

# buletin warisan

July – September 2005



Dear Members and Friends of Heritage,

Early in 2003 the Kwan Imm Ting in Klang made newspaper headlines. This was when the temple committee considered that part of the structure was beyond repair and needed to be demolished, while those in the community thought otherwise and wanted the building restored. Controversy grew around the issue when His Royal Highness Sultan Sharafuddin Idris Shah Sultan of Selangor expressed concern. The temple had been included in the book "Landmarks of Selangor" published to mark his coronation as the Sultan of Selangor. Described as "possibly the oldest Chinese temple in Klang", and "still has an arresting presence", it was recognised as being of significant architectural importance. So in the intervening period what has happened? The deliberation continues and the final outcome of the future of the temple still remains unclear. Read the article on pages 7 & 8 for the full story.

The debate surrounding the Kwan Imm Ting and the Tronoh Police station (see page 4) expose a number of myths associated with heritage conservation. Namely that; built heritage has no relevance to contemporary life, that it has the potential to restrict or prevent progress and that old buildings can be made a scapegoat for social problems, and that by replacing the old architecture with new, the problems will have been addressed. Buildings play such a major role in everyone's life that it is regretful that more imagination is not exercised in realising the potential of adaptive reuse of old buildings. Such missed opportunities that once gone – are just that - gone – they cannot be replicated.

"Our Heritage in Danger" article on pages 2-4, highlights the very serious and urgent need to identify and list buildings of heritage value. This has to be done along with a recognition that buildings worthy of saving are not just limited to those categorised as landmark or iconic. Built heritage can be valued for its aesthetic quality, historical context and for the unique environment that it gives regions, imbuing them with their personal character and a special sense of identity. Therefore in identifying built heritage that is justified in saving, the range has to cover a wide spectrum and therefore can include; religious buildings, grand Palladian mansions, modest dwellings, to even a rural police station or an abandoned folly, like that of Tangkak.

Ilse Noor the acclaimed artist while working on "Warisan Nusa Shell Calendar" in 1986 described how she became captivated by the "Folly of Tangkak", also known as Rumah Helang or Sialang.

"Intrigued by the fantastic story of an old ruined hunting house of the Sultan of Johor, with a stone eagle on top of its roof and the royal emblem on its walls, lying somewhere deep in the jungle."

The search begins to discover if the story is fact or fiction. After some assiduous detective work the building proves to be very real! Ilse exclaims;

"I do not believe my eyes."

"There it stands on a patch of grass, bare without any tree, our mysterious haunted house, "Rumah Sialang" in Kampung Sialang, Batu 19, Tangkak-Muar, Johor. It has a proper address and a letter-box! Everything is there, the ruined brick house, the haunted look, the royal emblem, the eagle on top of the roof – except the story is different, and its location."

With persuasion the owner of the ruin, a stern formidable old lady of 90, gives her consent for Ilse to sketch the house, which she conscientiously monitors.

"I have not even finished my sketch when she offers me a cold drink in her humble living quarters, the small brick house next to the ruin, the intended servant quarters. Here she tells me the true story of the building. The house was built around 60 years ago, about 1925, by Haji Yaakob bin Mukim from Parit Jawa in Muar. He was a tax controller for the government of Johor. He was also acquainted with Sultan Ibrahim of Johor. Haji Yaakob was a wealthy man and had two wives. One was Puan Zubaida binte Hanan, the old lady herself. He had built the house for 17,000 ringgit before the Japanese Occupation. The architecture of the house followed the Victorian style. Walls and columns were made of red burnt bricks, while the upper floor and window frames were made of cengal wood bought in from Singapore. The contractor was Chinese. Since the building was never completed and Puan Zubaida never moved into her dream house, it might console her to live at least next door and take care of its surroundings. I still feel a grain of doubt deep in my heart. I just cannot forget the fantastic story of Sultan Ibrahim's hunting house in the jungle. To this day, I have not found even from Puan Zubaida, a satisfying explanation for the Johorian emblem on its walls and the eagle holding a crown. The house remains to me, a mystery."

If you feel tempted to pay a visit to Tangkak and see the house for yourself, please read the "Our heritage in Danger" article before you go!

This is all a preamble to a request to ALL members to do some detective work! If you observe a building that you consider could have heritage interest or you are just curious about, take a note of the name and location, and if you see one that could be at risk – take a photograph – and then tell us! We will keep members posted of the shared finds, and with your help can compile our own "Endangered List".  
E-mail editor@badanwarisan.org.my

Finally, the latest developments regarding Malacca and Penang's joint bid for UNESCO World Heritage Listing from a local English daily. The Dossiers for nomination were received by the World Heritage Committee in January for consideration. These have since been returned to the candidates with requests for further technical details to be supplied and for completion of the Dossiers, which had omitted some vital information.

Diana Cooper  
Editor

## Our Heritage in Danger

by Elizabeth Cardoso

Heritage is a non-renewable resource. Cultural diversity is the one most significant components of our heritage and should be protected and valued as such. We have the right to live in a culturally rich environment – characterized by reciprocal knowledge and mutual respect among people and groups of diverse backgrounds, languages, religions and cultures.

How do we become more aware of cultural issues and cultural values which will make us more “culturally competent” and help us find (create?) collective urban spaces where principles of coexistence and tolerance are key, where the periphery are integrated with the centre, where society has a better capacity to deal with the challenges which arise from a multicultural society.

If we want to achieve human development and to guard against cultural homogenization, cultural rights should be the forefront of the debate concerning the fundamental factors that lead to human development, where previously culture was relegated to second or third place a long way below that of economic policies.

Traditional cultures should be approached in a way which is meaningful and relevant in diverse cultural contexts; this should encourage greater tolerance, mutual respect and understanding, emphasising the common, core values shared by all cultures. A developed society recognizes and respects the varied identities and richness of cultural and linguistic diversity. In an increasing globalised world, we must recognize and protect common cultural identity and ensure that any community has a sense of belonging, a sense of identity, because of their history, culture, religion and language.

Cultural rights are more than the right to visit a museum. It is the right to retain and celebrate the various symbolic elements that give meaning to life.

