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Kuching Old Bazaar is the oldest and the most crucial community in Sarawak. Apart from being a historically significant political and economic centre, it also possesses a unique cultural heritage value. Today, it is also an important tourist destination.

This proposal by the Kuching Old Bazaar Cultural Mapping Tourism Promotion Programme could not have come at a better time. What makes it more meaningful is that this project is headed by the Kuching Old Market Community Association and executed by locals who are telling the story of Old Bazaar to the world. We also see the incredible amount of talent that emerged from the Old Bazaar. am extremely happy to see all these talented people coming together to do something for the Sarawak cultural and tourism industry.

Be it culture or tourism, its promotion should not be carried out only by people in the industries. In fact, what we urgently need is community participation. Every single person should be a cultural and tourism ambassador, making an effort to get to know their own hometown, and working hard for its progress and development.

It is due to the above driving philosophy that the Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture Sarawak decided to give its unwavering support to the Kuching Old Market Community Association when they presented this project to Us. am extremely heartened by the dedication demonstrated by the Kuching Old Bazaar Cultural Mapping Tourism Promotion team. Despite all the challenges posed to them by the Covid-19 pandemic, they could still complete their mission within the limited time. Indeed, can truly feel their love and passion for their home.

In this book, Kuching Old Bazaar's history and the residents' oral records of their lives are presented in two languages. This is probably the first ever book about Kuching's way of life in the early days. The precious information in here will definitely become future references. am especially delighted that we can overcome the language barriers and read more about the stories of the Chinese community. These are all our precious heritage. truly believe that when the tourists return after the pandemic, Kuching Old Bazaar will have a different story to tell. would like to thank all those that have worked hard for Sarawak, and also want to congratulate the Kuching Old Market Community Association on their 25th anniversary.

KAPITAN LIM CHUAN CHAN ABS

Chairman of Kuching Old Market Community Association

The Kuching Old Bazaar is not only the oldest district of Sarawak it is also our homes, the repository of our memories, the place where our ancestors left their footprints.

From its conception to realisation, the Kuching Old Bazaar Cultural Mapping Tourism Promotion Programme is indebted to a great many people. Despite obstacles posed by the Covid-19 pandemic, we were able to carry out our mission thanks to the collective effort of the people involved.

The Kuching Old Bazaar Cultural Mapping Tourism Promotion Programme is a timely opportunity to comprehensively research the history of the Old Bazaar. We have done so by conducting surveys, gathering historical data and documenting the oral accounts of those who have lived here. The publication of this book is a major part of the project. In addition, we are producing documentaries, designing trail maps and pamphlets, installing heritage plaques, creating murals, setting up the Kuching Old Bazaar website and more. Through these efforts, it is our hope that more people visitors and locals alike- will be introduced to the rich history and heritage of the Old Bazaar.

I am grateful to Datuk Haji Abdul Karim Rahman Hamzah and the Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture, Youth and Sports Sarawak for their support; to the board members of the Kuching Old Market Community Association, including Mr. J. C. Chua, deputy secretary of the Association as well as the coordinator of the programme; to the project manager and Old Bazaar culture-history writer Mr Chai Kit Siang and his team; to Dr Elena Chai Chin Fern of UNIMAS and her team; and to the local residents, media and various individuals who offered their assistance.

This is just the beginning of a year-long project. I trust that as more people will be interested in the Kuching Old Bazaar and contribute to its welfare, this historical community -so full of nostalgia and cultural memories will see new vibrancy and a lively future.

THE GOLDEN ERA OF KUCHING OLD BAZAAR

Determining exactly when Kuching started to be inhabited and when it became a place is a daunting task. There are, however, existing data and records that can be used to examine the situation in Kuching 200 years ago.

RECORDS ABOUT OLD BAZAAR

According to Elizabeth Pollard in her book Kuching Past and Present (1972), some ancient Belian wood tombstones found in 1830 in the area behind the Astana provide evidence of the presence of Brunei nobles around the 1820s. The Kuching Kwong Wai Siew Association's record mentions a Cantonese pioneer Lau Chek and his compatriots arriving in Kuching around the 1820s and engaging in farming and small businesses for quite some time. Lau Chek was also officially recognised by the colonial government as the first Chinese to have arrived in Sarawak. He used to trade at the Old Bazaar and was one of the founders of Kwong Wai Siew Association.

When the British explorer James Brooke and his crew arrived in 1839, they noted that in addition to the Malay villages, there were also some 20 Chinese residing in Kuching. They also noted the existence of an old temple on the riverbank, although there was no explicit evidence regarding which old temple this was. Historians generally believe this may have been a reference to the Tua Pek Kong temple and if so, this may be the earliest written record for the Tua Pek Kong temple. However, the actual year the temple was constructed remains an unsolved mystery.

When the Anglican bishop, Reverend F. McDougall arrived in Kuching in 1848, his wife Harriette McDougall described the situation of Kuching in detail. Her impression of Kuching at that time gives an indication of its size. She reported, The town of Kuching consisted in those days of a Chinese bazaar and a Kling bazaar, both very small....

CHINESE ARRIVAL IN KUCHING

By the time Madam Harriette arrived in Kuching, Sarawak was already under the rule of James Brooke and this also coincided with increased emigration of Chinese to Nanyang (or the South Sea). The Chinese migrants sailed from China to Singapore and upon learning about the newly established White Rajah kingdom, they crossed the South China Sea seeking new opportunities in Sarawak.

The Chinese bazaar mentioned by Mdm Harriette was undoubtedly the Old Bazaar, while the Kling bazaar was a combination of Gambier Street and India Street, which later became known as the New Bazaar.

During that time, two major Chinese settlements had formed in Sarawak. The downstream was the Kuching Chinese bazaar while the upstream was the Bau bazaar controlled by Hakka miners. In the beginning, there was peace and harmony between the Brooke government and the upstream Chinese, but the situation deteriorated in the 1850s. The culmination of the dissent ended with the eruption of the famous Bau Chinese Revolt, which ended with thousands losing their lives.

UPSTREAM AND DOWNSTREAM CHINESE INFLUENCE

A good question is whether the two groups of Chinese, in Kuching and Bau had any historical contacts. With the limited historical records available, the relationship between upstream and downstream Chinese cannot be ascertained in much detail. However, since the Rajah maintained good relationships with Chinese traders in Kuching, it is believed the Rajah also initially forged similar relationships with Bau Chinese and this kept the relationship of the two groups of Chinese in good stead.

In relation to this there are two relatively important records unrelated to trading which are worth mentioning. These records are important as they indicate that there was some sort of relation and communication between the two groups.

In 1856, when the Kuching Tua Pek Kong temple was renovated, a contingent of Bau miners came by boat to Kuching and prayed at the temple to express their wishes for good fortune. Another record tells of a woman by the name of Ah Si Mei who suffered beatings from her husband and who subsequently fell in love with a young miner. The woman and her new lover left Bau and eloped to Kuching where they apparently settled.

Whatever the prior communications were, after the Bau Uprising, it appears there was a clear distinction made between the Kuching Chinese and the Bau Chinese. When the Rajah's forces massacred the Bau miners, the Kuching Chinese were not affected. Following this incident, the Rajah's government became more cautious when dealing with the Chinese, but still relied on them for their trading skills and diligent work attitude. Indeed, the reliance on Chinese traders and labour led to a mass migration of Chinese to Sarawak especially during the second Rajah's reign. This trade and labour was a driving force for the economic development of Sarawak.

Recognizing the contributions of the Chinese on more than one occasion, the second Rajah, Charles Brooke in 1883 publicly pointed out that, Without the Chinamen we can do nothing

by Ho

OLD BAZAAR VS NEW BAZAAR e

The name of the Bazaar comes from the Malay term Pasar for market or bazaar. Ever-adaptable, the Chinese migrants adopted the usage of Pasar (E b sh) into daily language. The century old Kuching Old Street area was divided into the Old Bazaar and the New Bazaar with the two divided by the Old Court House.

The original bazaar started with the Main Bazaar located along the river and then spread with the formation of other streets and alleys in the 1860s. In the 1880s, under the second Rajah, development began on the other side of the Old Court House where Indian Muslims and Javanese settlements were originally located. This is when the names of Gambier Street, India Street started to appear. The wet market was also moved to the riverbank of Gambier Street.

People started to call the area around India and Gambier Streets the New Bazaar with the area along Main Bazaar remaining as the Old Bazaar.

STREETS AND PLACES
WITH ITS INTERESTING OLD STORIES

One has only to look at the names of the streets to get a hint about the history and industry of the old part of town. Naturally, the longer the street has been in existence, the richer the stories associated with that street. The century-old streets and alleys in the Old Bazaar developed in an ad hoc manner before the existence of proper town planning. Likewise, in the earlier years, the streets did not have uniform names. The street names often reflected a point of reference among the local folks and the official names that appeared later are all important records worthy of note.

This section attempts to combine information gathered from the collective memory and oral history of early Kuching Old Bazaar dwellers and also from official records. Deciphering these stories and records was not an easy task given that there are more than 20 names for the 10 streets in Kuching Old Bazaar!

MAIN BAZAAR T

Kuching Old Bazaar was a very typical business district where the Chinese traders, Malay, Dayak and European customers frequented. In the early years, before the development of other outlying areas, the Old Bazaar was the main trading center. This was also how the name Main Bazaar was derived. People came to this street to trade and sell. All the local barter trades as well as the import and export activities with Singapore and beyond were dependent on its wharf.

Since the earlier years Main Bazaar was equivalent to the Old Bazaar, shop owners often used Old Bazaar as their corresponding address. However, following the various Chinese dialects, the streets also had a few other names depending on the dialect group. The earlier Hokkien settlers called the area Gang Gi (7) meaning "by the river". The Teochew used the term Soon Hong Street (because there used to be a Soon Hong Kongsi (belonging to the Teochew. In the first half of 20th century, some people even used the term Hai Qian Street (

thought to be an influence from Singapore or Malaya. Around the 1960s, the name Hai Chun Street (became a rather fixed name for Main Bazaar. The word Hai Chun is believed to have originated from the Hakka meaning of "by the river".

Photo Carpenter Street I (Source: Mike Yong)

CARPENTER STREET I

The early name of this street was Attap Street (I generally believed to have been derived from the common use of Attap roofing (palm thatch) by most of the shops there. However, among the locals other names also existed such as Bak Kow Street (or Bak Street (These names were related to the Teochew Bak Kow Kongsi (Bak Kow or Bak are pronunciations in the Teochew dialect for wood. Thus, Bak Kow Street echoes the English translation of Carpenter Street when this back lane alley was the domain of carpentry.

EWE HAI STREET A

Photo: Ewe Hai Street i (Source: Chai Yu

The shophouses along this street were built by Ong Ewe Hai (E in 1886. He was one of Sarawak's Hokkien pioneers and also the first president of the Hockien Kongsi (He was also appointed the first Chinese Kapitan (community leader) of Sarawak. Ong Ewe Hai came to Sarawak from Singapore in 1864 and in the beginning, he was just a boat trader (7k of goods. As time progressed he ventured into local products trade and also import and export trade. In 1884, he managed to obtain the licence for the government's Farm Tax System and from there acquired a lot of wealth. The descendants of Ong family include Ong Tiang Swee Ek,k, Ong Kwan Hin EX Ong Kee Hui Et and Ong Tiang Swee's son-in-law, Wee Kheng Chiang who were all influential leaders in politics and trades.

1: E (Source: Chai Yu (

CHINA STREET

Among the streets of Kuching Old Bazaar, China Street is also referred to as Central Street (The reason for this is not truly known and "Central Street" most likely referred to the center position it occupies at the Old Bazaar.

As for the name China Street () this is often linked to the Cantonese pioneer, Lau Chek (X Lau Chek is officially recognised by the government as the first Chinese settler to have arrived in Sarawak. He and his compatriots were already actively conducting trading and farming activities in the Satok area in the 1820s. According to a photocopy of the land lease issued by the Brooke government to Lau Chek in 1866, Lau Chek operated the Ju Long Zhi Ji (E shop at present China Street. Given that the whole Old Bazaar area was predominantly Chinese, the appearance of the name "China Street" and how the name was derived, requires further study.

TEMPLE STREET

Photo: Temple Street (Source: Chai Yu :

The original Kuching river (Sungai Kuching) used to flow from what is now the Reservoir Park, through the Tua Pek Kong Temple and the old Chinese Chamber of Commerce and into Sarawak River. The creation of the reservoir had subsequently reduced the flow of the river and in 1928 the river was backfilled to allow development with the former river becoming a new street. The street was named Temple Street because the start of the street is where the iconic Tua Pek Kong Temple is located. The temple is one of Sarawak's oldest temples and is believed to have existed since the early 1800s. Written evidence can be found on the temple's pillars dating back to 1856.

WAYANG STREET

Photo Wayang Street 8: (Source: Chai Yu 33)

Wayang Street, also known as Hua Xiang Street (used to be an area dominated by the Hokkien. The Hokkien's famous Hong San Si Temple (is located on the street and every year during the temple deity's birthday celebration, a stage was set up opposite the temple. Crowds, including nearby Malay villagers, flocked enthusiastically to watch the vibrant Hokkien opera. The name wayang could have been acquired from the Malay audience as it is a Malay word. As for the use of Hua Xiang, there are two interpretations. The first interpretation is there was a flowering tree that exudes a fragrance on the street. Another interpretation alluded to the presence of heavily perfumed and make-up women who frequented the area.

