



1) The role of NGO (Penang Heritage Trust) in getting George Town nominated as UNESCO World Heritage site

Since 1970's, the Penang state governments has planned to modernize George Town & tried to model the city planning after Singapore & Hong Kong. Many old buildings & traditional shop-houses gave way to high rise buildings & shopping centres with increasing traffic congestions and outflow of residents to the suburbs. Seeing the loss of important city landmarks & living heritage, Penang Heritage Trust was established in 1986 with the mission the save the old city from further destruction & raise public awareness about the importance of conserving the heritage of George Town. After more than 20 years of struggles, persuasions & affirmative actions, the efforts of NGO's have made George Town recognised as a important cultural landmark to be preserved and be listed as a UNESCO World Heritage site in 2008.

2) The Pre-War Japanese community in Penang ペナンにおける戦前日本人社会

During the Meiji period, many Japanese moved to overseas to look for better living. One of their landing places was Penang which was a thriving trading seaport (国際貿易港) at that time. Waves of Japanese immigrants & traders set up their base in Penang and a small Japanese quarter (日本人町) started to form in the heart of the city. In the early days, the Japanese in Penang were mainly dominated by the Karayuki-san serving the sailors and locals but as time progressed, the profile of the Japanese population shifted more to professional skilled workers like barbers, photographers, dentists and the traders. They contributed significantly to the growth of the local economy but a few years before the outbreak of the 2nd World War and subsequent invasion by Japanese army in 1941, many of these innocent Japanese residents

were unfortunately been blamed for the atrocity and their numbers started to reduce. The entire Japanese community disappeared from Penang immediately after the war.

About the Speaker: Clement Liang

Clement Liang graduated from University of New South Wales in Australia majoring in IT. From the early days, learning foreign cultures and languages are his hobbies and his profession enabled him to travel extensively overseas. He was based in Tokyo from early 1990's for 4 years and he developed a great interest to trace the history of the Japanese living in South East Asia especially in Malaya & Singapore before the war. After relocating back to Penang, his hometown, he started to involve in various NGOs to promote cultural conservation activities & to raise awareness of the the history of the minority immigrant society in Malaysia including the Arabs, Armenians, Burmese, Japanese, Jews, Germans etc. Currently he is the Honorary Secretary for Penang Heritage Trust, a non-governmental organization dedicated to the cause of heritage conservation and he frequently holds public talks on the local history and organizes protest against destruction of historical sites & buildings. Email: clement_liang@yahoo.com