This is an urgent state of affairs. Notwithstanding the fact that a heritage law has been proposed by the Ministry of Culture, Arts and Heritage, the government must have an intermediate action plan to ensure that no more destruction persists until this law is in place. Rapid action and due diligence must be had to ensure that an inventory of buildings is carried out prior to decisions on whether to retain or to demolish and rebuild and to curb the rate of destruction.

If ever a building of high architectural quality has to be removed for the sake of modernization and development, it should be replaced by a building of a higher design and quality than the original otherwise there is very little justification. Instead the reverse is what is happening.

The following are just four examples of our heritage in danger.

## Rumah Helang, Tangkak, Johor

Johor’s version of the famous Kellie’s Castle, the Rumah Helang in Tangkak has been acknowledged as a “must see” in several heritage lists, including that of the official website of Johor’s Tourism authority ([www.johordt.gov.my/pdmuar/places\\_of\\_interest.htm](http://www.johordt.gov.my/pdmuar/places_of_interest.htm)), the PETRONAS Heritage Mapbook of Peninsula Malaysia (Wendy Moore, Petronas, 1990) and the PLUS Guide to Peninsula Malaysia (Muzaffar Tate, PLUS, 1996).



*Etching by Ilse Noor, 1986.*



*The house which replaced the above in 2003. Photo by C. Jeshurun.*

Until at least the mid 1980s, when the building was identified with the help of the museum authorities as a heritage building, worthy to be one of the 24 buildings recorded in Ilse Noor’s Warisan Nusa Shell Book of Malaysian Heritage (Pustaka Cipta, 1991) etching series, nevertheless, this did not prevent it from being demolished (2003) to make way for a very rudimentary house on the site.

## Palladian House, Bakri, Johor



*Timber roof bracket usually found in Chinese temple construction rather than in domestic architecture.*

This is a unique architectural style, combining European, Chinese and Malay eclectic elements. The first floor construction of timber borrows from Malay vernacular architecture while the decorative pilasters and stone balustrades on the ground floor borrow from European design.



*Detail of plaster moulding.*



*The porte cochere*

Add to this the Chinese-style balusters and motifs on the front main entrance and the roof construction and you have a celebration of cross cultural influences making this building unique to the Malaysian context.

And unlike the Palladian houses in the Straits Settlements of Malacca, Penang and Singapore, the porte cochere is enclosed and designed for use by the inhabitants and not just as a parking space for cars or carriages?

The land around the building has been cleared. Is this an indication that the building is going to be restored or just the contrary, that the building will soon be demolished?

## Shell Petrol Kiosk, Rembau, Negeri Sembilan

Standing forlornly beside a road which leads to nowhere, this abandoned petrol kiosk is possibly the only remaining one of its type in the country. Probably built sometime in the 1930s, residents of Rembau remember it was later used to sell kerosene (1960s?) but has long since been unused.

According to the Rembau district office, the building and site still belong to Shell Malaysia. It sits next to the Rembau Police Station on what would have been one of the town's main roads leading across a railway crossing and out of town, and which was the highway leading from Seremban to Tampin. We understand the main highway was realigned in the 1960s and a bridge built over the railway line.



*Standing forlorn and ignored. An orphan waiting to be adopted?*



*Note the "Shell" logo and the tunjuk langit.*

Architecturally a delightful eclectic combination of European and Malay vernacular design from the art deco style window and door openings to the tunjuk langit rising above the roof at both the front and rear facades.

I recently heard there used to be a similar kiosk on Pudu Road near Puduraya. Any other examples anyone? Any photographs of these examples? The question we have is if we were to restore the building, what new use could it be put to? Any and all ideas are very welcome.

## Police Station, Tronoh, Perak



*The Tronoh Police Station built 1904.*

The headlines in the New Straits Times of Tuesday 17 May 2005 on the Royal Commission Report on the Police read "Rehabilitate sick housing projects". The first paragraph reads "A Police building in Tronoh, which is part of the Batu Gajah police district headquarters in Perak, is still being used despite it being close to 100 years old." The report goes on to say that the quality of the housing quarters are in very poor conditions and that this summarized the general state of affairs of police housing and facilities all over the country... The press article states that inadequate housing and poor condition of work premises was one of the major problems faced by the police which in turn caused a negative impact on the morale and self esteem of police personnel. "The dilapidated police facilities, the commission said, also aggravated public perception of poor efficiency and service. The article included a photograph of the police building (viewed from the rear) in Tronoh.

I recommend you take a trip to Tronoh and see this building. Tell me it is in a dilapidated state and that the morale of the police manning the building is low.



*Front entrance, note the ventilation device*

When I saw it last August, it was in a high state of conservation and architecturally it demonstrated the ingenuity of native design, the use of local materials and construction methods which responded well to the tropical climate it was built for. I would hazard a guess that it would probably have been a cost effective building when it was built in 1904. The history of the building is documented in a framed panel which you see immediately you enter the

building. The "lock-up" with its timber bars is still there, one is still in use, the other converted into an office. Even the "lock-up" for stray cows is unique and tells us a story of a rural setting where cows are "impounded" for causing obstruction on the roads, until their owners come and claim them. It speaks of a time past, peaceful and leisurely. Contrast that with Kuala Lumpur where the first police headquarters on Jalan Tun H S Lee (High Street) was demolished a few years ago, after it was abandoned following a fire.



*Detail of brackets supporting the roof.*



*The "lock-up", for stray cows.*

## Conclusion

This is a clear indictment of how lax our laws are in relation to the identification, listing and preservation of our heritage building. Where each of these buildings would have told a story of community leadership, whose contribution to the area they are found in, and whose contribution ultimately to this country, should be celebrated, instead the lack of a national heritage policy ensures their untimely demise.

Footnote: Badan Warisan Malaysia would like to thank Dr Chandran Jeshurun for bringing these buildings to our attention. We would like to encourage all our members and friends of heritage to document any buildings or historic areas which you believe are worthy to be conserved. Please contact Elizabeth or Ee Lin at the Secretariat or e-mail [editor@badanwarisan.org.my](mailto:editor@badanwarisan.org.my)

## Mubin Sheppard Memorial Prize (MSMP) Cycle 5

At the prize giving ceremony held on 17 December 2004, the winners for the respective categories received their awards from the President of Badan Warisan Malaysia, YBhg Tan Sri Dato' Seri (Dr) Ahmad Sarji bin Abdul Hamid. The prize is in the form of a cash award together with a Certificate of Award.