According to the inscription on one of the plaques' in the Hong San Si Temple, the street was also called Hock Soon Street (TEN A name believed to be from among the Hokkien. There was also a rather unfortunate unofficial name given to the street. In the early days due to the abundance of cow dung on the street, it was also called Cow Dung Street (

BISHOPSGATE STREET TH

Photo Bishopgate Street B: F (Source: Chai Yu)

This small cross street forming the junction of Carpenter Street and Ewe Hai Street is also known as Little Side Street (1 or Side Street (T) The street goes from the Main Bazaar to a small gate that once led to the garden of the St. Thomas's Diocese of Kuching. The Bishop and church mission used this gate and street to come to town for meetings and to do their shopping at the bazaar. The gate was naturally called Bishop's Gate and the street took its name from this. In 1993, the government built a road behind the Bishop's gate severing the connection. The gate now serves as an alternative access to Carpenter Street and the Main Bazaar and the once prominent gate is now reduced to its Belian door frame.

JALAN TUN ABANG HAJI OPENG S

This section of road used to be called Rock Road (as it led past a large rock named Batu Kinyang (located one and half miles away. The rock, which juts out of the ground, was believed to be sacred. This stretch of road was the main route used towards the outskirts of Kuching and was also the longest road at that time. When Sarawak joined in the formation of Malaysia in 1963, the first half of Rock Road was renamed after Sarawak's first Governor, Tun Abang Haji Openg.

UPPER CHINA STREET

Upper China Street is a continuation of China Street Until 1993, this was a dead-end street with a hill slope at the end. Before the 1930s there used to be a well on the street and for this reason, the street is also called Da Jin Xiang (meaning Big Well Street

GREEN FU

This street is considered as the greenest or youngest among all streets in Old Bazaar. A relatively recent development the shophouses were built in the 1970s

OTHER WELL KNOWN LOCAL PLACES

AO BOI GANG F

SA KAK BO E

The street refers to an unnamed small tributary of Kuching River located behind the shophouses of Main Bazaar. In the early years there were small cargo boats plying along this tributary to allow shop owners to load and unload goods through the back doors. The meaning of Ao Boi Gang means River Behind. The river and Kuhing River were backfilled to give way to development. Now it is just an unnamed lane between two main streets.

Four streets namely Wayang Street, Temple street, Tabuan Road and McDougall Road meet at a traffic intersection in the shape of a triangle. Thus rendering locals to name the place as Sa Kak Bo (Triangle Ground). It was a place for the local to spend leisure time and a playground for children. For a while, a roundabout was designed at the ground and inside the roundabout there was a playground.

QI ZANG SENG M

From the 1900 geographical perspective, Padang Merdeka was then the backwater area where not many would frequent. It was not too far away from the Chinese cemetery. Around 1870s, the second Rajah developed the area for the purpose of building Kuching Recreational Ground. This place became Kuching's first public garden. There were seven old ficus trees in the ground where the local Chinese called the place as Qi Zang Seng. Hokkien (ficus) and 'M2'

and Teochew dialects pronounce the (Pine) as Seng which gave the place a transliterated name, Qi Zang Seng or Seven Pines. Some shops located opposite the Post Office on Old Rock Road used to write their address as shop number xx, Qi Zang Seng and the postal office recognised the rightful address. Padang Merdeka were also called as Council Square and Central Padang (Central Square) in the past.

PEK KONG NIA 122

The Tua Pek Kong temple is located on the slope of Bukit Mata Kuching, overlooking the Sarawak River and facing Gunung Serapi in the west. In the earlier years, there was a small trail by the side of the temple slope known as Pek Kong Nia (Pek Kong Hill). Under the second Rajah, the hill was opened up for development to connect to Padungan Road. When the development of the hill was announced, a commotion erupted among the local Chinese because they fear the Rajah had intentionally aim to destroy the feng shui of the temple, which could ruin the luck and prosperity of the Kuching Chinese community.

THE FOUR INSTITUTIONS OF CHINESE SOCIETY
TEMPLES, ASSOCIATIONS, COMMERCE AND SCHOOLS

Upon arrival in Nanyang, it was a common custom for Chinese migrants to set up small altars to honour the deities of their hometowns. Prayers were dedicated to express their gratefulness for the safe voyage. Thereafter, blessings and protections were continuously sought after to help with success with their new life in the foreign land.

Over the years, the old temples in Kuching Old Bazaar were set up by the various dialect groups. These include the Hong San Si Temple (by the Hokkien, the Hiang Thian Siang Ti Temple (by the Teochew, the Hin Ho Bio Temple (by the Hainanese, and the Kuan Ti Temple (by the Cantonese. All these temples were built in the mid-19th century. Another temple under the management of the five association clans known as Kuching Chinese Community Charitable Trust Board is the Tua Pek Kong temple)E.. The Tua Pek Kong temple is the oldest temple in Sarawak and possibly dates back to as early as 1820. Apart from the Kuan Ti Temple which had moved together with its affiliated Kuching Kwong Wai Siew Association all the other temples remain at the Old Bazaar.

Temples were the place of gathering for migrants of all dialect groups. As the number of migrants increased, associations became a necessity. These associations adopted the model of the Chinese village communities to manage and handle the affairs of migrants from the same hometown. By the early 20th century, some of these associations had even set up learning centres within their buildings, and one could hear students reciting their lines amidst the hustle and bustle at Carpenter Street.

ESTABLISHMENT

SCHOOL

YEAR OF

SCHOOL

FOUNDING

TEMPLE

VENUE

NAME

FORMER

YEAR

FOUNDING

THE SIX CENTENARY CHINESE ASSOCIATIONS OF KUCHING OLD BAZAAR

Yik Kuan School

Kuan Ti Temple

Carpenter Street

ASSOCIATION

KWONG WAI SIEW

1918

1854

Min Teck School

Hiang Thian Siang Ti Temple L m

Soon Hong Kongsi IGT]

ASSOCIATION

TEDCHEW

Main Bazaar

1916

1863

Hong San Si Temple LL

HOCKIEN

Hockien School

Wayang Street C 2-1

Hockien Kongsi HEEE a

ASSOCIATION

1912

1871

KAYIN COMMUNITY

Gong Min School

Carpenter Street at

ASSOCIATION

Jin Foh Guan AV FntE

1874

1918

Kheng Kiaw School

Hin Ho Bio Temple

Carpenter Street

T8 4

ASSOCIATION

HAINAN

Kheng Chew Association

1885

1930

4

ASSOCIATION

TAI POO

Tai Tung School

Carpenter Street

Puyi Gong Suo

1916

1923

The table above lists the six main centenary Chinese associations in Kuching and their respective temples and schools. The associations also helped to handle matters pertaining to their members' incoming and return journeys care and lodging for the needy either at the association building or subsidiary buildings. Each associations also had their own cemetery, known as Kongsi Sua (Kongsi means association and Sua means hill or mountain. The association served as a form of welfare and security support for the village folks.

Significantly, after the World War II, the Chinese associations began to centralise the organisation of the schools. This was the beginning of the Kuching Chung Hua Primary and Secondary Schools.

There were also other dialect associations at the Old Bazaar. The Lui Chiu Association, established in 1940 and formerly known as the Lui Yang Association was located at Carpenter Street. Although there were not many Lui Chiu people in Kuching, they dominated the charcoal industry from the early days. Other associations such as the Foochow Association and the Chao Ann Association were also located at Old Bazaar in the past.

The trade related associations only emerged later. Among the earliest of the trade associations was the Kuching Hairdressers' Association at Bishopsgate Street formed in 1934; the Chinese Grocers' Association at Main Bazaar was formed in 1937, and the United Merchants' Association formed in 1940. More trade associations appeared after the war, including the Kuching Coffee Shops' Union, Kuching Wharf Labourers' Union, Kuching United Hawkers' Association, Kuching Shoemakers' Union, Kuching Tinsmiths' Union, Sarawak Dental Association, etc.

In 1897, the Chinese traders in Kuching established the Kuching Chinese Chamber of Commerce, which operated for about 20 years until the emergence of the Chinese General Chamber of Commerce in 1930.

As the earliest and only business district in Kuching back then, the Old Bazaar produced many prominent traders. The influence played by the various dialect groups in expanding the economy has been enormous since the 19th century. This influence extended from the establishment of the living environment to the trading areas. The Hokkien and Teochew being the largest group at that time probably yielded the most influence and were instrumental in progressively driving the economy and the development of the city since the Old Bazaar era.

TRADE ACTIVITIES AT KUCHING OLD BAZAAR 1

The historical Kuching Old Bazaar was the center of trading and the start of a flourishing Sarawak. From the earlier Malay kampungs to a place where the Chinese conducted sporadic trade activities, to a busy market center, Kuching developed from a village to a town and to a city. The two hundred years of trade activities that started in the Old Bazaar propelled economic development over time.

The Old Bazaar was also a multi-ethnic place where different groups co-existed and lived. The Malay and Dayak also had close business relationships with shopkeepers of the Old Bazaar. In the early days, even though the shops of Old Bazaar included shops from all dialect groups, the Hokkien and Teochew were the most numerous. These two dialect groups were responsible for considerable economical strength and influence in the historical past of the Old Bazaar.

To better understand how the economy functioned it is necessary to examine several of the trade models employed at the Old Bazaar. These models provide some insights on how the towkays (bosses) of different generations and backgrounds established their trade foundations and wealth.

BOAT TRADE AAR

In Singapore 1846, 16-year-old Ong Ewe Hai, whose ancestry hailed from Tong Ann, Fujian, heard of the newly instituted White Rajah of Sarawak and his efforts to build up the young nation. He set out across the South China Sea to Kuching in search of new opportunities. With his partners, the young man rowed his sampan along the Sarawak River at dawn, buying local jungle produce from the natives to sell in Singapore. From Singapore he returned to Kuching with other products for sale and trade. From this simple beginning, Ong Ewe Hai's family later became one of Sarawak's three most prominent families.

Ong Ewe Hai was not the first to profit from the boat trade business. There were other Chinese boat traders who were already actively involved in ferrying goods between Kuching and Singapore. The boat traders also functioned as mail delivery men a profitable business during that time. With the growth of business volume, boat traders like Ong Ewe Hai chose Kuching to be their base and opened up shops from which to run their expanding trade activities.

Believed to date before 1860, the Main Bazaar was the nucleus of the Old Bazaar. No clear records exist about the Chinese shops at that time, however due to the sparse population during that time, it can be speculated that what was available was sold. Thus grocery shops became the earliest and most common trade.

The early grocery shops offered a mlange of goods as well as services like money changing and letter writing. However, the major source of income remained the trading of jungle and agricultural products. During the 19th and early 20th centuries. these products included cash crops like gambier, pepper and sago as well as a variety of jungle products like agarwood, camphor, rattan, engkabang, wild ox hide, horns of hornbills and jelutong. Around World War II, products like coconut, gula apong, garam apong and rubber also rose to popularity. More niche products like belacan, cincalok and a plant material used for hair care known as nang ngin khak were also stocked.

In addition to supplies from larger scale plantation investments, the jungle and agricultural products were also supplied by the Malay and Dayak from the surrounding villages. These dealings helped to foster strong and lasting friendships between the indigenous communities and the Chinese towkays. A common trading workflow was the Malay and Dayak from the outskirts or coastal areas paddle their sampan loaded with products collected from the jungle or their farms to Kuching Old Bazaar. The products were either sold to the towkays or barter traded for needed daily items stocked in the shops. At the same time, intermediary traders regularly visited the grocery shops to purchase higher value jungle products such as rubber sheets, pepper, gula apong, jelutong etc. for export to Singapore. The Hokkien traders excelled in this form of export trade and reaped economic benefits during the peak time. The success in trade consolidated the overall economic strength of the Hokkien.

In a study conducted by historian Dr Tien Ju-K'ang, on the Chinese of Kuching in 11144 1948 and 1949, it was estimated that over 70 of grocery shops were owned by Teochew and Hokkien. From the 1965 Kuching Trade Yearbook, the records show that there were some 58 grocery shops on Kuching Old Bazaar, spread across Main Bazaar, Carpenter Street, China Street, Wayang Street and Ewe Hai Street.

In terms of numbers, the Teochew owned slightly more grocery shops than the Hokkien. The Teochew called such shops as Kim Kuei Tiam (in Teochew) written officially as "R" .. Their trade association was known as The Chinese Grocers' Association (75 M but the origin on the usage of " is unknown.

According to Johor writer, Lu Su Bo (fil 1Ea) in his Johor Bahru's downtown and its disappearing Teochew traders (BTTLL 10 700 vi) the origin of the term "T was searched through all resources but to no avail. It could possibly be a Teochew term.

The main cash crops valued by Chinese traders were as follows:

CASH CROPS !

