

I don't know what the largest event that took place was before we lived in the house, but I had a wonderful 40th birthday here with about 100 guests who mingled within the ground floor of the house, & dining out under tents in upper garden terraces. 100 is the full maximum capacity that I believe the building(downstairs) can take for a short period of time. The upstairs area is always 'out of bounds' to large numbers of people as I don't want to compromise the structure of the floors in any way. Constant vibration is an issue we deal with with the new utility road along the boundary and the increased number of buses & lorries on Gurney Drive. We do worry about the impact of this on the structural integrity of this priceless heritage building.

Loke villa is an 'intimate' building, it is actually quite small inside and cannot take huge events. There would be no space to enjoy being in the building. But it does look & feel lovely with people in it, enjoying the spaces. It is definitely a friendly & warm home.

4. What aspect of maintenance is important for an old mansion such as Loke Villa; wooden panels, pest control, gardener, wiring?

Everything! We are constantly maintaining & watching out for this building. Termites are definitely something we have to monitor all the time (in & out) especially as time has gone on & the development around the house has pushed all the pests underground right under the villa! We have just had to complete a major termite treatment in the house & grounds.

The lawns have to be maintained constantly of course. We have bought a mini tractor to make the job slightly easier. We keep an eye on the structure of the building all the time, looking out for cracks, watching the wood within the building, checking tiles & the staircase. With the new road alongside the property in the huge development next door, heavy vibration has become a constant issue. This vibration has been aggravated as well by the increase in traffic on Gurney Drive. Lorries bouncing over the sleeping policemen make the whole upstairs shake.

Drainage in the surrounding drains off the property is also monitored especially during times of high tide & heavy rain together, as there has been backlog before & the bottom garden flooded- whereby the water has not been able to drain because of the new concrete walls erected by surrounding developments.

Fluctuation in the electric currents have been an issue with the 2 developments on either side as well with the lights constantly fusing & blowing out bulbs. Maintenance is a full time job!

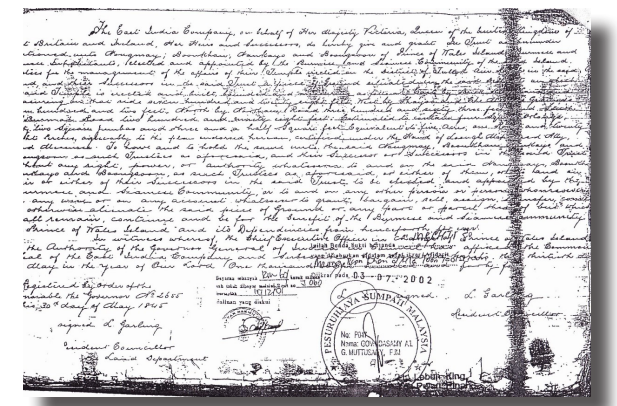
By Rebecca Duckett-Wilkinson



Loke Villa on Gurney Drive, Penang.

Another Doomed Historical Enclave

A distress call from a resident of Kampong Siam came to PHT. All the Siamese residents, including those who have lived up to six generations on the only surviving historical Siamese village in Penang have received the eviction letters dated 23 April 2014 from a legal firm representing a developer, giving them to move out the place within one month. One of the affected residents is PHT's living heritage awardee Wan Dee Aroonratana, the Thai Menora performer and outstanding cultural expert on the local Siamese customs.



Documents indicate the land was originally bequeathed by the East India Company on behalf of Queen Victoria to the Siamese and Burmese communities on 30th May, 1845.

Documents indicate the land was originally bequeathed by the East India Company on behalf of Queen Victoria to the Siamese and Burmese communities on 30th May, 1845.