The jury comprised Associate Professor Kamariyah Kamsah, UiTM Shah Alam (Chair), Ar John Koh, Ar Lim Take Bane, Ar Tuan Hj Norzam Darmin, Ar Lillian Tay and Elizabeth Cardosa.

MSMP Cycle 5 received a total of 15 submissions from 6 institutions of higher learning.

### Category: Dissertation/Topical Study

**SPECIAL JUROR'S PRIZE:** "The Documentation on the Architectural Features of Five Oldest Mosques in Melaka built in 18th Centuries" by Ra'alah Binti Mohamad; M.Phil., School of Architecture Studies, University of Sheffield, UK



**MERIT AWARD:** "Urban Conservation of Kuala Lumpur: A Case Study on Jalan Tunku Abdul Rahman (south section)" by Elphine Chew Ann Fey, BA (Arch); Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, Skudai, Johor



### Category: Case Study

**HONORARY MENTION:** "Measured Drawing: The House of No. 65, Acheen Street, 10200 Georgetown" by Heritage Studies, Department of Architecture, Universiti Islam Antarabangsa Malaysia

1. Muhairi Muhammad,
2. Abdul Fatah Jaafar
3. Amira Abdul Aziz
4. Dayang Nurhashimah Ismail
5. Hasbi Mat Nawawi
6. Muhd Shahrilfaizail Abd Hamid
7. Munyra Asyikin Baharin
8. Nadia Che Abdul Rani
9. Noor Aini Mistar
10. Nurul Hanani Che Mohd Zain
11. Zul Fadhli Kamarrudin



Badan Warisan Malaysia also launched the cycles 3 & 4 publication which was sponsored by Yayasan Warisan Pribumi on the same day, as well as the 6th Cycle of the Mubin Sheppard Memorial Prize 2005.



The President presenting a souvenir to the sponsor represented by YBhg Puan Sri Nila Inangda Keumala Manyam

Now, we once again invite entries for the Mubin Sheppard Memorial Prize 2005. Submissions should reach the office of Badan Warisan Malaysia no later than Friday, 17 June 2005.

For more information on the MSMP, please contact Cik Intan Syaheeda Abu Bakar 03-2144 9273 or e-mail [intan@badanwarisan.org.my](mailto:intan@badanwarisan.org.my)

## Award Ceremony for the National Heritage Awards 2004

On 3 May 2005, Badan Warisan Malaysia organized the Awards Presentation Ceremony for the National Heritage Awards 2004 at Methodist Girls' Secondary School, Tranquerah Road, Malacca. This ceremony was officiated by YBhg Tan Sri Dato' Seri (Dr) Ahmad Sarji Abdul Hamid, President of Badan Warisan Malaysia.

YBhg Datuk Haji Abdul Rahim Abdullah chaired the Jury Panel which comprised YBhg Dato' Lee Yee Cheong, YM Ar Raja Dato' Kamarul Bahrin Shah Raja Ahmad Shah, Ar Helena Aman Hashim, Ar Lillian Tay, Encik Ismail Ibrahim and Elizabeth Cardosa.

According to YBhg Datuk Hj Abdul Rahim, the jury's assessment was based on criteria which covered aspects such as conservation methodology, conservation process, client/consultant's interpretation, concept of authenticity, added elements and creative technical solutions respecting the building's character and the contribution to surrounding environment and influence on practice or policy.

In his address, YBhg Tan Sri Ahmad Sarji stressed that the original name of a place or building should be retained to ensure that its history is not lost. For example, the Shellabear Block in the Methodist Girls' Secondary School commemorates the founder of the school Mrs Emma Ferris Shellabear. Many would also recognise the name as her husband was a prominent historian. The block serves as a reminder of the school's history, heritage and identity to the future generations. He continued to stress that if people keep on changing the name, our future generations would not be able to appreciate the uniqueness of the building.

YBhg Tan Sri also took the opportunity to welcome people who are really concerned with the preservation and conservation of built heritage to become a friend of Badan Warisan Malaysia just like the participants in this competition who have demonstrated their awareness and care of our nation's built heritage. By participating, they have shown a great desire to preserve and conserve our heritage buildings and sites not only through documentation but also through active work in conservation and restoration projects.



Award recipients with Tan Sri Ahmad Sarji & Datuk Abdul Rahim

He said that Badan Warisan Malaysia is very encouraged by our government's endeavours not only in allocating funds for the preservation and conservation of our built heritage especially through projects which involve public buildings.

But he urged that the government should establish a heritage development fund with financial incentives available to those private individuals who live and own heritage properties, to support the rehabilitation and maintenance of these properties and to encourage more people to participate in heritage conservation activities.

### Awards



In the "**Restoration**" category, the Shellabear Block of the MGSS Malacca was given the Award of Excellence for successfully demonstrating exemplary conservation practice through a holistic

understanding of both the technical and social aspects of the conservation process and practice.

Two awards were handed out in the category of "**Conservation with Adaptive Re-Use**".



The Kuching Old Court House Complex, Sarawak won the **Award of Excellence**. This ambitious project effectively incorporated the use of traditional methods, materials and craftsmanship and has reinstated the historic character of the complex.



Bargas Zakariah, Gopeng, Perak received an **Honourable Mention** for showcasing one aspect of Perak's traditional architecture. The restoration and relocation of this family

house has ensured the continuity of its architectural and historic identity.

All winners received a brass plaque for the building and certificates for the individuals and organizations responsible for the projects. For this cycle, 7 submissions were received – 2 for the Restoration category and 5 for the Conservation with Adaptive Re-Use category. country – Malacca, Perak, Penang, Terengganu and Sarawak.

The National Heritage Awards 2004 was made possible with the cooperation of Syarikat Perumahan Pegawai Kerajaan Sdn Bhd (SPPK).

Jury panel: YBhg Datuk Abd Rahim Abdullah (Chair), YBhg Dato' Ir Lee Yee Cheong, YM Ar Raja Dato' Kamarul Bahrin Shah, Ar Helena Aman Hashim, Ar Lillian Tay, Encik Ismail Ibrahim and Elizabeth Cardosa.