PERIOD

GAMBIER

Mid 19th To Early 20th Century

SAGO

Mid 19th To Mid 20th Century

PEPPER

Mid 19th To Early 20th Century 10

RUBBER

Early To Mid-20th Century

20

CRAFTSMANSHIP TRADE ITTY

In addition to the grocery shops, craftsmanship trade also occupied a significant position at the Old Bazaar. For example, Carpenter Street, as its name indicates, was a place occupied by numerous carpentry shops. Spreading across China Street and Bishopsgate Street were the Tai Poo Hakka with their tinsmith shops. There were about 20 of such shops in operation since the early 20th century. During the same span of time, there were also a number of dental clinics, which mainly carried out tooth extractions and the fabrication of dentures.

Before World War II, there were also a number of other skilled trade shops operating including: wooden clog shops, shoe shops, watch shops, tailor shops, weighing scale shops, sauce making shops etc. Wary of the saying hunger breeds discontentment, numerous coffee shops owned by Hainanese were also all over the streets of Old Bazaar ensuring that discontentment was kept to a minimum.

FARM SYSTEM FF!

Kuching Old Bazaar produced many tycoons who were not only skilful in trading but also management and their fortunes were also closely related to the Farm Tax system. This system, under license from the Rajah's Government, largely monopolised the opium, liquor, gambling and pawn trades.

Widely used in colonial Southeast Asia by the British and Dutch, tax farming was an economic system in which the government contracts private individuals to collect taxes on select goods, a portion of which they are allowed to keep. This position of tax farmer, awarded through open bidding, contributed to the rise of many powerful Chinese clan leaders and created much strife among the Chinese society in the 19th century.

Recognising its efficiency and profitability, the Brooke government introduced the tax farming system to Sarawak. Ghee Soon Company under Law Kian Huat, one of the three richest men in Sarawak, and Sim Ah Nio won the first auction in 1867 and soon rose to become the largest trade corporation in Sarawak. At its height, the company controlled over a hundred trade operations across the Old Bazaar, among which opium was the most profitable. The Ghee Soon Company went into decline following the devastating 1884 Great Fire of Kuching, but its model of success was taken up by Ong Ewe Hai, who won the next tax farming bid and soon founded his own business empire.

Others who benefited from the system included Yeo Guan Chow of Ban Hock Company and Khoo Hun Yeang. The tax farming system began to decline in use during the early 20th century due to postwar bans on opium and gambling by the British crown colony government.

THE GOLDEN ERA R

The postwar economic boom signalled a new era for Old Bazaar. New modes of transport brought more customers, while advances in shipping opened Sarawak to the wider world. Cargo ships connected Kuching not only to Singapore but also Hong Kong in the 1960s and goods began to be imported from China in the 1970s, bringing more competitive prices and robust international trade.

A rapidly growing financial sector saw not only the establishment of foreign banks but also the emergence of local capital banks, predominated by the Cantonese and Hokkien. For entrepreneurs, easier financing through local banks meant more opportunities to set up and expand their businesses.

New commercial and residential areas sprung up due to the development in the construction industry. Since the 1970s, commerce in Kuching has expanded steadily outwards, from the Old to New Bazaar and further to towns, which were once on the outskirts. Today, the businesses are also following the global trend and entering the network world to expand their business territories. Looking back on the changes of trade businesses over the past century, we can describe it as an unrelenting transformation with the flow of time.

While the Old Market of present day is still home to many of the traditional trades, new shops have made their way into the Old Market such as shopping malls, cafs, western restaurants, bars, creativity shops, souvenirs shops, etc. These changes were inevitable for the old district and also a response to the introduction of tourism. In the foreseeable future, it is highly likely that the fate of the Old Bazaar will be closely tied to the development of the tourism industry.

HIL:: MISSION AAGIGEN AUSHHINO THE THE IM
THE ON SHIEERRA

Francis McDougall, with his wife Harriette and others of the Borneo Mission, set out from London on the barque Mary Louisa at the end of December 1847. According to Harriette's account, during the trying six-month journey the passengers learned Malay and the Jawi script with the aid of a dictionary and a Malay Bible translated by the Dutch.

The Anglican Diocese, located behind Kuching Old Bazaar, is the oldest church in Sarawak. In 1847, the Rajah James Brooke with the help of friends in England chose Reverend Francis McDougall to lead the mission to Borneo. Born in 1817, the Anglican priest and surgeon was to leave an indelible mark on the history of Sarawak.

After their arrival in Kuching, the mission lodged at a wooden house left behind by a German missionary (on the site of the present Old Courthouse). During high tides, the river flowed under the raised house and drove swarms of ants up the posts and into the house. According to Harriette's account, this menace was fended off with kettles full of hot water.

The McDougalls soon made acquaintance of the local Malays and Dayaks and had the chance to practice their Malay language skills. They also took in from the street a few wandering children between the ages of two and a half to six years old who had been abandoned by their parents. Harriette provided care and education and these children became the foundation for future schools.

A large piece of hill land of about 40 acres behind Carpenter Street was given by James Brooke to the Anglican mission. Under the assistance of a German carpenter, the bishop's house, cathedral and school were built. The house was the first to be completed, and it was not only the residence for the McDougalls but also a clinic and a school.

Not far from the bishop's house was St Thomas's Cathedral, a lofty wooden Gothic-styled church. The present cathedral was erected in 1956 next to the old one, which was dismantled once the new building was finished.

THE CATHEDRAL AND THE BISHOP'S HOUSE E I K

The education was crucial to missionary work. McDougalls and his wife beginning with teaching English to about 10 children in the mission-housethe McDougalls went on to found St Thomas's School (later St Thomas's Secondary School), the first formal school in Sarawak. When St Thomas's School moved into its new facilities in 1886, the original buildings became the home of the all-girls St Mary's School. At that time, there were no other forms of formal education except for small private classes operated by the Chinese.

In the early 20th century, a new road cut through St Thomas Boys School and St Mary Girls School leading to what is now the Padang Merdeka. This road was named McDougall Road in honor of the pioneering educator. The area had long been known as College Hill by Old Bazaar folks possibly referring to the two prestigious educational institutions that occupied the hill.

For the children of the Old Bazaar, the two schools on the hill offered an opportunity for quality education. Many benefited from the opportunity and subsequently made enormous contributions to Sarawak.

As the oldest church in Sarawak, the Anglican Diocese also owns a number of properties in the Old Bazaar, mainly on Wayang Street and Upper China Street.

THE BASE OF ENGLISH EDUCATION EE N ET XXTHE

HERITAGE BUILDINGS AROUND KUCHING OLD BAZAAR

With its long history covering at least two hundred years, Kuching Old Bazaar has many impressive heritage buildings. Not only the old temples and churches but also buildings built during the Rajah's era, These building are significant venues not just for the people of the Old Bazaar, but for all of Kuching.

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The impressive general post office building is a neo-classical style building constructed in 1931. The building also served as telegram service center and office of the Chartered Bank. For a time, an annex behind the building was also the office of the Land and Survey Department. The post office also has an installation of some 3300 mailboxes providing mail receiving services for the public who do not have corresponding addresses. These mailboxes were installed by the Brooke dockyard and the Sarawak engineering department and boxes with their old locks and keys are still in use today.

GENERAL POST OFFICE

The Old Courthouse was the Rajah's main government building. Construction on this site commenced in 1868 with the official opening occurring in 1874.

Over the years a number of annexes were added around the central courtyard and since 1945 the Old Courthouse has remained pretty much as we see it today. During the Rajah's era, this building and the annexes served as the offices of the government agencies and later as the actual Courthouse. Even though the official Courthouse has been relocated across the river, the people of Kuching still refer to the building as the Old Courthouse. Today, the building serves as a popular tourism venue with a restaurant, bar, museum, craft stores and event hall all under the same roof.

To the early Chinese who spoke in their respective dialects, the Courthouse was called Bo Lei Tia (which literally means Glass Hall. There are, however, different interpretations for this particular name. According to researchers, the phrase Bo Lei could be a transliteration of the Malay word Polis (Police) or Balai (station). Traditionally the British would set up a police station adjacent to the Courthouse and the fact that there were bound to be police officers guarding the Courthouse could be the basis for the local phrase.

OLD COURTHOUSE

The Square Tower was built in 1879 to replace the old castle which was a part of the prison. It now a western restaurant. The rooster weathervane on top of the Square Tower was an influence of Christian belief. Most of the rooftops of churches in Europe has such weathervane. It was believed that in the 1920s, famous British author W. Somerset Maugham went up to the roof top of the building to enjoy the scenery of Kuching.

SQUARE TOWER

The present textile museum building was built in 1907 as a medical headquarters and hospital specially serving the European communities. One of the first public buildings over two stories high, it was also the first building in Sarawak constructed using cement by the Ban Hock Company owned by Yeo Guan Chow. The ground floor of the hospital served as clinic and pharmacy, while the second floor was the wards used only by the Europeans.

The third floor was the nurse's dormitory. The local Chinese in those days did not know how to pronounce 'hospital' and due to its square structure, they took to calling the building Si Fang Lou (Square Building). After the government built a polyclinic, the local term for the building stuck and it continued to be called Si Fang Lou (Mandarin) or Si Pang Lao (Hokkien).

TEXTILE MUSEUM TTRR t

The Round Tower was built in 1886 between Carpenter Street and India Street. This building was used as a dispensary. The tower remained as a dispensary until 1947 and was later used by the Labour Department and (because of the proximity to the Courthouse) a registry of the lower courts. It is now a western restaurant.

ROUND TOWER

During the first Rajah's reign, besides the government owned cargo ships, Sarawak steamship was the only private company with its own cargo ship. The cargo ships sailed between Kuching and Singapore transporting goods and labourers at the same time. During the second's 's Rajah era, the shipping business was privatised in 1870 which resulted in poor services and sharp increase in shipping charges. When the Sarawak Chamber of Commerce was formed in May 1873, the chamber immediately reflected the problems and needs about shipping services. The Rajah decided to use government resources and invited Borneo Company along with a few Chinese pioneers such as Ong Ewe Hai and other Chinese traders who were mainly into sago export to establish the Sarawak Singapore Shipping Company. The company was formed in July 1875 and it became the background of Sarawak Steamship Company. In 1930, the company constructed a beautiful building as a warehouse. The building is now used as Sarawak Handicraft Centre.

SARAWAK STEAMSHIP BUILDING

The Chinese History Museum was established in 1993 and prior to that it served as the Chinese Court created by Charles Brooke. According to archival records, the Chinese Court was first set up in 1911 in a wooden house belonging to the Anglican Diocese on Bishopsgate Street. It was not until 1 July 1912 that the Chinese Court was relocated opposite the Tua Pek Kong temple, when it was officially launched with the appointment of a Chief Magistrate, Ong Tiang Swee who was the prominent Chinese leader. He was assisted by six magistrates nominated by the various Chinese communities. The Hokkien and Cantonese communities each nominated three candidates. The Chinese Court served the various communities until 1921 when the court was dissolved.

CHINESE HISTORY MUSEUM SER

From 1930 until 1990, the building served as the office for the Chinese Chamber of Commerce and since 1993 it has been the Chinese History Museum.

BAIZZR OLD VICCHINE
ROONEESS OF

Ong Ewe Hai, a Hockien from Tong Ann district was born in Singapore and arrived in Kuching in 1846. He was initially involved in boat trading but then went on to establish the Ewe Hai Moh Company (kiEr2) with Lim Eng Moh (who was from the same village. The company dealt mainly with import and export of local jungle products. In 1872 Ong Ewe Hai founded the Ewe Hai Company, which he managed by himself. During this time, he earned the trust of the Rajah due to his ability in trade and his leadership. Around 1880 he bid for and won the tender for the Farm Tax System; a system that covered a period of 10 years. He was appointed as the Chinese Kapitan and was also the chairman of Hokkien Kongsi (present Kuching Hockien Association). Consolidating his wealth, he built the shophouses along the present Ewe Hai Street and also built his villa on the hill behind Wayang Street (the present day Marian Boutique Lodging House). Ong Ewe Hai passed away in Singapore in 1889 due to illness.

ONG EWE HAI
(1830-1889)

Law Kian Huat, a Teochew from Chao Ann district, Guandong arrived in Kuching during the reign of the first Rajah in 1852. Initially he was involved in the planting of gambier and pepper. He then partnered with Sim Ah Nio (t3E5) who came from the same village to form the Ghee Soon Company (X 10 A)) focusing on the import and export of local jungle products. In 1867, the company won the tender for the Farm Tax System and soon became the largest company in Sarawak. He was officially recognised as the premier of the Teochew trade organisation and was later appointed as chairman of the Soon Hong Kongsi (At its height, the Ghee Soon Company owned more than a hundred shophouses in the Old Bazaar. Unfortunately the majority of the shophouses were destroyed in the Kuching Great Fire in 1884. The company closed down after Law and Sim passed away in their Teochew hometown in 1885, the year after the Great Fire.

(source: Mw N

LAW KIAN HUAT

(1835-1885)

Chan Ah Koh, a Chao Ann Hockien arrived in Kuching in 1854 and initially worked as a miner at Bau and then later ran a small business. His mining activities bore good results as he unearthed some gold sand around his house and in so doing found his 'first pot of gold'. During that time, he moved to Kuching and bought two shops (shop no. 39 and 41). He also established the Chan Chin Ann Company (tix (focusing on the trade of local jungle products. Chan Ah Koh was good in managing his trade activities and his business and diversified his trade activity with huge profit. Chan Ah Koh became one of the big landlords in Sarawak with properties at Old Bazaar, Sekama, Pending and Batu Kawa. He passed away in his hometown in 1904.