The land was supposed to be bequeathed in perpetual ownership of the joint communities. It included a prohibition “to grant, bargain, sell, assign, transfer, convey or otherwise alienate the said piece of ground or any part of parcel thereof...” The land “shall remain, continue and be for the benefit of the Burmese and Siamese community of Prince of Wales Island and its dependencies from henceforth forever...” The residents now want a closer scrutiny of the



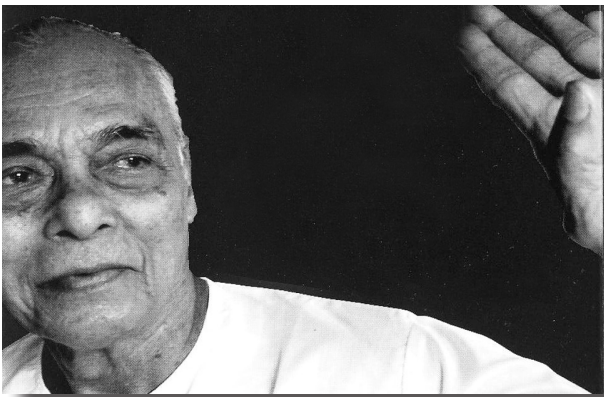
Signboard erected indicating the property owner.

relevant documents and the land transactions to find out how this could have happened.

PHT sees this as another serious blow to Penang's historical enclaves which are diminishing in an alarming rate. Kampong Serani, Koay Jetty, Tanjung Tokong, Kampung Buah Pala, Indian Catholic quarter of St. Xavier's' Church, the list goes on. Some of the wanton demolitions involved land held previously by trustees who conveniently disposed of instead of keeping it for the benefits of the residents to whom they have been entrusted. It is unfortunate that Malaysian laws and land offices make dubious distinction between property ownership and trusteeship.

Part of Penang's attraction to international and local tourists is its amazing cultural diversity. Its living heritage is unrivaled in Malaysia for the city has or used to contain ethnic enclaves of some of the oldest communities on the island – Achenese, Kedah Malay, Rawa, Jawi Peranakan, Indian Muslim, Bohra Muslims, Chettiers, Hokkien, Chinese Hui Muslims, Cantonese, Siamese, Burmese, Eurasian, Jewish etc, most of whom are still connected to their ancestral traditions, clan houses, language and faith. The rapid homogenisation of the population of the city will make it lose its unique social and cultural history.

Each enclave and community tells its own story of struggle and success. The city was built and shaped by common people with similar dreams and sense of purpose - creating new and enriched livelihoods for the next and future generations. Penang's success story is shaped by these peaceful and productive initiatives. These enclaves tell us how Penang became what it is - a historically colorful and livable city.



Wan Dee Aroonratana, the Thai Menora performer and outstanding cultural expert on the local Siamese customs.

By Clement Liang

Reminiscing on Food Carriers



Prakash Jakathesan and his wife Punita Mutiah with YB Dr P. Ramasamy, Deputy Chief Minister of the state of Penang(2nd from left) at the Press Conference of The Revolution of Tiffin Carriers Exhibition on 10th May 2014 with officials from the Malaysia Book of Records.

(Photo taken from Penang State Museum)

The Revolution of Tiffin Carriers'a three-month exhibition opened to the public for free at the Penang State Museum branch at 57, Jalan Macalister. The event and the tiffin carriers on display are the private collection of lecturer J. Prakash, 35, and his staff nurse wife M. Punita, 33. The couple had their names etched in the Malaysia Book of Records for having the largest collection of tiffin carriers, 185 in total. The oldest tiffin carrier in Prakash's collection is from 1870. It weighs 6kg and has a bottom compartment for charcoal to keep the food warm.

'Tiffin' is an Anglo-Indian word derived from the old English slang term 'tiffing', or to 'tiff', which means 'to have a light drink'. Locally called 'mangkok tingkat' in Malay, or 'pua chan' in Chinese, or 'thukku chatti' in Tamil, tiffin carriers have been an important part of our Malaysian culture. A tiffin carrier is a stack of boxes used to carry meals. It is a compartmentalized food-storage unit consisting of two to four bowls or containers of the same size, stacked on top of each other, with a lid on the top, sealed down and clamped shut with locks down the sides or top. This is meant to act like a thermos flask keeping hot food warm and cold food cool. They are used to carry food from kitchens to workplaces or on long journeys, keeping it fresh and uncontaminated.

In the early days, tiffin carriers were made of hand beaten moulded brass which made them very expensive. Then in the 1970s, cheaper enamel tiffin carriers made their appearance in the market. Aluminium was a cheaper metal and more affordable but these carriers were soon deemed unhealthy and unsuitable for long term use. Stainless steel then became the most common and popular metal

for tiffin carriers as they were easy to clean and hygienic. Tiffin carriers exist today in all kinds of materials, forms and colours. Melanin tiffin carriers with heat insulation are becoming the trend these days.