## Kwan Imm Ting, Klang

by Elizabeth Cardoso



The Kwan Imm Ting is one of the oldest Chinese temples in Malaysia dedicated to Kwan Imm or the Goddess of Mercy. In 2000, plans were approved for its demolition to be replaced by a 3-storey structure in its place. Through public intervention and with the encouragement of DYMM Sultan Selangor, the temple committee was persuaded to retain the existing temple and to modify their plans for expansion.

Badan Warisan Malaysia was appointed in mid 2004 to prepare a conservation plan for the original main temple with its central prayer hall and two side wings. The right side wing has since been demolished to accommodate the plans for the new temple prayer hall.

In trying to understand the history of the Kwan Imm Ting, Klang, we found very few documents available about its historical origins. However, following a search through the National Archives, a few documents from the Selangor State Secretariat files relating to the early history of the Kwan Imm Ting have been located although many gaps remain. Nevertheless, analysis and interpretation of the inscriptions on the wall paintings have added to our knowledge of the history and development of the temple.

Documents tell us that the temple was built by 1892 and its original location was in Klang town, at the junction of Kling Street and Station Street. By 1910, we learn of plans to surrender this site in exchange for the present site of the temple along Jalan Raya Barat. A bilingual stone tablet set up to commemorate the corner-stone ceremony for the

new building of the temple dated 6 January 1911 is found in the temple. We learnt of a petition for the extension to the Temple Reserve in the late 1910s to allow for additions to the existing temple and the erection of quarters for the priests. Documentation of a proposed extension in the form of the right courtyard wing is shown the form of which exactly mirrors the Right Courtyard Wing which was demolished in June 2004.

There is a gap of 30 years where there are no documents available to the researchers which can throw light on the developments of the temple complex. However, certain conclusions can be drawn, based on certain physical evidence garnered from the cai hui and a map of Klang Town dated 1951. The cai hui on the Front Elevation of the Main Entrance Hall is dated keng-wu, i.e. 1930. From this, we can surmise that this section of the building was either built in or around 1930, or at least substantial renovations were carried out and the Front Elevation enhanced with the elaborate decorations. It is, however, not clear when the Extended Prayer Pavilion was built as no date can be located on the decorations on the Front Elevation or gable walls.

Nevertheless, it is certain that by 1951, the side extensions to the Prayer Pavilion were already constructed and the temple consisted of the Main Prayer Hall, the Prayer Pavilion together with its extensions, the Main Entrance Hall and both the Right and Left Courtyard Wings.

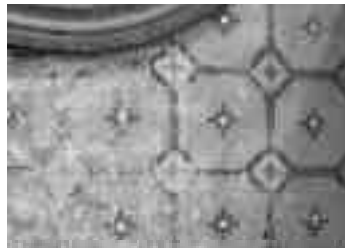


The temple's architectural expression and content is unique. The floor plan is based on a Chinese paradigm temple courtyard configuration in the Minnan style of Southern Fujian with its hierarchy of spaces expressed externally by the different heights of the roofs with their curved ridges and upturned ends. The form of the brick and timber construction is uniquely Southern Chinese and, as such, would have required the presence of Chinese masons, carpenters, craftsmen, artists and materials.



Although there are many other Southern Chinese temples in the Minnan style in Malaysia, however, many architectural facets on display in this building are not evident elsewhere in the

country. The most prominent of these are the semi-circular pediments on the leftmost and rightmost bays of the Front Elevation with the unusual bas-relief on the left wing which shows a Western-style motif of a lion and a tiger holding a globe underscored with a ribbon. The incorporation of this European architectural element in a Chinese temple is unique and not evident in other similar typologies. In direct contrast, the motif on the right wing features a more traditional scene of three Chinese lions playing.



Another unique architectural feature is the simulated relief wall-tile frescoes on imprinted plasterwork found on both wall panels framing the Main Entrance Hall as

well as the two wall panels below the semi-circular pediments reference above. This technique is not found in other local and regional Chinese Fujian temples, or for that matter, in any other Chinese architecture of this age in Malaysia. Its preservation would provide compelling evidence of a unique artisan technique.

The historical importance of this building is self-evident, given its specific place within Klang's historical continuum and the communities it represents. As Klang's oldest Chinese Temple, its age places it as an antiquity. The inherent heritage values of the Kwan Imm Ting are clearly demonstrated as it was the single Chinese temple personally identified by DYMM Sultan Selangor to feature in "Landmarks of Selangor" (Jugra Publications, 2003).

The Kwan Imm Ting also demonstrates great social significance. For over 100 years, it has represented the interests of the various Chinese communities in Klang. It continues to have as its custodians, members representing 19 different Clan Associations in Klang. The temple continues to retain an important role in the daily spiritual life of the community demonstrated by its constant bustling daily use and the faithful comprising people from different walks of life and ethnic groups.

The main ridges of the various roofs are embellished with a form of decorative artisan works called "jian nian" or porcelain-cut-and-paste shard-work. On the semi-circular pediments of the end bays, the mouldings and finials were



influenced by European/British period designs and convey a different aesthetic sensibility. The overall eclectic combination of decorative elements and forms from China and the West presents an architectural creation over time that is unique to Klang.

Decorative friezes have been created by the Chinese artisans on the front façade. Frescoes, termed "cai hui", have been painted on them.

The Dilapidation Study and Condition Investigation Survey were presented to the Kwan Imm Ting committee in February 2005. Our principal recommendation is to restore the 1911 building form with the retention of the Main Entrance Pavilion of 1930 and the Left Courtyard Wing (with modifications). We await a decision from the temple committee on when (whether?) they will begin restoration work.

Photos 2003-4 by Elizabeth Cardoso and Ooi Bok Kim. |

# The Dutch Fort At Kuala Linggi, Malacca

by Dr Chandran Jeshurun



*The crumbling bastion as you enter.*

Built on top of a small hillock at the mouth of the Linggi River, this was a very strategic location that was initially controlled by the Bugis chieftain, Daing Kemboja. The main *raison d'être* for this military installation was the tin that was brought from the hinterland of Sungei Ujong by the early Chinese miners, predominantly of the Hakka clan. As the Bugis also used it as a base to launch surprise attacks on the Dutch in Malacca, the latter finally subdued Daing Kemboja in 1757 with the help of Johore Malays.