CHAN AH KOH

(1838-1904)

The son of Ong Ewe Hai, Ong Tiang Swee was born in Kuching in 1864 and studied in Singapore. From the age of 18 years, he assisted in his father's business and at 21, he managed to help his father win the bids for the Farm Tax System licence in Sarawak and North Borneo (Sabah). Ong Tiang Swee with his astute trade capability founded Hiap Soon Hin Company (th) NX E 5) at no. 86 Ewe Hai Street. He subsequently established Ong Tiang Swee and KKkX7' and diversified into

Son Company several other businesses. Throughout this time he maintained good relationships with both the second and third rajahs. Not only was he appointed as the Chinese Kapitan, he was also the Chinese Chief Magistrate and a member of the Rajah's government council. He was highly regarded as the highest ranked Chinese leader of that time. He was also the chairman of Hokkien Association and one of his outstanding achievements was earning the support of the Rajah in establishing the Hockien School (iE Ong Tiang Swee passed away at his Rock Road home in 1950 at the ripe age of 86. On his funeral day, flags were flown at half mast to honour the great contribution he had rendered to Sarawak.

ONG TIANG SWEE

(1864-1950)

Wee Kheng Chiang was of Kinmen Hokkien ancestry and while born in Kuching, he was sent back to Kinmen during his childhood. He returned to Kuching when he was 15 years old and continued his education at the St Thomas mission school. He then worked as a clerk with the British Borneo Company R (and also as a civil servant. He joined the Sarawak Steamship Company 11 and was highly regarded by Ong Tiang Swee, eventually marrying Ong's eldest daughter, Ong Siew Eng [E In 1921, Wee Kheng Chiang started his own business and over the next 10 years he founded more than 10 other companies. His business interests were diverse and included the establishment of banks in Kuching and Singapore. The globally famous United Overseas Bank (1FRRRTT was one of Wee's more well known establishments In the business world, he was referred to as the 'Uncrowned King of Sarawak'. Not only was he successful in his personal and family business, he also helped to nurture many Kinmen entrepreneurs. He also played important roles in promoting education and looking after the welfare of the people. He was bestowed the nonourable title of CCommander of the Star of Sarawak" by the third Rajah in 1941. And, he was also awarded the Panglima Negara Bintang Sarawak by the first governor of Sarawak making him the first Chinese with a "Datuk" title. The accomplished leader passed away in Kuching in 1978.

WEE KHENG CHIANG

(1890-1978)

The uprising of the Bau Hakka gold miners took place at a time before the first Rajah, James Brooke, had completely stabilised his political reign. Following that event, not only did the Rajah face financial difficulties, he also became more cautious in his dealings with the Chinese community. As his health deteriorated from the 1860s, the huge responsibility of managing Sarawak fell upon his nephew Charles Brooke. After James Brooke passed away in 1868, Charles Brooke succeeded him as the second Rajah.

The ability of the Chinese to thrive in business was very much related to their relationship with White Rajah's family. For a century, the Rajah had been living on the other side of the Sarawak River, across Kuching Old Bazaar. While there were indeed differences of opinion and points of reference, there is no doubt that the Rajah and the Chinese community forged a close relationship.

Based on archival records, Charles acknowledged on numerous occasions the abilities and the contributions of the Chinese to Sarawak. Recognising the inherent industriousness, he had also arranged for several large scale migrations from China to Sarawak during his reign. Historian Liu Tze Cheng (XIFFF in his book Sarawak Sketches) provides many descriptions about the interactions between Charles Brooke and the Kuching Old Bazaar Chinese. Based on the available records, in the early days there would be a ship arriving in Kuching from Singapore every Thursday. Upon the ship's arrival, a cannon will be fired from the Astana. People from the Old Bazaar would throng the riverside to wait for the ship to berth at the wharf to check if there were any new immigrants (or their relatives and friends from China). No surprisingly, many of the new immigrants were unaccustomed to the climate and due to the hot and humid weather in Kuching, often suffered from heat strokes. In response, the Rajah set a rule for the Chinese to have a shower by the well at 5am in the morning and 8pm at night. By way of a reminder, these were also the hours that the cannons were fired from the Astana. The initial financial state of the Rajah administration that Charles Brooke took over was less than ideal. In the early days, Chinese tycoons from the Kuching Old Bazaar, such as Law Kian Huat rendered financial assistance to the Rajah serving much like the government's unofficial treasury. On top of that, from the 19th century until early 20th century, the Rajah also appointed some of Old Bazaar Chinese traders as members of the government's council so that they could provide opinions and suggestions to the Rajah.

THE CANNON SHOTS AT 5AM AND 8 PM TE L. 55

CHARLES BROOKE HORSE RIDING AROUND THE STREETS F UT 4EEE

In 1912, the Rajah also built the Chinese Court House next to the river at the Old Bazaar. Administration of the court was handled by seven magistrates who were the Chinese community leaders representing the various dialect groups. They were given autonomy to handle the Chinese civil cases, making it the only Chinese court in the whole of Malaya and Singapore. The Chinese Court, however, only operated for a mere nine years before all legal matters were handled by the main court. During the early years when the Chinese Court was in operation, the Rajah ordered for 7 cannons to be fired every Chinese New Year to honour the tradition magistrates' voluntary contributions. This continued until 1941, right before World War II.

Needed or not, the Rajah always encouraged the Chinese to work hard and to save their hard-earned money. He wanted them to be able to visit their family and relatives in China at least every three to five years. The Rajah was also supported the establishment of Chinese schools. He allocated a piece of land and sponsored the building designs and materials for the Hockien School established by the Hockien Association.

The 5am cannon typically marked the beginning of the business day and the commencement of the hustle and bustle of the bazaar. An early riser, the Rajah would also be up and would make his way across the river to make his rounds. When the people heard the clip-clop of horse's hooves amidst the buzz in the market, they would know that the Rajah had arrived. He made a habit of greeting the traders and labourers alike, and would even dismount his horse when he met children, in order to better engage with them. He also enjoyed using some basic Malay to converse with everyone. He would also use these opportunities to find out from the public about the work attitude of the government officers and police.

As one can imagine in this cross-culture setting, there were bound to be differences of opinion based on background beliefs. In one such incident, the misunderstanding escalated to the point where Charles Brooke reportedly threatened the Chinese people at the Kuching Old Bazaar. According to a record, the Rajah had planned to blast the big rock at Rock Road (Batu Kinyang) during the late 1890s. This was not viewed favourably by the local people who believed the rock had supernatural powers. It would appear that the rock's power was indeed exercised as the blasting operations did not go smoothly and there were many accidents. As further evidence of the bad luck, at the same time there was a cholera outbreak throughout Sarawak, including Kuching.

The Chinese community believed the Rajah's construction had angered the gods and that some form of ceremony would be required to make reparations (with the gods). The community engaged the services of a spirit medium to perform the appropriate rituals including holding a procession to appease the affected spirits. Processions are seldom quiet affairs and this one apparently frightened the Rajah's favourite horse, which was stabled nearby. The incident infuriated Charles Brooke to such a degree that he threatened to open fire on all the Chinese shops on Main Bazaar from across the Sarawak River if they did not stop the procession. When Ong Tiang Swee, the President of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce heard of the Rajah's anger (and his threat) he understood the gravity of the matter. He immediately rushed to the procession to prevent it from continuing and dispersed the crowd at the same time.

There were also differing views regarding some of the buildings in Kuching. The Chinese along the Old Bazaar were very wary of the imposing structure of Fort Margherita situated across the river. They felt that the cannons, which were aimed at Kuching Old Bazaar, were not for protection, but a form of silent watch or warning on the Chinese residing there. Many of the older generation were extremely suspicious of the Rajah, whom they believe used various ways to impact the feng shui of the Tua Pek Kong Temple in order to weaken the Chinese community's power.

BLASTING OFF THE ULU SALAAR

F E 3

Another controversy surrounding the Brooke family involved an unkept promise given at the Centenary Celebration of the Brooke rule. Many felt that after World War II, the third Rajah Charles Vyner Brooke, did not fulfil his earlier promise to give political autonomy to Sarawak, instead deciding to cede Sarawak to Britain as a crown colony. This meant Sarawak would become a colony rather than achieving independence as they believed he had promised. The Chinese community were against the decision of the third Rajah and when the cession became a reality, Vyner Brooke was portrayed as a traitor who had betrayed Sarawak.

When it comes to clothing, there is often more than meets the eye. The function of a piece of clothing is often not just simply to cover one's body. In fact, clothing can serve as a living piece of art that indicates the culture and socio-economic standards of a particular era, even representing the people's hopes and dreams.

THE FASHION TRENDS OF THE OLD BAZAAR

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During that era, both men and women wore magua jackets, which was a distinctive style of collarless jacket from the Chinese Qing Dynasty. The men generally wore magua jackets with their long robes for daily business or official occasions. However, when they were doing hard labour, they would be dressed in singlets and short robes, tangzhuang (E or bush jackets. For more formal or celebratory occasions women would be dressed in a tangzhuang (a jacket with an upright collar and Chinese button knots) and a long skirt.

Over the years, the skirts went through many changes from the early traditional pleated long skirts, to pants (trousers). to the Western-style skirts in later days. Up until the 1950s and 1960s, this was still everyday fashion for the majority of the Chinese women. Although the Hakka ladies wore a slightly modified version with blue tops and wide-legged pants. Bras were not invented then, so women generally wore the traditional Chinese undergarment dudou (At5L), or the Chinese bodice, under their jackets.

In the early 19th century, Teochew and Hokkien settlers began to arrive at the Main Bazaar Street and Carpenter Street to start their businesses. Not only did they bring trade, they also brought their culture and lifestyle habits with them, including their pigtail hairstyles, cotton linen chang shans (K) and magua jackets (BiX).

In the 1930s, immigrants referred to as comb sisters, commonly known as majie (YE), appeared in Singapore and Malaya. Their style was distinctive with their long braids, white or blue Chinese jackets with Albow-length sleeves, and black silk culottes (trousers). The majies typically originated from the Shunde District in Canton, China. During the Qing Dynasty, the flourishing silk industry needed a large number of women in their factory production lines. Some women who refused to follow the feudalistic family system of blind marriages decided to form a sisterhood. They tied up their hair and took lifelong vows to remain single and be celibate, hence the term comb sisters. However, when the silk industry in China went into decline, these jobless women headed to Nanyang to carve out new lives as domestic helpers.

During this time, following the trend in Singapore and Malaya, the plain floral majie outfits, or the samfu (became the fashion trend for ladies in Kuching. With their short sleeves, these outfits were made of light and breathable fabric and were perfect for the hot and humid weather of the tropics. This was a unique fashion innovation created by the early immigrants for the tropical climate. The rich would wear tight fitting Qipaos or Cheongsams (iff as they barely needed to move around.

During this time, Nyonya fashion was also very popular. This hybrid fashion was believed to have originated from the Nyonya ladies from Singapore who had married local men. The rich and famous of the time wore not just the qipao but also the nyonya fashion as it was a representation of upper-class lifestyle.

PRE-WAR: THE MAJIE TREND

THEEARI DAYS: CODINNG TO NAVAAAO IN CHANSSIAN AMD MAGUAS
HR:

A typical market scene of that time would be, men in their 555 undershirt or Eagle Brand white singlets, and women in their pastel floral samfu, click-clacking on the streets with their red wooden clogs.

The clogs reached the height of their popularity during the 1950s and 1960s. In Kuching alone, there were five different clog manufacturers. operating on Carpenter Street, China Street, Ewe Hai Street, Wayang Street, and Tabuan Road. On every street there was someone selling wooden clogs.

Red wooden clogs were part of the everyday wear for the Teochew people. When they arrived in Kuching, their newly introduced clogs became the main footwear for the general populace. They were non-slip, resistant to the high humidity, and cooling, making them the perfect footwear for every purpose from going to the wet markets and main streets to the bathrooms and kitchens. They were so universal in their use in fact, that these clogs became part of the Teochew and Hakka wedding dowry!

POST-WAR: THE ERA OF THE CLOGS

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In the 1960s after Malaysia's independence, the post-war economy finally began to recover. As trade and communication increased, western fashion began to influence the dressing styles of the local population. Throughout Kuching, one could easily spot the new rock n' roll influence of The Beatles and the A-gogo trend by the pantsuits, miniskirts and the popular beehive hairstyle.

Before World War II, there were already a number of Hakka and Cantonese tailor shops in Kuching. However, the demand for the new imported popular fashion trends promoted the growth of the tailor industry. During this time there were no fashionable ready-made clothes, every piece of clothing was tailor made. Such was the demand that in 1965, there were about 20 Western-style tailors at Old Bazaar. At the same time, there were many dressmaking schools. To meet the demand the Kuching Chinese Women Association set up sewing classes at their night school at Chung Hua Primary School No. 2. Every girl learned to sew during those years.