There is no accurate information when and where the tiffin originated; some say it first made it's appearance in India and known as dabbas while some say China. The British brought the tiffin carriers with them from India to Malaya in the 1800s and were widely used throughout the Straits Settlement.

Peranakan tiffin carriers dating back to 1930s are renowned for their intricate paint designs and striking coloured enamel. The thukku chatti, the tiffin carrier used by Indian plantation workers to bring their food from home had inscriptions of their names on it and was passed down from one generation to the next.

Interesting to note that there were tiffin carriers that include those with the 'Occupied Japan' mark which were manufactured in Japan during World War II. The 'Occupied Japan' is printed at the bottom of the carriers. They were produced when Japan was occupied by the Allied Powers.

In The Star newspaper dated Friday January 7, 2011, Penang was to launch a campaign to promote tiffin carriers for food takeaways. The then State Local Government and Traffic Management Committee chairman Chow Kon Yeow said that back in the old days, people would ta pau (take away) food using tiffin carriers instead of plastic bags. "If we can return to the old habit, it will be a positive move for the environment".

By Trevor Sibert

An E&O Reclamation Project

This is the flyer to highlight the problems arising from the massive Seri Tanjung Pinang Phase 2 land reclamation project. Please visit the Penang Forum at <http://penangforum.net/> for more information.



COLOSSAL SIZE - 891 ACRES 4 TIMES STP1 - STRAITS QUAY 240 ACRES

85% THE SIZE OF PULAU JEREJAK

HIGH DENSITY USAGE – UP TO 80 UNITS/ACRE

200,000 RESIDENTS - ¼ THE ENTIRE PENANG ISLAND POPULATION (+ CARS!)

DREDGING 33 MILLION CU.METERS OF SAND FROM PULAU PANGKOR

URGENT CONCERNS :



MASSIVE SILTATION



EROSION



TRAFFIC GRIDLOCK



PORT SILTATION

MARINE LIFE DAMAGE & LOSS OF FISHERIES RESOURCES



LOSS OF LIVELIHOOD OF FISHERMEN FROM PENANG TO PANGKOR



CREATING A SINGLE TIERED COMMUNITY OF THE RICH



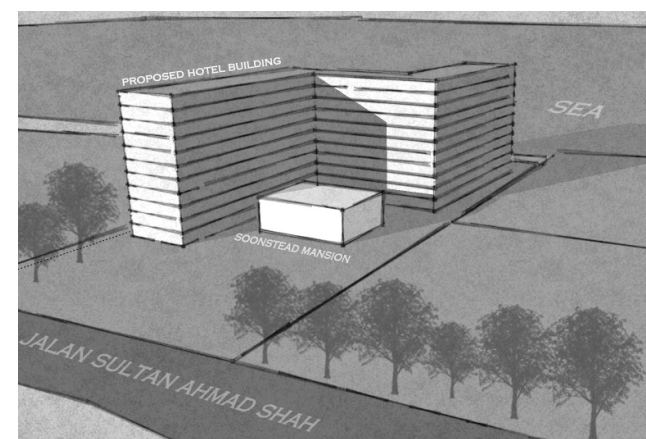
THE COSTS TO SOCIETY OF A PROJECT THIS SIZE FAR OUTWEIGH THE BENEFITS TO A SMALL MINORITY.

FIND OUT MORE.. If you are concerned, go to : <http://penangforum.net/contact-us/>

Write a letter to the Press, your Residents Association, Adun or MP.

Public forums & Road shows will be held

Heritage Alert - Will Soonstead Mansion be a forgotten Penang icon?



Artist visualization of proposal.

The Penang Heritage Trust has received a heritage alert about Soonstead, the mansion at Jalan Sultan Ahmad Shah.

PHT President, Khoo Salma, on behalf of PHT had wrote to Dato' Patahiyah binti Ismail, President of MPPP to voice our concern over the matter. We had been told that the developer (Boon Siew) is submitting plans to MPPP to tear down the Soonstead Mansion and build a 13-storey hotel on the land.