Some accounts state that the Fort itself was built as a symbol of the capitulation of the Bugis to the Dutch forces but what is known is the fact that a Dutch-Bugis Treaty was signed within its walls on 1 January 1758. By this Treaty the Bugis conceded the monopoly over the tax on tin ore from the interior to the Dutch who named it Fort Philipina after the daughter of Jacob Mossel, then Governor-General of the VOC in Batavia.



*Hardly any evidence remains of the structures within the fort.*

It is a square-shaped structure measuring 167 feet by 150 feet and made of laterite slabs with a front and rear entrance and four bastions. The walls were believed to be about 8 feet high and there was a moat all around it with a connecting jetty to the sea. The hill on which it stands is known among the locals as Bukit Supai or Sepoy's Hill, no doubt a reference to possibly South Asian troops under the Dutch. The remains are mainly the base of the walls including the bastions with some other evidence of the floor plan of buildings inside the Fort. The Museums and



*Wall of the fort.*

Antiquities Department carried out some restoration work at the site in 1975 and it has been gazetted as a historical monument.

The Kuala Linggi Fort can be reached from the North-South Expressway heading south by turning off at Port Dickson Interchange and heading down the new highway until you reach the traffic lights to turn right into PD. Instead of turning right you should carry on along the highway until you reach the end and turn left into the old road south (Route 5). It is a winding road that will pass the small town of Pasir Panjang after which you should enter M143 which will take you across the Linggi River into Malacca and to Kampung Kuala Linggi where the fort is located.

The Linggi River has, unfortunately, been one of the most sadly neglected historical toponyms in Malaysian history as it once served as a major point of access from the sea to the interior of what is now Negeri Sembilan. Not only did the waves of Minangkabau migrants from Sumatra use it as their first landfall, but there is very strong historical evidence to suggest that its past goes back to the pre-Malaccan period. The megalith complex at Pengkalan Kempas and the Keramat Sungai Udang are believed to have been located at the Linggi's seafront before it was pushed outwards through siltation and vegetation.



*The "Rudder", the "Spoon" and the "Sword" megaliths in Keramat Sungai Udang.*



*Pengkalan Kempas megalith complex.*



*New holiday chalets being built which obstruct the vista of the Strait of Malacca.*



*Wall at rear of house, possibly using laterite from the fort as a building material.*

In the nineteenth century it served as the point of entry for the Cantonese and Hakka adventurers, including the famous Yap Ah Loy, who came in search of their fortunes mainly in tin mining. And Sungei Ujong was viewed by the British at that time as equally important as other tin-bearing centres in Perak and Selangor. Indeed, when the skirmishes between the British and Negeri Malays occurred in the 1830s and 1870s the Linggi River was the primary means of accessing the interior for the former's military forces.

All that remains of this historically important site today are a handful of forlorn-looking Malay houses languishing uncomfortably in the outskirts of a totally modernized Linggi town with spanking wide dual carriage-ways and broad concrete bridges where there used to stand, as late as in the 1970s, a quaint kampong with a rickety old wooden bridge.

## **A British Historical Relic From Malacca's And Negeri Sembilan's Past**

by Dr Chandran Jeshurun

### **The Malacca Memorial Obelisk**

This unusual monument of rather modest proportions sits almost incongruously in the midst of the older part of Malacca between the Dutch buildings, now renovated, and the seafront of the British period. It is a reminder of the late

nineteenth century expansion of British influence when minor wars had to be fought against recalcitrant Malay overlords who controlled major tin mining areas especially in Perak, Selangor and Sungei Ujong. The British, after they had established their presence in 1875, sided with the Dato Klana of Sungei Ujong in his disputes with the titular head of the Minangkabau confederacy, the Yam Tuan Antah. The main issue was their rival claims to the small district of Terachi which was situated between their fiefdoms.

Having set himself up as British Resident of Sungei Ujong close to the Dato Klana's residence in Ampangan, Commander Patrick Murray, found that the Yam Tuan's forces had advanced towards Ampangan and captured the police post at Paroi on 3 December 1875. An earlier clash between a small British force of about 50 men and the Yam Tuan's men numbering around 200 had occurred on 28 November 1875 near Terachi when Murray had to withdraw due to insufficient ammunition and, more likely, fear of being overwhelmed by the Malays. In the meantime, reinforcements consisting of a small detachment of 20 men from the 1st Battalion, H.M.'s Foot Regiment based in Malacca had arrived and on 4 December. But when Murray launched another assault on Paroi the Yam Tuan's forces successfully repulsed it.

As it was clearly futile to undertake any further military operations with such limited forces, the British decided to build up their armed strength instead. The Governor of the Straits Settlements, Sir William Jervis, decided that 350 Gurkhas of a battalion from India that had been sent to support the Perak campaign would be dispatched to Sungei Ujong. In addition, a force of 85 Arab irregulars was recruited by a Mr Fontaine in Singapore and joined 50 men of the 10th Foot Regiment in Malacca to proceed to Seremban. By 17 December Murray's position was considerably strengthened with the arrival of 300 Gurkhas, half a battery of artillery and 32 officers and men from H.M.S. Thistle.

In the meantime, Murray had engaged the well-entrenched Malay warriors of the Yam Tuan at Paroi in what was some of the heaviest fighting of the entire skirmish on 7 December. The British won a significant victory and re-captured Paroi but sustained 37 casualties, both dead and wounded. By then the combined British forces were placed under the command of the Malacca garrison chief, Lt Col Clay, and Murray left on 19 December with a party of soldiers to launch a rearward attack on the strongly-fortified Malay stockades on the Bukit Putus pass. Having waited three days for Murray to get into position, Clay led the remainder of the troops on a frontal assault on the 22nd in which a Gurkha patrol under Capt Channer surprised the Malays in one of the stockades. Together with Murray's advancing columns from the rear, Clay's troops completely broke the back of the Malay resistance and the British were able to march into Sri Menanti. One of the results of the fighting in Sungei Ujong in 1875 was the award of the first Victoria Cross for bravery in the Malay States to Capt Channer who was also promoted to the rank of Major.