INDEPENDENCE ERA: THE WESTERN ROCK TREND

1970S: SWEEPING THE FLOOR WITH BOOT-CUT PANTS

The 1970s and 1980s saw a further explosion of fashion trends, following the hippie, rock, disco and Polynesian trends of boot-cut pants, high-waisted pants and big-collared floral shirts.

"Back then, we referred to these boot-cut pants as floor sweeping pants.

They were tight on the thighs and flared out at the calves. You needed to have one or two of these in order to be considered trendy!" said Tia Chen Thai, who grew up on Bishopsgate Street.

Denim jeans also began to appear then. "I would always look forward to Chinese New Year in the hopes that my parents would buy me a pair of denim jeans." smiled Joshua Chan of Wayang Street at this fond memory.

Typically, fashions change and as the popularity of boot-cut pants waned, the slim-cut carrot pants, lantern pants and batwing sleeves took over.

During that era where material goods were often treasured, clothes were handed down from one sibling to another, and were never thrown away despite it being torn and tattered. Eventually they would simply take on a new life as a floor mat. Clothes that were still in good condition would be barter traded with the people from up river or out of town.

By the 90s when ready made clothing became available, young people were spoilt for choices and few went to tailors for clothing. Only the Ah Ma (grandmothers) along the Old Bazaar would still don their floral samfus, and the Ah Gong (grandfathers) their white singlets with checked boxer shorts while clanging away with tin or weaving rattan baskets.

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Food is a symbolic representation of lifestyle and part of the collective memory of a certain era. Food also serves as an accessible heritage asset able to transcend time and space. The traditional food of far away China made its way to our tables in Kuching over a century ago. However, like any culture, the food culture was also ever changing according to the development of time and places.

THE OLD BAZAAR'S FAMOUS FOOD

I d H

Being the earliest market in Kuching, the Old Bazaar was a gathering place where all the delicacies were on display. At different junctures of time, different types of traditional delicacies appeared. Some disappeared over the course of time while others were passed down to or inherited by subsequent generations until now. These traditional delicacies continue to be the source of fond memories to many.

The peddling hawker was the Old Bazaar's food ambassador during the earlier time. A variety of food items were peddled around the streets on foot, by bicycle or tricycle.

PEDDLING HAWKERS DRRT oy

In the 1920s when resources were extremely scarce, there were not many choices of local delicacies available. The earliest to appear was the staple food, noodles. A Tai Poo Hakka man, Kiew Shao Nyap (EB) used to carry a basket around Carpenter Street, Upper China Street, and Main Bazaar selling Jam Mian (B) a dry noodles. Jam Mian is a type of traditional Tai Poo Hakka noodles where the handmade noodles are cooked, then mixed with other cooked ingredients such as minced meat. The popular local specialty Kolo Mee is speculated to have evolved from Jam Mian. The Tai Poo hawker also sold Kueh Tiaw, and Mouse Tail Liked Rice Noodle (Lo Chu Pan). The fare of one memorable seller was referred to by the local residents as Shorty's Noodles (The image of him peddling around while beating a piece of bamboo to announce his noodles was a distinct memory from that time.

KIEW FAMILY'S TAI POO JAM MIAN

In the early days, the soup base of laksa was all homemade as there was no ready made laksa paste like present day. There was also no standard formula to make the perfect laksa and the ingredients of any one seller were a carefully guarded secret. As a result, the taste varied greatly among respective stalls. The only thing in common was the herbal fragrance of spices used in the broth. The earliest laksa stall was believed to be owned by a Teochew, Goh Lip Teck. He peddled around the streets at the Old Bazaar in the 1940s and then later operated a stall at the Min Heng Coffee Shop on Carpenter Street.

MIN HENG GOH FAMILY LAKSA

R nh

In the 1950s and 1960s after independence life was getting better and the number of mobile street hawkers increased. One of the most talked about hawkers was the one yelling, "Chee Cheong Fan, Chee Cheong Fan" in the early hours of the morning. The Cantonese grandma with her shoulder pole of two baskets started selling Chee Cheong Fan at 6 every morning and her loud voice became the alarm clock for many. Long strips of smooth slippery Chee Cheong Fan were cut with scissors into small pieces upon order. This was topped with her special chilli sauce and soy sauce- a simple breakfast that was hard to forget.

CANTONESE AH MA CHEE CHEONG FUN

If Chee Cheong Fan was not your favourite, there were also many varieties of kuih (local pastry) available. The choices were, Ham Chim Peng (Gai Dan San (or O-Kuih)) all yelled loudly by a huge Cantonese man as he rode around with a big basket on the front of his Bicycle. Inside the basket, in addition to the different types of kuih, were a variety of sauces. People also remember the tall guy selling double coloured Kuih Salat (XT with strong coconut favour and made from authentic ingredients. Anyone who has eaten it will always recall its amazing taste.

CANTONESE MAN'S "KUIH"

In the late afternoon, a Mr. Chung pushed his tricycle with the famous Ark Kah Pau (B9AEE) He would start pedaling around Old Bazaar at four in the afternoon! The 50 per piece, the meat dish was commonly bought to take back as a dish for dinner.

CHUNG'S ARK KAH PAO 54 e

Among the mobile hawker stalls, there was also a type of traditional Teochew kuih with preserved radish. More than a hundred tiny ceramic saucers were filled with rice milk and placed in a big steamer. After steaming, a pinch of preserved radish was put on top of the hot rice milk and this tiny saucer kuih was called the Zhu Kuih (7k

TEOCHEW "ZHUI KUIH" IN LITTLE SAUCERS

There was also the senior Mr. Tia who carried a shoulder pole selling rojak. He used two ceramic bowls to mix the rojak. In the morning he started off at Main Bazaar and walked through all the streets. Once his rounds were completed, he took a sampan to Kampung Boyan across the river to continue selling his famous rojak across the river.

TIA ROJAK

Standing on the corner of the streets, one could also enjoy tasty afternoon tea. There were salted sotong sticks (a)) Belacan Bihun IZtZ) Sio Pau (SE and other snacks such as pickles and ice cream; all were all children's 's favourites.

In the afternoon, there was hawker named Chua who sold Tauhu Hua (EIET) from a bicycle. On the back of his bicycle there was a wooden barrel with freshly cooked Tauhu Hua. Upon hearing the rings of his bicycle bell, the street folks would come with their own bowls to fill with the Tauhu Hua, syrup was added on top and the dessert brought back and enjoyed at home. You could also eat the Tauhu Hua on the spot. Once finished, the supplied bowls and spoons would be returned to Mr. Chua.

CHUA'S TAUHU HUA

In addition to the delicacies, there were also hawkers selling bulk sauces. These were called Da Jiang You (T (because you could buy the exact amount of sauce required. The sauce hawkers would have a few bottles of sauces in baskets on their bicycle and customers could come by with their own bottles to be filled with the desired amount. There were also other street hawkers selling local products such as bamboo sticks, wooden chopping boards, honey and a variety of other goods. The majority of these hawkers were local Dayaks and Malays from the surrounding villages selling mostly products collected from the jungle.

SAUCES SOLD ON STREET LittT gi

The permanent hawker stalls and restaurants of Old Bazaar were mainly located near the opera stage known as Yang Chun Tai (DE) opposite the Hiang Thian Siang Ti Temple IX i)E) on Carpenter Street. This place was also referred to as the Lau Ya Keng (t E) food place and is said to be the place where Kuching's earliest Kuih Chap (MRit) was sold. Also sold was also Pak Lo (K a Teochew meat porridge; kolo mee, laksa, pork satay, and vermicelli fish ball soup. These stalls are still operating at Lau Ya Keng today. The night market's chicken porridge sold in the 1980s from a tricycle, with fried chicken wings and fried Ngo Hiang dumplings still forms a vivid nostalgic memory for many Kuching folks. Many used to queue up for these delicacies as take away for their late night supper.

In the 1970s, there was also a very famous kolo mee stall operated by the famous director Tsai Ming Liang's ' father, Ah Pik. The stall was located by the roadside of Wayang Street's Hong San Si Temple. There was also Ah Yong's Ang Tao Peng (ice kacang or red bean shaved ice) stall, which was an all time favourite treat for children (of all ages). Nearby behind the Rex cinema was the place to find a variety of snacks such as Old Rex prawn crackers, grilled squid and delicious satay. For those going to a movie at the cinema, there was a variety of drinks and other small snacks such as cocunut and sugarcan juice. salted Chinese pears, Kacang Putih, steamed peanuts, Ang Tao Mo (cotton candy).

Some of the street hawkers later moved to operating coffee shops and restaurants. For example, Kiew's Tai Poo Jam Mian operated for a time at the Upper China Street Hainanese Coffee Shop, and thereafter set up his own Nyan Shin Coffee Shop on Carpenter Street.

CLASSICAL DELICACIES OF THE OPERA STAGE 1A

In the past, it was uncommon for people to frequent restaurants and only wealthy families could afford to hold wedding banquets at restaurants. Even for wedding celebrations, most local people would set up three to four tables in front of their shop to entertain invited guests. A cook was hired and only very close relatives were invited. There used to be a Teochew cook by the name of Ah Guai (Po F who was usually hired to cook for household celebrations (his descendants are presently operating a stall at Lau Ya Keng). There were, however three famous restaurant in the 1950s, namely the Hainan Ann Lee Restaurant Teochew Chia Heng Restaurant E and the Cantonese Ing Wah Restaurant The Ann Lee Restaurant, which has continued to operate on Carpenter Street since the 1930s, served the ever popular Qi Pan Duck (HHEP) and Jade Chicken with Hams EEEEE

RESTAURANT LUXURY DINING

The classic coffee shops were furnished with coffee tables with marble stone tops and tables and chairs made of dark sreolate-coluuu hardwood. Some shops also had a type of very nigh-back bench chair, which provided a sense of privacy for the corresponding table. On the tables there was Usually a steel plate with boiled eggs or butter buns. Those who felt like eating an egg or bun would simply take the item and eat. The towkay would later calculate the charge based on item eaten. Underneath the table would usually be a spittoon (Tam Pui Bhal for the use of older customers. Most of the coffee shops made their own bread (toasted over a charcoal fire) and roasted their own coffee. There were also customers who after having had their smoke of opium would drop by for a cup of coffee mixed with butter. The belief was that such a mixture of coffee and butter would help to soothe their dried throats from smoking. The way of drinking coffee is believed to have started with the opium customers. The shops were also popular with many local native customers who came by to enjoy the bread and coffee.

At the Old Bazaar, there were many famous Hainanese coffee shops such as Min Heng (RXx), Juat Siang (E). Eng Siang Seng (zt) of Carpenter Street: Hai Chew

(S2M). Syn Wah Hui ([z])) Mui Syn (of Main Bazaar, Hui Tong ([]) of Wayang Street, Kim Joo (S of Ewe Hai Street; Hoon Huang (35 of China Street; and Fook Hoi (7) of Old Rock Road. These coffee shops were not just places for meals, but also places for meeting friends and catching up on the latest news.

KOPITIAM - FOR ALL

FR Er uhu uf 15

AT HONE AMVAIL
THE

By 1849, many of the original Chinese houses had been reconstructed using the very strong and durable belian or ironwood for the house framework.

Nipah palm leaves were then used as thatch for the roofing. When subdividing the lands, maximum usage of the available space was made resulting in narrow and long shophouse designs to accommodate more units. Central skylights (K) or atriums were incorporated into the design of the shophouses to allow natural light and ventilation for the middle units.

The local building styles have been studied by the architect, Dr. John H.S. Ting and described in his book, *The History of Architecture in Sarawak Before Malaysia*. According to Dr. Ting, when the Chinese first arrived in the 1840s, some built their houses following the style of traditional Chinese farmhouses, while others hired local Malay carpenters to build houses on stilts with space for domestic animals beneath the house. In 1846, Rajah James Brooke conducted a land survey and sold parcels of land to the Chinese and Indian settlers. Although it is impossible to know the exact area, the land parcels must have been pretty large to enable further divisions of the land for the construction of the many shophouses that resulted.

In her book Kuching Past and Present, Elizabeth Pollard mentioned that after Charles Brooke became the second Rajah, he immediately ordered major renovations to be carried out on the shophouses along Main Bazaar. The project blueprints were based on the Singapore shophouses incorporating fully painted brick walls to improve resistance against the harsh, humid weather conditions. Compacted soil was used for the ground floors, while the second floors used timber flooring. The original palm leaf thatch roofs were eventually replaced with wooden material (most likely durable belian shingles) or (if able to afford) Chinese ceramic roof tiles. Windows were with wooden frames and louvers were also installed. Another important instruction by the Rajah was that in front of each shophouse there was to be a space of five feet for a walkway the Five Foot Way [I BA].

By 1870, most of the renovations of shophouses along the river had been completed. The project was then extended to Carpenter Street, but the main focus was on replacing the palm leaf roofs to make the bazaar look more tidy. Unfortunately, there was no mention of using brick walls and sadly during the Great Fire of 1884, more than 130 shophouses perished with Carpenter Street bearing the biggest loss. Some shophouses with brick walls along Main Bazaar managed to survive the fire.

Most of the shophouses in the Kuching Old Bazaar were rebuilt after 1884 following the classic Nanyang architectural style. Typically, the ground floors were used for commercial purposes, while the second floor served as living quarters.