We hoped that MPPP will take measures to safeguard this important heritage site by:

- Rejecting the application
- Warning the developer against illegal demolition - legal action will be taken and no approval will be granted for 100 years
- Taking proactive measures to prevent any illegal demolition

We would suggest that the MPPP to invite the owners of Soonstead to come in for a dialogue and to find out why they have resolved to submit an application for a development.

We had the below following questions:

- Have they been advised that approval for the application can be obtained regardless of heritage guidelines?

- Who is advising them and what are the loopholes?

The outcome of our investigation revealed that Soonstead will not be demolished but will be compromised.

GEORGE TOWN FESTIVAL 2014

Come Celebrate with Us in August 2014!

GEORGE TOWN FESTIVAL

George Town Festival 2014 is back again will take place during the entire month of August. It will be a month-long festival that has turned into a proudly Penang arts institution. From its start as a series of arts and culture events in celebration of George Town's listing as a UNESCO Heritage Site in 2008, George Town Festival was mooted and celebrated its first inauguration in 2010.

The festival continues to offer the best possible experience through our core beliefs of Collaboration, Community, Reinvention and Accessibility, intriguing audiences with our various free and ticketed events.

For the list of event programmes, please visit <http://georgetownfestival.com/programmes/>

Heritage Alert - Mansion to be demolished?



Still intact and standing boldly.



A very prominent landmark as you enters the entrance of the estate.

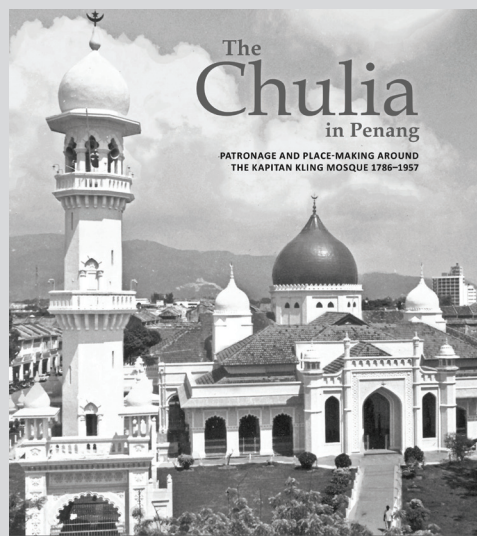
We received a facebook alert that the mansion in Tanjong Tokong which is part of the Lim Leng Cheak Estate is under threat. Citizens Chant has info that it was sold to the developer of Evergreen Apartments. PHT President, Khoo Salma, on behalf of PHT had wrote to Dato' Patahiyah binti Ismail, President of MPPP to voice our concern over the matter. The heritage bungalow at 656 Jalan Evergreen 5, Taman Evergreen, 10470 George Town, Penang, Malaysia, formerly belonged to Mrs. Lim Leng Cheak, one of the most prominent in Penang. She was the main benefactress for a number of Buddhist temples including Kek Lok See, the Tanjong Tokong Temple and the Siamese temple in Perak Road.

We seek clarification from MPPP if the developer submitted a plan to demolish this house and has MPPP identified this house for protection. Also, we urged MPPP to be proactive against the threat of illegal demolition as this appears to be part of the land sold to the developer of Evergreen Park.

THE CHULIA IN PENANG

Patronage and Place-Making around the Kapitan Kling Mosque 1786–1957

Merchandise



The Chulia in Penang: Patronage and Place-Making around the Kapitan Kling Mosque 1786–1957.

Tamil Muslims – once known as Chulias – prospered as traders of pelikat cloth, pepper and local products in the Straits of Malacca. In the nineteenth century, they enriched the port town of Penang with endowments for mosques, Sufi shrines, burial grounds, a water tank and an ashurkhanah, holding religious feasts and processions. The most valuable endowment in the Straits Settlements was that for a mosque and burial ground in George Town, granted in 1801 by the English East India Company. On this site, a South Indian vernacular mosque was founded by the leader of the Chulias, Kapitan Kling Cauder Mohuddeen, a Marakkayar shipowner, merchant and progenitor of the 'Merican' clan. In

the early twentieth century, the colonial government enacted an ordinance to take back the lands and modernize the townscape. In the process, they co-opted the traditional leadership and refashioned the mosque into a grand Indo-Saracenic symbol of British patronage over its Muslim subjects.