This seemingly unobtrusive monument, about five feet in height, had pride of place directly opposite the old Dutch building that once housed the Malacca Museum but in post-Merdeka days it was relegated to a forgotten corner of a newly-built car park. Today, however, the rather diminutive and weathered obelisk looks quite out of place standing as it does on its pedestal smack in the middle of the large real-life exhibits of an old Royal Malaysian Air Force Twin Pioneer aircraft and a KTM diesel-engine locomotive and passenger coach. Nevertheless, it bears sad testimony to the stirring times of a bygone era when the British first extended their political control over the Malay States. Ironically, there is nothing to record the struggle of the Yam Tuan Antah and his warriors which very nearly drove the British out of Sungei Ujong before powerful reinforcements from the Empire's garrisons arrived in the nick of time.

As a postscript, the following are the inscriptions (on four faces) of the Malacca Memorial Obelisk:

Face 1 Erected by their comrades in memory of those who lost their lives in active service against the Malays in Sungei Ujong 1875-6

Face 2 1st Batt H.M.'s Foot  
Sergeant F. Owen  
Private J. Ball  
Private J. Newman  
Private H. Smith

Face 3 1st Goorka Light Infantry  
Naik Bucktring RAV  
Sepoy Duljeet POON

Face 4 Arab Contingent  
Corporal Ali SAN  
Private Mahomet AWAL  
Private Mahomet NIZAM  
Private Ferozef MAHROUT  
Private Ali MUSJIE  
Private Mariano VOLADY



Face 2 has a Christian cross above the names while face 3 shows a kukri for the Gurkhas and face 4 is marked by a crescent moon for Islam.

Interestingly, Murray also has a memorial plaque in St Andrew's Cathedral in Singapore which simply states:

To the memory of  
Commander P. J. Murray, RN  
British Resident in  
Sungei Ujong from 1874 to 1881  
who died at Malacca  
on the 12th April 1881  
Tablet was here placed by his friends

## The 2nd International Delphic Games 2005 Kuching, Sarawak. 1 to 7 September 2005

2,600 years ago the concept of the Delphic games as a peaceful competition of the arts was born. However the contemporary Games are very recent, having been initiated in 1994, and only held once before. This week long event has the objective of "Revitalising Endangered Traditions". The aim is to promote understanding between people by a cross cultural exchange that has the dual intention of reinforcing classical art forms while also encouraging new mediums of expression.

There are twelve categories in the Games Programme divided between; two forums, competitions and exhibition events. Competitions will be held in; traditional music, dance, song, textile weaving, photography, film making and fine arts. Demonstrations will be given in sculpture in wood and stone, fashion and story telling.

At the start of the Games (2 – 4 Sept) the World ECO-Fibre & Textile (W.E.F.T.) forum will be conducted. 300 weavers, craft-artisans, scholars and like minded individuals are expected to attend to exchange the latest information and research promoting the knowledge and use of natural fibres and dyes.

Towards the end of the Games week (exact dates to be confirmed) there will be an Architectural Conservation exhibition. This will run in tandem with a seminar that will discuss conservation issues that are significant to the theme of the Games and will be accompanied with a site visit and a heritage walk to local sites.

Representing Malaysia on the Board of Advisors of the International Delphic Council is Ramli Ibrahim, celebrated for promoting an awareness of dance and art as the Artistic Director of the Sutra Dance Theatre. Among the Games Directors are two members of Badan Warisan, namely Edric Ong, who assisted in organising trip to Kuching (March 2004), and Alex Moh, the photographer who has exhibited and given talks at Badan Warisan. Heidi Munan, another member who also assisted with the Kuching excursion will be a chairperson for the W.E.F.T. Forum.

Fee for participants is US\$ 250.00 covering accommodation meals and local transport.

For further information, please go to [www.2nddelphicgames.com](http://www.2nddelphicgames.com)



**Reminiscences of the Straits Settlements Through Postcards** A joint publication by national Archives of Malaysia and National Archives of Singapore.

This publication is a record of the first time the National Archives of Malaysia and her sister establishment in Singapore have collaborated in an outreach programme. It all began with an exhibition of postcards shown and well received at three venues; Malacca, Singapore and Penang, generating the impetus for publishing this glossy volume that goes beyond the coffee book genre.

The purpose of the project was to highlight the parallel history of "Us" and "Them" across the Causeway at the time when Malacca, Penang and Singapore were unified under the banner of the Straits Settlements and shared 120 years of history. And the method chosen for exploring this time span? Old pictorial postcards, so attractive and easy on the eye, a most palatable way of delivering a history message.

At the beginning of the book there is a brief account of the history of the Straits Settlements, which alerts the reader to the differences in the background and development of the three protagonists. As expected from a publication coming from archive sources, there is a description of the history of the postcard, with a short and interesting discussion of the varying types and styles, and a brief low-down on conserving the material. Recognition of the immense value that postcards can render to the historian are with heartfelt intensity mentioned by the compilers (unnamed), as having historical "street cred" that no contemporaries possess because, "In the days before the doctoring of photo images became so easy, a picture was worth a thousand words".

After the background has been set, the cards with just short captions are allowed to speak for themselves. These 150 cards date from the turn of 19th century come from both archives and a small contribution from the private collection of Lim Shao Bin. Divided by themes the cards explore: buildings and landmarks, trades, portraits, transport and leisure. They give a glimpse of life in another era when ice cream was delivered by bullock cart, St Andrew's Cathedral, Singapore had a rural setting, and when the tiger trap shown on another postcard would have been a serious necessity. Pictures of Malacca are particularly revealing. There are scenes of Heeren Street, Malacca Pier and the River and an interesting one of Malacca town showing the Stadhuys, Christ Church, and the Clock Tower, giving insightful views of the town before it was developed.

The postcards have been carefully and thoughtfully selected and the attractive layout encourages prolonged browsing. Let's hope that this collaboration between the two archives is not a "one off", but just the start of what could be an interesting and beneficial partnership for both parties.

**Kinta Valley Pioneering Malaysia's Modern Development**  
By Khoo Salma Nasution & Abdur-Razzaq Lubis

This is a huge publication, 428 pages in all, so there is ample space to take the reader on a full tour of the Kinta Valley, the heart of Perak, to discover the rich history of the area. Both authors are heritage advocates so they are sharing something that is very close to their heart. Their previous publications include "Ipoh: The City that Tin Built", a heritage map of the town and "Raja Bilah and the Mandailings in Perak: 1875-1911".