THE MAJOR RENOVATION OF 1884 1884 K

For the last century, since the major rebuild and despite multiple changes of ownership and renovations, the facade of the Old Bazaar shophouses has remained largely unchanged. The Old Bazaar was traditionally a central business area, and these streets were especially busy during the hustle and bustle of daily life. The area also served as a residential area with the upper floors of the shophouses occupied as living quarters and with every inch of space utilised to its maximum capacity.

As the Kuching population grew, more immigrants were living in the shops or renting the rooms upstairs. Apart from their own living quarters, the shop owner or landlord would partition up the available shophouse space with plywood and rent these rooms out to other traders or workers. In some cases, a family of more than 10 people would squeeze into a room. With all these residents in all the shophouses, the result was a community established in the streets of the Old Bazaar. This street neighbourhood scene was not unlike the one portrayed in the popular Hong Kong movie, *The House of 72 Tenants*.

"Our family of seven lived in two rooms. My parents had one room, my sisters had the other room, while we brothers would sleep on the corridor floor.

There was no living room, let alone a sofa. There was just a dining space, and we had to roll up our mats every morning just like in a longhouse."

recalled Voong Nam Jin of his time growing up on Main Bazaar in the 1970s. His father's shop "Sin Ching Loong" was on the ground floor, while the front section of the second floor was rented out to an accountant. The back section of the second floor was rented out to a family who was in the textile business. Their own family lived in a self-built loft, with a kitchen and bathroom. However, all the toilets were on the ground floor.

"Back then, we already had a flush toilet."

t RRE

"HOUSE OF 72 TENANTS"

36- DOORS LORRY FOR TOILET WASTE COLLECTION 7

Before the flush toilets, toilet waste was collected manually in the Old Bazaar. Joshua Chan who lived at shop no. 39 of Wayang Street remembers clearly that the top of the squat toilet in his house had an oval hole and cover, while the bottom part had a waste bucket. The toilet was surrounded by four walls with an opening to remove the waste bucket (and to prevent the smell from leaking out). The waste bucket was oval shaped and could be locked. There were hooks on both sides of the bucket so that waste collectors could conveniently hook the bucket out for disposal.

Toilet waste collectors would come by regularly each week to collect and then dispose the contents of the buckets. Using a metal hook, they would pull out the waste buckets and put a cover over the bucket before placing it one of the doors of the 36-doors lorry t "Although it was named the 36-doors lorry, it had 34 doors for the waste. The other two doors were for the driver and passengers. The waste collection service was provided by the Kuching Municipal Council."

For the locals, being a toilet waste collector was a dirty and smelly job. Adults back then would tell children, "If you don't study hard, you will end up as a toilet waste collector." However, for Joshua Chan the toilet back then did not leave a smelly impression as the waste collectors would always clean the buckets thoroughly.

"The bathroom upstairs was for showering only. If we needed to go to the toilet at night, we would use the Tam Pui (JEEE il), a classic red and white chamber pot, rather than make the trip to use the toilet downstairs. Each morning we would then take the chamber pot to the toilet and empty the previous night's collection. The chamber pot was a regular item in every household, so much so that it was actually part of the wedding dowry back then."

By the mid- 1970s, most of the shops at Old Bazaar had converted to the use of flush toilets. Waste was flushed into septic tanks built at the staircase at the back entrance. There was a space below the staircase where most of the people also used that space to rear chickens. "Back then, everyone did that at Old Bazaar. They would buy several chicks and rear them until it was time to slaughter them for the festive season." "

REARING CHICKS FOR FESTIVE SEASON

The bathroom in Tia Chen Thai's memory was right across from the toilet, and there was a cement water tank inside. "When we were little, we looked forward to Mother calling us to help her wash the water tank on a hot day. We would then be able to jump in, washing and playing in the water!"

Back then when material goods were scarce and many people lived in tiny spaces, the shophouses did not have much space for furniture. At the most, they would have a rough, but sturdy belian table and bench. There was not even space for chairs with backrests. At most there were one or two wardrobes occupying the tiny space in the bedrooms.

Before the appearance of black and white televisions, most households owned only a few electrical appliances such as a fan, a refrigerator and a small Philip or National brand

transistor radio. The pre-television time was the golden era of radio and the prime time for the local Kuching station.

In the early 1900s, there was no water supply at the shops. Everyone had to collect water from the nearby water well if they wanted to cook or take a bath. According to local accounts, there were public water wells behind the Tua Pek Kong temple, the current Chinese History Museum, and Upper China Street. Some residents also recalled water wells behind some of the old shops in Carpenter Street.

With the installation of water mains in the 1920s, public tap water outlets at Old Bazaar started to take over the role of water wells. When tap water was supplied directly to the shops, the scenes of crowds gathering at the water wells or water taps became a thing of the past. Used to shortages, even with water supply, most people were still careful in their usage of water. Water was still collected through the open skylight in most shophouses and used for cleaning purposes.

The shophouse skylight played a major role back then. Not only did it gather rainwater, it was also the place for washing and drying clothes. Most people would use bamboo pole pushed through one of the shophouse windows to hang their clothes out to dry. During the peak of the Old Bazaar's population growth, every household in every shophouse had bamboo poles hanging outside their windows to dry clothes.

In the 1970s, one had to be rich to own a gas stove. As a consequence, most households at the time still cooked with firewood. The wood stove was built with bricks and cement and had an access port with metal tube to enable blowing on the fire to fan flames. Below the stove were stacks of firewood, as well as used newspapers and oil for fire starters. The food cooked on these stoves was said to have a better fragrance. The wood stove and taste of the food cooked there remains one of the most vivid memories for those who lived at Kuching Old Bazaar.

The Five Foot Way remains as one of the many fond childhood memories to those who lived in the Old Bazaar. In this space children played hopscotch, jump rope and marbles, while the older people would relax with a small table and stools for some casual moments. The streets were busy and cramped, but the relationship between the people living in the shophouses was closely knit. As with most small communities, at any time of the day one could call on next door neighbour to borrow an egg, some soya sauce or vinegar.

The century-old shophouses of Old Bazaar are a vibrant present day, testimony to the memories of several generations of families who lived there. They also play a very important role in the collective memories of historical Kuching.

THE HEARTWARMING ARCADE X. 1.1 AIE DO

BAZZAR

OLO GOIIGG PLATES THE OF PRISSAAINT

As in other flegging Hanyang cities, carts dravun by noress or oxen were the main forms of Trrangorri elong the diir roades of Old Bazzai in the early days of Muchiigg

In the 1870s, the Brooke government introduced oxen from India for the transport of people and goods. There is some irony, however, that for most people, goods continued to be transported on human shoulders.

The first rickshaws were brought in by the Brooke government from Singapore in 1895. These two-wheeled carriages relied on human labor a driver in white singlet and blue shorts, wearing a straw hat, dashing along dirt paths barefooted or in sandals sewn from old tyres.

At the height of its use, there were as many as 300 rickshaws reportedly travelling the streets of Kuching. As demand grew, rickshaw stands were set up by the government on the Main Bazaar, India Street and Gambier Street. It was believed carpenter street also had a rickshaw stand.

Travelling by rickshaw from Old Bazaar to the kampungs (villages) in Satok cost a mere 2 cents. Even then, only the well-to-do could afford the service. The ownership and use of private rickshaws was a sign of wealth.

LATE 19TH CENTURY: CARTS AND RICKSHAWS 19th 4... .

MOTORCYCLES, MOSQUITO BUSES

BICYCLES, TRICYCLES,

FARLY 20TH CENTURY: :

In 1912, the first minibus appeared in Kuching, shuttling between Main Bazaar, Rock Road, Green Road and all the way to Matang Road. With a 20-horsepower engine and seating for eight passengers, it was dubbed the mosquito bus (hy!) Et). As roads expanded and demand increased, more and bigger buses followed, with as many as 260 in service by the end of 1940s. Entering the 20th century, cargo tricycles eased the burden on the rickshaw drivers and gradually replaced their hand-pulled precursors. Street peddlers, glad to be relieved of their shoulder poles, also invested in cargo tricycles as a means to carry more products longer distances and to expand their businesses.

In turn, bicycles came to dominate the streets of the Old Bazaar well into the 1970s. They were efficient, could carry relatively large loads and were much more affordable than motorcycles, which came later. To own a Vespa Scooter in Kuching at that time was to be the envy of the town.

The first motorcycle in Sarawak was introduced by Charles Vyner Brooke before he became the Third Rajah. The first automobile to appear in Old Bazaar was a British-built model brought in by the Borneo Company. No doubt the Second Rajah, Charles Brooke was less than impressed with these novel (and noisy) new modes of transport.

"In the '70s, Main Bazaar was the main road of the Old Bazaar. Wayang Street, Carpenter Street and the other streets were little more than lanes. Buses could only pass along Main Bazaar," says Joshua Chan, who used to live on Wayang Street. In the 1950s, the Sarawak Transport Company became the first major bus operator, with its main station on Java Street near the river. The other major operator was Chin Lian Long with its main station in front of Electra House.

Sarawak was a product of river and sea travel so naturally boats were another popular form of transport. During Hari Raya, shopkeepers would take their families across the river to visit their Malay customers in the kampungs there using the 5 per trip sampans. During Chinese New Year, they would walk to the main jetty near the petrol station and take a ride on one of the motorised resse or boat to visit the Ching San Yen Temple

MID-20TH CENTURY: BUSES

"IF YOU NEED TO GO PLACES, LOOK FOR A HENG HUA"

No account of transport is complete without mentioning the Heng Hua. "If you need to go places, look for a Heng Hua" -s the saying goes among the Nanyang Chinese, including those of Old Bazaar.

The earlier Heng Hua immigrants did not possess much education and their language skills were limited when they first arrived in Kuching. However, what they lacked in language skills they made up for in hard work. These hard working immigrants ventured into the labour service and most of the rickshaw pullers on the streets were Heng Hua.

During the Rajah period, they pulled the rickshaws of the Europeans and then later they pulled rickshaws on the streets transporting the common folks.

When new immigrants arrived, they became apprentices under their fellow village folks, learned new skills and then carried on the same trade.

From pulling rickshaws, the Heng Hua went on to open bicycle shops, motorcycle shops and repair services, and later on ventured into car dealerships and bus companies. For more than a century, up to the present day, the Heng Hua still dominate the bicycle trade and motorcycle repair business.

" HHITTT BEX

OF BRIARA OLD AIGHHNNO LEEEAISS

Another legend relates that Seng Ong Kong once appeared in front of the Hong San Si Temple to save the Rajah from falling off his horse. The Rajah tried to thank his rescuer, only to see the boy disappearing into the temple. By order of the Rajah, a water hydrant was installed near the temple for public use. This spot is now marked by a small fountain.

One of the most famous and widely known folk legends of Kuching Old Bazaar is of the child deity, Seng Ong Kong E'A of Hong San Si Temple rescuing the area from fire. During the 1884 Great Fire that ravaged nearly the entire Old Bazaar, a young boy was seen standing on top of the attap roof near the Hong San Si Temple. He was waving a black flag to summon rain, which eventually came and helped to stop the fire, thus saving parts of the bazaar. After the fire disaster, people believed the boy was the Seng Ong Kong deity.

SENG ONG KONG AND THE GREAT FIRE

NO FEAR OF CROCODILE BUT FEAR OF WATER GHOST T-1 tizk

Not far from the Old Bazaar there were two fresh water reservoirs used for ice making. The bigger, deeper reservoir never had a drowning incident, but the smaller shallow reservoir always seemed to have accidents. These accidents were believed to be the mischief of the water ghost. According to local beliefs in order to prevent mishaps, before one enters a reservoir or pond, one should collect three stones. While walking around the reservoir the stones are thrown in one by one and each time reciting ding si zhui gui)) meaning Stone dead the water ghost in the Hokkien dialect. Only then will it be safe to enter the water.

A more benevolent spirit, in the form of a white crocodile, was said to inhabit the small Kuching River that once flowed in front of Tua Pek Kong Temple. Whoever caught sight of it, as local tycoon Wee Kheng Chiang supposedly did in his youth, would be promised a successful, thriving future. Given the apparent success of Wee, gives the tale a substantial amount of credence.

There were persistent rumours of a water ghost among the Old Bazaar folks. Whether in the Sarawak river or the reservoir, people believed in the existence of the water ghost. The Bazaar folks were not afraid of crocodiles when playing or swimming in the river, but they certainly did fear the water ghost.

There were many feng shui beliefs related to the Old Bazaar and surroundings. One famous feng shui story relates to the topography of Tua Pek Kong temple, which resembles a huge crab. Whenever there was a change of tide, a swirl formed in the river right in front of Tua Pek Kong temple. Local beliefs were that the Rajah purposely built the Chinese Court and the Borneo Company right opposite the temple to press down on the huge crab's pincers. In so doing, to spoil the good feng shui of Tua Pek Kong temple. Another version of the tale is that the area is a feng shui dragon. The small hill of the temple is the dragon's head, and the dragon's body lies across Mathies Road leading until Chung Hua Primary School No 1, with the dragon's tail extending to the hill behind the museum. According to the legend, the Rajah was afraid that the Chinese were becoming too powerful. He ordered that the river in front of Tua Pek Kong temple be backfilled and the hill behind the temple be opened up for development. This has inevitably disrupted and weakened the feng shui dragon.