The Chulias excelled as Malay scribes, clerks and land surveyors, and also as ship chandlers, stevedores and lighter owners in the port industry. Educated in English, Malay and Islamic schools, the local-born Chulias, called Jawi Pekan or Jawi Peranakan, became part of the cosmopolitan Muslim elite. They innovated the performing arts of Boria and Bangsawan and pioneered early Malay and Tamil print media in Penang, which helped give birth to modern vernacular discourses. Influenced by the Khilafat and Self-Respect Movements in India, they strengthened Tamil identity and started Tamil schools. For economic and political reasons, they formed the Muslim Merchants Society, the Muslim Mahajana Sabha and then the Muslim League, the last of which competed in Penang's city and settlement elections in the 1950s. The book looks at how this diaspora community – living under the East India Company, then in the Straits Settlements and British Malaya – evolved in response to the changing terms of colonial patronage.

Khoo Salma, while providing a fascinating perspective on Chulias in Penang and the historical processes that defined their society, politics and Islam, also illustrates an important microcosm of the city and the state... The book is almost an encyclopaedia on the Chulias, with evocative images that sharply capture their Indianness and Islamic Cosmopolitanism. It is an excellent book which deserves to be at the top of the league in diasporic studies.

– Foreword by Raj Brown, Emeritus Professor of International Business, Royal Holloway, University of London

The Chulia in Penang: Patronage and Place-Making around the Kapitan Kling Mosque 1786–1957 by Khoo Salma Nasution is available at Areca Books for RM135



Tamil Muslim or Jawi Peranakan children dresses in local peranakan garb.



Kapitan Mosque, 1920s

Article taken from:
Areca Books Online Bookshop

Not To Be Missed

CML: Make known new port 'owner'

Lim claims ignorance of Penang Port status

GEORGETOWN: The Federal Government has been urged to announce the appointment of the new operator for the Penang Port.

Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng said he received a letter on Jan 10 from Seaport Terminal (Johore) Sdn Bhd director Datuk Mohd Sidik Shaik Osman stating that the company had been appointed to take over the operations of Penang Port Sdn Bhd on Jan 9.

"In the letter, they have also requested for a meeting with us but we did not get back to them because we do not know exactly what the status of the port is," said Lim in a press conference.

"We've given plenty of time to the Transport and Finance ministries to announce the operator's appointment."

"We do not know exactly what the present situation is. So, we will not be meeting any officials from Seaport Terminal until the Government announces the appointment."

Lim also clarified that the road upgrading work along the Tun Dr Lim Chong Ee Expressway from Queensbay Mall to the Sultan Abdul Halim Muadzam Shah Bridge was under the jurisdiction of the relevant authorities.

Unreplied: Lim showing the letter from Seaport Terminal (Johore) Sdn Bhd.

"Work on the elevated road is causing heavy

Monorail for Penang derailed

Former PM promised the project back in 2006, says MP

GEORGETOWN: The Federal Government has no plans for a monorail system in Penang.

Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Seri Abdul Wahid Omar said the decision not to implement the monorail system was taken after consultation with the Penang Transport Master Plan at a Cabinet meeting in April 2008.

The Federal Government is however reviewing the efforts taken to

Historical mansion demolished

150-year-old building torn down in middle of the night

JOHORE BAHRU: Lushness of the 150-year-old Wong Ah Fook Mansion once a landmark in the city has been lost as the building was demolished in the middle of the night.

The mansion, which was built by the Chinese immigrant, was one of the oldest and most significant historical buildings in Johore Bahru.

The mansion was demolished by a local contractor who was hired by the Johore Bahru City Council (MBJB) to clear the site for a new development.

The demolition was carried out without any notice being given to the public.



Proud moment: Yusuf showing an old photograph of the Lebuh Aceh community as they celebrated Merdeka Day in front of Masjid Melayu Lebuh Aceh in George Town, on Aug 31, 1957.

Bringing to life the tales of yore

Muslim heritage and heyday of Lebuh Aceh retold through personal account

By NURSYAZANA KAHARUD

THE crowd sat spellbound, all ears listening to stories about the Lebuh Aceh Muslim enclave of yore as they embarked on a discovery trip down memory lane.

Judean Warisan Melayu Lebuh Aceh vice-chairman Yusoff Azmi Merican had their rapt attention as he regaled them with interesting and rarely heard historical accounts of the community.