The author's really do start at the beginning when the Perak area was the hub of an ancient Buddhist kingdom and visited by Indian traders, so predating the Malacca Sultanate. Trade was conducted with the Orang Asli who were the first to mine for tin. Change came about in the 18th Century, when Chinese immigrants mainly Hakka and Cantonese were recruited to work in the mines. Early mining methods are diligently described making the reader appreciate the dramatic improvements that the Chinese introduced with their innovations in mining and smelting methods. But it is not all technical; the social and work life of the mining coolie is also described including an interesting section on the role of women miners.

Changes and development of the Kinta Valley came from two catalysts; the worldwide increase in the demand for tin and the discovery of large deposits in Kinta and Larut. The British Resident Hugh Low had established with Malay royalty and chiefs and two Chinese towkays, the Perak State Council in Kuala Kangsar, which oversaw the resultant "Rise of Kinta" as it gained economic importance.

It was during two major "tin rushes" that there was a rich ethnic mix of communities, Malay, Chinese, the Mandailing, Acehnese, Javanese, Tamil, Pathan, Sikh, Europeans and Eurasians working together to develop the mining industry. This impetus led to the development of the frontier towns like Papan, Batu Gajah, Gopeng, Kepayang, chemor, Kota Bharu, Malim Nawar to mention a few which are thoroughly charted, by Khoo and Abdur Razzaq. Other chapters cover; "Ipoh and Modern Kinta", the "Japanese Occupation", and "The Emergency" so taking the account beyond the story of tin. The book concludes with a discussion of the environment and the significance Orang Asli of Kinta who were mentioned in the initial chapter but become the focus of the final.

There are copious photographs and reproductions of contemporary maps which are interspersed through out the well written text. These contrast with the 32 pages at the end of colour plates, showing present day views of the landscapes and towns taken by various photographers. Page XIV shows Alma Baker's residence in Batu Gajah at one time a bustling vibrant town. Alma Baker a New Zealander was a rival of William Kellie Smith; Batu Gajah's other well known resident. But while Kellie's Castle has been preserved and can be visited, sadly Alma Baker's unique house was demolished last year. The timing of the publication "Kinta Valley" could not be more appropriate to make us conscious of the importance and relevance of the Kinta Valley before we lose more valuable heritage.

## Exhibitions

### Triumph

#### In the face of disability

#### Photographs by Victor Chin

16 June to 9 July 2005

This collection of 40 images is a photographic portrait of a small group of the disabled in Malaysia and Thailand.

Victor Chin is a multimedia artist and currently an honorary fellow at the Institute for Environment and Development (LESTARI) UKM.

### Kuala Lumpur International Photography (KLIP)

#### Biennale in co-operation with the National Art Gallery

#### Young Photographers Lose Themselves

#### by Caecar Chong, Erna Dyanty, Danny Lim, Mun Li, Pang Khee Teik and Yap Hoi Yan

1 to 30 August 2005

Six young photographers negotiate with the terror and comfort of their urban spaces through very individual photography aesthetics. Three of them look at the world outside their homes, the streets, buildings, cities, essentially their extended homes, and recontextualise their identity and visual language through various mediums. The others look indoors, and redefine their art and their identity against their subjects' art and identity.

This show has been co-ordinated with the assistance of our member, photographer Alex Moh.

### 120 Years of Railway Networks in Malaya – A Photography and Ceramic Exhibition

September 2005

2005 marks the 120th anniversary of the railways in Peninsula Malaysia – it was in June 1885 that the first railway was opened from Port Weld to Taiping.

Members were taken on a tour of the KL Railway Station and KTMB Sdn Bhd Corporate Headquarters earlier this year.

For this exhibition, we are delighted to work with Malaysian photographers Chan Kin Wah, Eric Peris, Soraya Yusof Talismail, Syed Zainal Rashid, Arthur Teng, Bob Teoh, and potter Alex Tan to showcase images of the railway networks.

With the kind co-operation of KTM Berhad, the photographers covered a selection of stations from Perlis to Singapore, and up to Kelantan.

More information on the exhibition will be provided in the next bulletin.

### Tropical Reflection - an exhibition of paintings by Liew Choong Ching

6 to 22 October 2005

Liew Choong Ching is a small town boy hailing from Jerantut, Pahang. His art is very much influenced by the environment around him. Much of his childhood was spent in the midst of indigenous people. This fascination and interest eventually lead to his very first venture into art – the orang asli series. When he moved to the east coast of Peninsula Malaysia, he captured the essence of life of the Malay fishing community. Bali's vibrant colours and senses also gave him inspiration.

This is a collection of sketches and paintings from the different phases of his work. The artist will be working on site throughout the exhibition. Please feel free to come and speak with him.

## Talks

### The Zheng He Anniversary: Reassessing, Commemorating, and Utilizing the Eunuch Voyages - talk by Dr Geoff Wade

11.00 a.m. Thursday 21 July 2005

Venue: Cyberitorium, Level 2, Menara Star, Petaling Jaya.

The 600th anniversary of the eunuch-led Ming voyages to Southeast Asia and the Indian Ocean has given rise, in addition to new associations to study admiral Zheng He, to a great enthusiasm for commemorative events to mark the voyages and to assign a new status to the man himself. Why this great desire today to celebrate Zheng He and his comrades, and who is promoting it? In an attempt to put the activities in some kind of context, this talk will examine the way Zheng He has been depicted, utilized and is now being reassessed, by people in China, in Southeast Asia and more generally around the globe over the last several centuries, with a focus on the last 20 years.

Please register with the Secretariat.

**Dr Geoff Wade** is currently a visiting Senior Research Fellow at ARI, NUS. He is an historian with interests in China-Southeast Asian historical interactions and comparative historiography.

### A Tree to Remember

#### Reading and reminiscence by Ted Miles

4.30 p.m., Saturday 3 September 2005

We are delighted to host an afternoon with Ted Miles to launch his new selection of articles, "A Tree to Remember". Ted will read from this selection and regale us with tales from his experiences having lived in Malaysia for over 50 years.

Copies will be available for sale and Ted would be happy to autograph them for you.

## Visits

### **Merdeka Legacy Visit 1 – Stadium Merdeka and Stadium Negara, Kuala Lumpur**

9.30 a.m., Saturday 16 July 2005

**Stadium Merdeka** was inaugurated on 30 August 1957. Date of construction: 15 July 1956–23 August 1957 Purpose: for the independence celebration of the Federation of Malaya on 31 August 1957.