The setting up of Chinese Court in front of Tua Pek Kong temple was also seen as a deliberate attempt to confuse and frustrate the benevolent deity with daily court cases. On top of that, the firing of the eight o' o' o'clock evening cannon was also intended to spoil the dragon's chi (aura). When a hotel was built near the temple, the architectural design resembles a huge knife aimed to chop off the dragon's ' head.

PRESSING DOWN THE HUGE CRAB'S PINCERS

As eerie as it might sound, when the Japanese occupied the Astana during World War II, they tried to repaint the old and dirty fort, ignoring the warnings of the locals. On the day the painting was supposed to start, the commander of the Japanese forces in Borneo, Toshinari Maeda was killed in a mysterious plane crash while on the way to Labuan. When the tragic news arrived, the painting work was halted immediately.

A lesser known feng shui legend was about the Astana as the cat's head, Fort Margherita as the cat's body and the cat's tail lying at Kampung Pulo. It was believed that the fort has to retain its original white colour and cannot be painted with any other colour, or else the good feng shui will be spoilt.

THE FORT THAT CANNOT BE PAINTED 7 AEEF FI Et

THE RASTAIISS WEBRE

In the era without mobile phones, childhood activities and pastimes at Old Bazaar were self-made, creative, cooperative and vibrant (i.e. noisy). The arcades of the Old Bazaar, the Sarawak River and the Ao Boi Sua (the hill behind Bishopsgate) were all included as the available playgrounds for active youth.

In the 1950s, there was an open greenspace in the area behind the Juat Siang coffee shop on Carpenter Street (shop 34). This space became the place where children played kites and other games. The Sarawak river was another playground where children waded in water, chased mudskippers, slipped along the muddy bank into the river and became covered all over with mud. Of course fishing was one of the greatest pastimes. The riverbank beside the cargo holding area of the Borneo Company was the best place to fish for giant prawns. Another ideal fishing place was the reservoir park, especially when it rained.

After the 1960's children collected rubber bands, cigarette boxes and pebbles from the streets to fashion their own toys. The strings of rubber bands were joined together to make skipping ropes or catapults. The old pull-out cigarette boxes were stacked up into pyramid-like shapes and the strikers were made of few layer of cigarette boxes band catapults were used to shoot the pyramid. The person who managed to tumble most boxes was declared the winner.

The game that required money to buy was marbles. The bigger ceramic white marbles cost 15 cents each, while the colourful transparent ones were sold at 20 or 30 cents for 10 balls. Children would play marbles on the five foot way, the Ah Boi Sua hill and also the sandy ground behind Tua Pek Kong temple.

Tia used to frequent the riverbank to wait for the Malay marine officers for a game of sepak takraw. The most memorable time was when every evening from Fort Margherita, the sound of a horn was heard accompanied by the national anthem. "The marine officers would immediately stop playing and stand straight to salute the national flag even if the rattan ball dropped into the water"

The older children enjoyed playing basketball, football or badminton. "Weather was no hindrance to our football games. When it rained, we would play at Ao Boi Sua. It was the church area and the grass field eventually became a muddy field. We were even chased by policemen and the sisters!" laughed Tia Chen Thai while recalling those happy youthful moments.

PLAYING FOOTBALL WITH MARINE OFFICERS Fa7k ELEREK

Old Bazaar also housed a concentration of classic bookstores such as the Tai Tung and Kuching Bookstores of Ewe Hai Street; Kwang Hwa of Carpenter Street; the Star Bookstore of Main Bazaar and the Kueh Nam Long Bookstore of China Street. These bookstores were a source of knowledge, reference material and entertainment for the local residents.

During the 1970s, Kueh Nam Long provided a comic and novel rental service, while the Tai Tung and Kuching Bookstores sold numerous Taiwanese fiction books, journals of Modern Arts (tx; and Contemporary Literature (The other two bookstores sold mainly school textbooks and reference books. In addition, at the corner of Main Bazaar where Ah Yong ABC Ice Kantong stall was located, there was a wooden box to rent comics and martial arts novels. Most people associated with the Old Bazaar could remember squatting by the roadside enjoying their shaved ice treat while reading Small Hooligans (v) (l) (R) Dragon Tiger Gate (JRE) comics or the novels of Jin Yong (il) During the time when information technology was unknown, newspapers were the source of information and very precious reading materials. Literary supplements in the newspaper played an important role in local art activities. The Sarawak Vanguard (Rit EIRR), The Chinese Daily News (Ex), The Malaysia Daily (9 [JI ERR) The See Hua Daily News (i1 ERR) and the short lived Sarawak Times 1Uttttttt all had extremely active submissions of art and literature writings from young writers. The novel excerpts presented in the newspapers were also very popular.

An unforgettable memory for many was the pen pal column in newspapers where one could reach out to old friends or seek the attention of new ones.

COMICS, NOVELS, NEWSPAPERS

During those times, gambling stalls could be seen on the back streets or five foot way of Carpenter Street. The most common game at the time was Tan (HE). The dealer had a numbered metal board (with numbers 1 to 4) and a pile of old copper coins with holes in the middle placed by the side. The dealer would grab a handful of coins and cover these with a small cup. The punter would place their bet on a number (1 to 4) on the metal plate. When everyone had placed their bets, the dealer would open the cup and count the copper coins with a small stick. The coins would be divided into sets of 4 with whatever number was in the last presenting the winning number. The winner would get double the amount of the bet placed.

The favourite gambling stakes for children were for candles, toys or the Tikam paper draw game found in grocery stores. On the upper part of the big cardboard were candies and small toys while on the lower part were pasted strips of 200 to 300 small draw papers. The top draws were for cash prizes of 1, 2.2 or 5 dollars.

Given the public interest, gambling was considered big business. According to the Sarawak Gazette, during the Japanese Occupation the Japanese used the control of gambling to solicit funds. They gave out gambling licences and called for tenders in Kuching, Sibu and Mini. The licensee would then sub-license to other parties and receive payment. The main licensee could then repay a certain amount to the Japanese military government.

Sarawak Turf Club was established slightly later in 1924. The peak of the popularity was in the early 1980s when the races drew huge crowds of people.

There was a betting station located inside the venue and every bet was 1 ringgit. The payout for winning was between 20 to 40 ringgit. The Turf Club was eventually relocated to 7th Mile and the old race course has since been transformed into the MBKS grounds.

Gambling used to be a way to spend leisure time and there were gambling games for the old and young. Adults would go to the association houses or backstreet gatherings for games such as Mahjong (15M3), Cap Jiki (3) Four Halojim (of) Pai Kow (H1)L and other types of gambling. Among these, Cap Jiki was a favourite. Choosing

from numbers 1 until 12, a bet could be placed on any two numbers and every draw would pay one to a hundred odds.

"My mum used to buy. She would check on the draw between 3 to 4 o' clock in the evening. If her number was drawn, she would get 5 or 10 dollars," recalled Old Bazaar resident Joshua Chan.

These gambling activities were of course illegal, but depended on whether the police were doing their rounds. If someone reported the activity, the Sikh police officers would come by and gamblers would disperse quickly. The unlucky (or not so quick) ones would be caught and fined. During the Chinese New Year however, the police officers would normally turn a blind eye and allow one or two days of gambling and people could play to their heart's content without fear of getting caught.

Unlike the other games, betting on horse racing was legal gambling. During horse racing day, Old Bazaar folks would go to the racecourse at the end of Padungan Road to watch the horse racing. The race course started in 1880 and the in

GAMBLING WAS A SOURCE OF ENTERTAINMENT
Colours Card [[HH Poker (HEHE)

J Ti5

Before the era of television, everyone listened to the radio broadcast. Kuching radio station's drama series was a particular favourite. Almost everyone at the Old Bazaar followed the drama and their emotions rose and fell according to the latest episode broadcast. The radio also served as a means of communication Letters would be sent to the radio station to request for songs to be dedicated and to make friends. Beyond just news, the entertaining programmes and these services ensured the popularity of the radio back then.

When the first black and white televisions made their way into the Old Bazaar around the 1970s, not many households could afford this luxury appliance. Children who did not have a television at home would go to the homes of a friend with a television. Neighbours would place the television set in the front of the shop to let children from other shops watch together. By the time colour televisions showed up, television had become a common electrical appliance in virtually every household.

The cinemas not only showed movies, but was also a stage for performances "My house was opposite Rex Cinema. Foreign performing troupes used to be invited for martial arts and wrestling performances That time I didn't have money to buy a ticket so could only peep in from the front door", said Joshua Chan. In the 1960s, there was also a circus troupe performance at the present Green Hill Corner..

located on the balcony or upper deck. Children could enter the cinema for free with their parents and they would sit on the lap of their parents or on the cement staircase. Hawkers would usually walk into the cinema rooms to sell various types of snacks including popcorn, steamed peanuts, Indian kacang putih, and different types of soft drinks.

One of the favourite entertainment for the young and old in the family was watching or listening (on the radio) to shows. All were popular whether it was an opera show for a temple celebration, free open air movies, shows in cinemas, black and white television or even drama series broadcasted over the radio.

During the celebrations at the Seng Ong Kong or Hiang Thian Siang Ti Temple, there would be local show performances each night. The majority of the audience were elderly attending with their grandchildren. They would bring a small stool to join the crowd and watch the lively performances. There were also free open-air movies showing mainly China revolutionary movies, martial art movies or Liu San Jie (a form of folk music singing).

Given the lack of home entertainment there were many cinemas in the Kuching old town area. One of the most famous was the Rex Cinema of Kuching Old Bazaar. In the 1970s, the Rex Cinema screened mostly Shaw Brothers' movies including martial arts movies such as, One-Armed Swordsman f Bruce Lee's Fist of Fury and Enter the Dragon (zz R) Other types of romance and fiction movies were also equally popular during those days.

In the 1970s and 1980s, movie tickets were priced at 50 cents, 1.20, with different tickets sold at different counters. The 50 cents ticket was for a seat in the front, the 1.20 ticket was for a regular seat and the 1.80 ticket was for the premium seat. In the big cinemas, the premium seats were or

SIIIMMEEEE BAZARR OLD AUGHHTNO OF

Kuching Old Bazaar was not only a trading center, but also a place rich with cultural heritage. Throughout the year at the Old Bazaar, there were many traditional events organised by the community or government. Some of these events have been forgotten and lost with the passage of time while others are still practiced and organised today. These events are usually organised by temples, associations and by the government. The following section draws on information obtained from Chinese associations and the Sarawak Gazette.

Tua Pek Kong processions have been held only infrequently. The temple traditionally followed the practice of only organising a procession once every 60 years. The Tua Pek Kong deity's birthday, which falls on the second day of the second lunar month, is the main event celebrated. On this special day, an elaborate ritual with prayers is held at the temple. Another important event is the Hungry Ghost Festival when a tall stage is built in front of the temple for the scrambling of food offerings (t))) The scrambled food are believed to bring good luck and safety to the devotees.

In the past, the tradition of Xing An (1T was often held at Tua Pek Kong temple. The intention of this practice was to officially inform the deity that an elderly member of the family had passed away. Generally the practice of Xing An was for the mourning family member, particularly the son, to circle around the outside of the temple and then have a more distant family member to represent him to inform deity about the death. The Tua Pek Kong temple also served as a place for making oaths. In the early days people frequently beheaded a chicken at the temple and solemnised the oath as a way to resolve disputes or make peace.

TUA PEK KONG TEMPLE

LLI 1a

The Hokkien deity, Seng Ong Kong celebrates his birthday on the 22nd day of the 2nd lunar month. During this celebration, a grand and elaborate prayer ceremony is held at the Hong San Si temple. This also includes a large-scale, vibrant procession around Old Bazaar, that is held at night. Opera shows are shown for a week on a stage set up in front of the temple. During the deity's birthday, devotees would also come to return money borrowed from the deity. This is a traditional practice whereby a certain amount of money starting from 1 ringgit is symbolically borrowed from the deity for luck, safety and prosperity purposes. The money is usually kept in a red packet placed in the purse or wallet. The following year on the deity's birthday the devotee returns the money borrowed, doubling the original amount. Among the traditional food offerings presented to the deity is the eye catching Eight Trigrams Tortoise Bun VIMM Ang Ku Kuih (a type of kuih moulded to resemble tortoise) and Huat Kuih (steamed cake).

HONG SAN SI TEMPLE

The Teochew temple of Hiang Thian Siang Ti holds their procession on the 4th day of the 12th lunar month. This procession is not related to the deity's birthday but is to show gratitude to the deity for his blessing and to pray for another year of luck and peace. On that day, elaborated rituals are also held and food offerings such as five types of meat, fruits and vegetarian food are presented. During Chap Go Meh (the last day of the Chinese New Year), the temples rent out lucky items such as a Lion Candy (HE) a sugar block moulded into the shape of lion. During Ching Ming (Tomb Sweeping festival), the temple organises a ceremony at the ancestral graves located at the Yue Hai Ting Cemetery, Jalan Tun Abang Haji Openg.