Yusoff recounted tales of people from various backgrounds and social standing living together harmoniously in the Muslim enclave and how tightly knit the community was that everyone in the village knew each other by name.

"There are many things that happened here that cannot be found in history books and most of them are very interesting stories," said Yusoff, adding that only a few from the old generation were left in the community.

Among the notable personalities who benefited were Tuan Haji Mustard who went on to become a district officer in the 1930s. Tales of riots and the banning of secret societies in the area were also mentioned.

On secret gangs, Yusoff related poems he had penned about the notorious societies. "The original poems written by an anonymous author more than a hundred years ago spoke about the friendship between the

Twin NGOs renew call to scrap island project

CAP and SAM surprised over approval of impact study

GEORGETOWN: Two NGOs have renewed their call to scrap the Seri Tanjung Pinang Phase Two project following the approval of its detailed environmental impact assessment (DEIA).

The Consumers' Association of Penang (CAP) and Sahabat Alam

It was earlier reported that the 307ha island, which will be linked to Gurney Drive and Straits Quay by two 400m-long bridges, is part of a RM250m project to be completed over the next 20 years.

Among the issues raised by CAP and SAM were justification of the

Federal Court reserves judgment

> Five-man panel to decide later on petition to have Penang local government elections restored

By ELLY PAZANIZA

penangherald.com.my

PUTRAJAYA: The Federal Court yesterday reserved its judgment on a petition by the Penang government and an individual to have local government elections restored after hearing submissions from all sides yesterday.

Federal Court Judge Tan Sri Md Raus Shariff, who headed a five-man panel, said they would deliver a written judgment later. Besides the Penang government, the other applicant was P. Ramakrishnan, former president of the non-governmental

within its powers to enact laws on local government elections.

He also said that under Article 76 (4) of the Federal Constitution, Parliament's power was limited to ensuring a uniformity of laws and policies, and the article did not deal with abolishing local government elections altogether.

He further submitted that abolishing local government elections denied the constitutional rights of a citizen, including depriving them of their liberty, equality and freedom of speech under the Federal Constitution.

Senior federal counsel Alice Loke, who represented the respondents, contended that the federal government had the power to enact Section 75 of the Local Government Act.

The hearing of the petition followed the earlier decision of Federal Court Judge

E&O crosses major hurdle

Conditional approval to develop phase two of SIP project

By YEE CHAI

yanggastar.com.my

PUTRAJAYA: After three years, Seri Tanjung Pinang (STP) has crossed a major hurdle in obtaining the conditional approval from the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation (MRENC) to develop phase two of its Seri Tanjung Pinang (STP) project.

The company disclosed to Bursa Malaysia that the progress of STP project was approved by the MRENC on a volume of 2750 acres of sea-fronting land in Penang.

Interestingly, the closing price yesterday jumped the RM2.30 per share that STP had paid a 2011 for its purchase of a 1.5-acre

the company announced that its subsidiary, Tanjung Pinang Development Sdn Bhd, had received the approval in principle from the

Among other terms, it was only valid for two years from the date of issuance, the company stated.

With the approval in principle, the company is expected to start the construction of the STP project in the near future.

STP is a very significant one as it is the first time that a company has received approval from the Federal Government to develop a large-scale project in the state.

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ANNOUNCEMENT

Embroidered Kebaya Artisan

The PAPA Project (Penang Apprenticeship Programme for Artisans)

PAPA is pleased to announce that we have places for anyone who is interested in learning how to sew embroidery on kebaya - 'sulam'. The daughter of well known 'Auntie Kim' of Kim Kebayas - who sadly passed away recently - has inherited her mother's skills and is willing to teach under our PAPA project.

With a minimum of 3 apprentices, a 10-lesson course will be run in September 2014. Each lesson is a minimum of 3 hours and will take place at PAPA, which is also moving to new premises on Jalan Kapitan Kling - at the old Star office.

The normal charges are RM1000 per course. PAPA is being offered a 50% discount. Apprentices will be charged only RM250 for the whole course and PAPA will supply all materials and machines. Apprentices have to be able to handle a non-electric foot-paddle sewing machine.

Please call PHT on +604-264 2631 for further details.



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