**Stadium Negara** was inaugurated on 19 April 1962. Purpose: to serve the needs of the capital and the whole Federation both as a sports arena as well as a performance space. Current Owner of both stadia: Permodalan Nasional Berhad

The site on which Stadium Merdeka sits has a history going back over 100 years. In 1893 a 9-hole golf club, the Selangor Golf Club (SGC), was opened on what had previously been grounds used for a Chinese cemetery. The clubhouse used to stand where the Methodist Boy's School is now located.

In 1921, the SGC moved to its present site on Circular Road (now Jalan Tun Razak) and the area on Petaling Hill was turned into a public park, known as People's Park (later known as Coronation Park). This area on Petaling Hill has several schools – Davidson Road Chinese School, Confucian High School, Methodist Boy's School and Victoria Institution – all built between 1895 and 1929. The site is also home to several religious institutions – the Ni Tin Keng, a Goddess of Mercy temple (established 1894), Chinese Gospel Hall (end of C19) and Wesley Methodist Church (1915) – as well as other social facilities like the YWCA (established 1915), the Chin Woo Stadium and the Basketball Association.

As the story goes, in 1956 when Tunku Abdul Rahman was looking for a site to build the stadium for the declaration of independence, he went up the clock tower at the Chin Woo Stadium (built 1952) and saw people using the grounds for recreation and exercise. He declared that the stadium should be built on this site, a location which was central to the city of Kuala Lumpur, in order that all citizens, whatever their background, could easily access it.

The building of the stadium was accomplished in just over 1 year. It was designed by S.E. Jewkes, the Director of Public Works, and built by the Public Works Department.

The site visit will be led by Laurence Loh who will explore the many unique and magnificent architectural and engineering feats of this stadium, as well as that of the adjacent Stadium Negara (built 1962).

**RM10 per member.** Please register with the Secretariat. |

### **Merdeka Legacy Visit 2 – Parliament House, KL**

Date to be confirmed.

With the formation of the Federal Executive Council in 1909, Parliamentary Democracy in Malaysia began to develop. This personal tour of the site will be a great opportunity to learn about the workings of the supreme legislative authority of our nation.

There is a formal dress code – for details please contact the secretariat. Photography and smoking are not allowed in the premises.

**RM10 per member.** Please provide your full name and IC or passport number when registering. Members not on the list will not be allowed entry.

### **Chinatown Revisited**

September 2005

Victor Chin will lead members on a Chinatown Walk – retracing the route of the walking tour which he drew up with Cheryl Hoffman in the late 1980s.

Copies of the walking tour are available at our Gift Shop. Please contact the Secretariat to indicate your interest.

### **A Day in Kampar**

Sunday 2 October 2005

Meet in Kampar at 9.00 a.m. for a tour of selected sites in Kampar. Retired schoolteacher, Mr Chye Kooi Loong has kindly agreed to lead members on a visit to the Green Ridge and regale us with tales of the military exploits which took place there. We are also planning a walk around the town.

Please contact the Secretariat to indicate your interest

## Trip

### **Sandakan and Kota Kinabalu**

23 to 26 September 2005

This next trip will take members to some interesting sites in Sandakan and Kota Kinabalu. Led by YBhg Puan Sri Datin Amar Elizabeth Moggie and Dr Chandran Jeshurun, this is an opportunity for everyone to develop a deeper understanding of these towns' significance.

We are planning heritage walks of Sandakan and Kota Kinabalu and visits to historical sites including Agnes Keith's house which is now a museum, war memorials and a trip on the old railway.

Malaysia Airlines have offered us a generous discount on the fare and we are now finalising other arrangements.

Limited to 28 persons – very few places remain. Details will be forwarded to members on the trip after our recce trip. |

## Badan Warisan Malaysia Council Members

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Ong Pei Yee, *UUM Intern 7 April to 21 June 2005*

Lina Tiplonglart, *UUM Intern 7 April to 7 August 2005*

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### *Opening hours*

Office: Mondays to Saturdays 9 am to 6 pm

Exhibition Centre: Mondays to Saturdays 10am to 5.30 pm

Resource Centre: Tuesdays to Saturdays 10 am to 4 pm

Rumah Penghulu tours: Twice daily Mondays to Saturdays  
at 11 am & 3 pm (other times by prior appointment)

No 8 Heeren Street Heritage Centre

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Tel: 606 281 1507

E-mail: 8heeren@badanwarisan.org.my

Open Tuesdays to Saturdays 11 am to 4 pm

## Notices

### Rumah Penghulu Appeal



It has been 10 years since the relocation and restoration of the Rumah Penghulu Abu Seman. This traditional Malay House on the grounds of our Heritage Centre is opened to the public as a significant historic structure that illustrates the beauty

of vernacular Malaysian architecture. In addition to the twice daily tours that we conduct, this house is also used for exhibition, cultural events, workshops and informs a broad audience about Malaysia's architectural heritage.

Members may be aware that in the ASEANTA (ASEAN Tourism Association) Awards for Excellence 2003, the Rumah Penghulu Abu Seman won the Merit Award for the Best ASEAN Conservation Effort. This project also received an Honourable Mention in the UNESCO Asia-Pacific Heritage 2000 Awards.

With increased visitor activity in the house, we are in the process of enhancing the interpretation of the site and carrying out the necessary maintenance works. Therefore we are seeking funding and donations in kind for the following:

- Improved exhibition
- Redesigned brochure
- Refurbished interior furnishing
- Timber and roof maintenance
- Multilingual exhibition panels
- Multimedia presentation

Please contact the Secretariat if you would like to contribute to this project.

### Membership Subscription

Thank you to all our members who have responded to the first round of correspondence regarding membership subscription. We are delighted that you have continued to subscribe for multiple years as well as taken up a life membership – your continued support is very encouraging and much appreciated. Thank you as well for introducing new members to Badan Warisan Malaysia. We hope that other members will renew their membership ahead of the due date.

### Congratulations

Our Honorary Council Member Datin Waveney Jenkins was conferred an MBE on the occasion of HM Queen Elizabeth II's Birthday 2005 for her services to UK and Malaysian cultural relations. Our heartiest congratulations to her.

### Situation vacant

Cleaner for the heritage centre – for details please contact [Chai Ching.](mailto:Chai.Ching@badanwarisan.org.my)