During the Hungry Ghost Festival on the 15th day of the 7th lunar month, a lavish ceremony dedicated to the hungry ghosts is organised each year. The climax of the event was the common blessing of food offerings which draws a huge crowd every year. In addition, the Coming out of Garden [7 ceremony, signifying the transformation of a young person into an adult, is also a distinctive Teochew annual cultural practice.

HIANG THIAN SIANG TI TEMPLE

The Hin Ho Bio Temple located at Carpenter Street is also the location of the Hainanese Association. In the tradition of Hainanese there are a number of rituals and celebrations performed every year including the veneration of the Hin Ho deity. The activities held annually at the temple are, the Goddess of Mercy birthday celebration on the 19th day of the 2nd lunar month; the anniversary of the Hin Ho deity's enlightenment on the 19th day of the 6th lunar month; the ordination day of the Hin Ho deity on the 19th day of the 9th lunar month, the birthday of the Hin Ho deity on the 23rd day of the 3rd lunar month, the ordination day on the 9th day of the 9th lunar month, Zhu Sheng Niang Niang (AR birthday celebration on the 20th day of the 3rd lunar month and Shui Wei Niang Niang (k FERRRRR birthday celebration on the 15th day of the 10th lunar month.

HIN HO BIO TEMPLE RGM

During Chinese New Year the Malay neighbours living across the Sarawak River would take a sampan with their family members to come and visit their Chinese friends. During Hari Raya, the Chinese would reciprocate and also cross the river to celebrate the festive season with their Malay friends. The close and cordial relationship between the various ethnic groups was firmly forged during this time of sharing celebrations.

In the early years on Carpenter Street, Chap Go Meh night was celebrated with a firecracker war led by the respective associations. The entire street would be in an uproar with the crackling sound of unending firecrackers.

According to local resident Sim Soo Teck, the Chap Go Meh activity started after dinner time around 8 in the evening. The Kwong Wai Siew Association was the most lively with the loudest firecrackers, lion dance performance and Cai Qing (ceremony. The other associations were not to be outdone with their equally thunderous firecrackers. Children would be busy running here and there collecting the candies distributed by the various associations.

The firecracker war usually went on for an hour and the entire street would be left covered with a thick layer of firecracker confetti. As the associations and local residents moved out of the Old Bazaar, the vibrant Chap Go Meh celebrations remain a sweet memory.

MEMORIES OF CHAP GO MEH EZ F

THE KUCHING INTER-CULTURAL MOONCAKE FESTIVAL

In order to promote the continuation of good and friendly ties between the old Bazaar and communities across Sarawak River, Pantai Damai State Assemblyman, Abdul Rahman Junaidi and Padungan State Assembly representative, Lily Yong collaborated and initiated the mooncake festival. The event was supported by the then Chief Minister Pehin sri Abdul Taib Mahmud as an annual festival. The mooncake festival marks the full moon on the 15th day of the 8th lunar month, and serves as a platform for the reunion of different ethnic groups of Sarawak. The event was organised by the Kuching Old Market Community Association with the support of the government and has been promoted widely, both locally and internationally.

AChingay procession is a traditional ritual to chase away an evil spirit (in the case of Kuching a plague god). According to the Sarawak Gazette's Report, four grand Chingay processions have been held in Sarawak, all in Kuching. These processions were initiated by the Hokkein under the lead of Ong Tiang Swee and held once in every 10 years. The years the procession was held was in 1898, 1908, 1918 and the last one was in 1928. In the early years, due to the lack of tap water supply and poor sanitation, plagues frequently broke out. The procession was viewed as a means to chase away the bad spirits responsible for the disease. A special Wangkang boat (EAE) is built for the procession and pulled along the street through town. The climax of the procession was the burning of the boat, also known as sending off the boat (ix AGG) to rid the community of the bad spirits. After 1928 when Kuching began to have tap water supply and improved sanitation, these plague incidences became rare. Furthermore, as the procession was costly it was never held after the last one in 1928.

CHINGAY PROCESSION AND WANGKANG

Regattas have an important place in the history of Sarawak. These boat-racing events were initiated by the White Rajah with the intention of stopping rivalry and conflicts between the indigenous groups. Rather than warring and headhunting, the Rajah instructed the indigenous groups to challenge each other through boat races to prove their strength. The main record for such events is from the Sarawak Gazette 1872, which reports a regatta was held on 29th February in front of the Astana. All the Europeans in Sarawak and neighbouring countries were invited to attend. Before the race started, the guests were invited for breakfast with the Rajah.

For more than a hundred years, the regatta has been a much anticipated happening in Kuching and people of all ethnic groups would flock to the Old Bazaar to watch the exciting event. According to the memory of Old Bazaar folks, whenever there was a regatta, the indigenous people from the rural and coastal areas would come to join the crowd. At night, they would sleep on the walkway of Old Court House or the five-foot way of Main Bazaar. The attraction of this exciting and colourful hundred years old grand event continues to be unbeatable to all, near and far.

THE SARAWAK REGATTA

In early 1941, the Rajah's government released a report in the Sarawak Gazette covering the Centenary of Brooke Rule in Sarawak. This attracted a lot of attention and evoked considerable response as the third Rajah, Charles Vyner Brooke, had suggested that it was the intention to end the Rajah's rule, and return political power to the people through a constitutional government. During the month of August, a series of events were held to commemorate the centenary celebration of the Brooke rule. The main celebration was held from the 24th until 26th September in Kuching. In addition to official ceremonies, there were also grand parades and associated activities. The celebration ended in December when Kuching was engulfed by the second World War. The Rajah subsequently left Sarawak and when he returned after the war, Sarawak was handed over to the British Crown Colony.

CENTENARY OF BROOKE RULE IN SARAWAK

GRASSROOT STORIES OF THE BACKSTREETS

The main streets and backstreets harbour memories for all who have lived there; each with their own Witleknows life story. Let's take a walk down memory lane to hear the stories Of people who have lived there and the happenings that occurred along these streets.

The Old Bazaar once provided a makeshift home for labourers working at the wharf. These labourers, then known as coolies, organised themselves into small groups and rented shophouses in which to rest or live. Such an organization was called coolie keng (5)) which literally means space or place of the coolie.

The coolie kengs probably date back over a century to when Kuching was growing as an import and export trading center: There was no machinery to move goods at the wharf and the traders depended solely on human labour. These were very arduous jobs, yet everyday the wharf labourers came to the Old Bazaar to wait for the arrival of cargo goods and orders from their leader. Most of labourers were Chao Ann although there were some Hakka and Malay as well. There was no labourer union or management in the early days and the labourers were organised under the lead of respective leaders. This was very much a situation of each for his own and often quarrels would erupt due to arguments over jobs.

According to the information from the Kuching Wharf and Port Labourers' Union, the number of coolie kengs grew from five or six before the war to eleven after the war, representing over 200 labourers. The Kuching Wharf Labourers' Union, formed in 1948, gradually organised the coolie kengs and coordinated their jobs and workloads. The union also sought to ensure worker benefits from authorities and shipping companies. With the establishment of the Kuching Port Authority on June 1961, the operation of wharf was overtaken by the Pending port. With the moving of port downriver and the introduction of mechanisation the coolie kengs of Old Bazaar slowly faded into the past.

Local residents recall that the wharf labourers usually returned to their coolie kengs at noon to wash up, rest or have lunch. Meals commonly a large pot of porridge were prepared by the labourers themselves or provided by nearby residents. After work, those without families would spend the night in the coolie keng. A folding cot or a straw mat was usually all they had for a bed.

According to the available records, coolie kengs could be found in the Old Bazaar until the 1970s. These were located at shops No. 51, 52, 61 and 62 of Upper Chinese Street and shop No. 19 of Bishopsgate Street. The shophouses were rented by the leader and the labourers collectively and the rental was between 10 to 100 ringgit per month divided amongst the occupants.

COOLIE KENG 71 [3]

In 1952, Sarawak passed a law dropping the term coolie in favor of the more neutral labourer. Today, the coolie kengs exist only in the memory of the locals and the Wharf Labourers' Union building that stands on Carpenter Street still bears witness to the lives of those that once toiled on the wharf of Kuching.

According to local resident Wee Boo Yaw, in the 1950s, one of the coffee shops operated at No. 25 and 27 of Carpenter Street was a favourite hangout for the wharf labourers. A bowl of porridge or rice with pickled mustard cost 30 cents. When work was available, the leader would come to the coffee shop to call for the labourers.

Reports are many, but as gambling was technically illegal actual records are scarce. We know that under the tax farming system, businesses had to bid for the right to legally operate gambling dens. A few of these gambling dens were supposedly operated in the backstreets, but locals could not pinpoint the specific locations.

activities had never ceased to exist. In the backstreet, the temple, the empty ground behind shophouses - any place out of the police man's sight was the ideal spot to gather for gambling.

Always in demand,
GAMBLING

Wayang Street, known in Chinese as the street of flowery fragrance, was home to another kind of indulgence. Writing in the International Times, local writer Lee Jun traces the arrival of pipa tsai (EEK in Wayang Street to the late 19th and early 20th century. Pipa tsai were female performers (or sing-song girls) who offered entertainment and company but not sexual services - although this rule was perhaps not without exceptions. They would chat with customers over drinks and occasionally pick up the pipa instrument and sing a Cantonese or Minnan tune.

During that time over half of Wayang Street was taken up by entertainment houses where the pipa tsai entertained and flirted with their wealthy customers. However, during the 1929 global financial crisis, many of these rich customers lost their wealth, and the pleasures of Wayang Street vanished like a dream.

Apart from Wayang Street, there were also prostitutes plying their services along Bishopsgate Street and Upper China Streets. Locals recall that there was a brothel which operated illicitly on the corner of Bishopsgate Street in the 1960s and 1970s. At night, the prostitutes loitered along the five foot way, waiting to accompany customers to the second floor.

Another sight of the backstreets was its infinite amorous.

THE FRAGRANCE OF FLOWERS

F.S. Choo, a descendant of Bau Hakka gold miners, describes a Kuching opium den in his book Children of the Monkey God. At seven years old, he accompanied his father to collect a debt at a shophouse in the extremely narrow road of Carpenter Street, the air was thick with pungent smoke. He describes the scene on the first floor of the shophouse where, "Seven to eight old men bare to their waist and wearing only loincloths in either drab grey or khaki. With their ribs sticking out through their dark tanned skin, browned from too much exposure to the tropical sun, they looked emaciated and severely malnourished. They were all reclining on long, hard wooden benches with the ball of their elbow as a means of support and making loud gurgling noises with the long water opium pipes on which they sucked." "

The 19th century was the age of the opium trade. Many of the Chinese migrants had acquired the habit of smoking opium when they were still in their village homes. Upon arrival in Nanyang, they were homesick, sad and due to the long free hours, they looked to gambling as a source of entertainment and used opium to forget about the emotional and physical hardships. Once addicted, much of their hard earned salary was spent relentlessly on opium.

According to Mr. Desmond Leong, a veteran journalist and former editor of Sarawak Vanguard, the opium trade in 1925 generated a staggering 1,307 ,488 for the colonial government (The White Rajahs... Myths Retold: The Massacre of the Bau Hakkas (2011)).

After the war, opium was banned by the British crown colony government. However, along the backstreets of the Old Bazaar around the 1960s, there were still a few elderly men who never quite shook the habit. Passing neighbours could occasionally smell the opium smoke and knew exactly what was going on.

OPIUM 9994 XB

?

THESSE FEREAAE WORRS
YOU DO IEEESIV SIANG MARKET

The lingua franca of the residents of the Old Bazaar was Hokkien, followed by Teochew, Cantonese, Hakka, Hainanese and etc.

There were many unique nouns and adjectives that were used in daily communication of bazaar folks. Most of these descriptive phrases originated from dialects, especially Hokkien. Their common usage resulted in the adoption of interesting and lively slang words that all old bazaar residents would instantly recognize.

The current Textile Musaum. Formerty a government hospital, it was named after its square shape. From then onwards, the older generation would refer to hospitals as si pang lao.

4 18yb5 t 1 1 BRL DE BR. HUEL 1A iff 489 22. Fi, Z 00) JB BS EELEER 75 75 K3E"

Reters to the Hiang Thian Slang Ti Temple. When people talk about eating at Lao Ya Keng, they are reterrting to the hawker stalls opposite the temple.

th X. I. E, la A via ,, se ll i1 i (29) BA

Badruddin Road is called kam jia hui which means 'sugar cane farm', The police headquarters was located at Badruddin road, then surrounded by farms. The locals reterred to the police headquarters bysts location.

4 1s mile. This was the location of cemeteries and this became the name of the place.

7 16 mile. Similar to the cemeteries. the mental hospital was located at 7 7 1 mile. qi ki puah" came to mean the mental hospital.

The present location of SK St. Mary and Tabuan Road. The place was named after Its tringular shape. 25:30 6: (m 1H2 ,, [1t

In the early days, many of the populace had not received very high education and literacy was limited. Therefore, it was common to name a building or place according to its appearance and shape.

Refers to the jall, which is near the current Park Lane. HELL: At iil...

The uphill trail next to the Tua Pek Kong temple. :h (B4 31

Refers to Hong San Si Si Temple.

MEANING 2X

Old Kuching folks would immediately understand the hidden meaning of these names. 12: zi if (a 15 Nb

PRONUNCIATION

seng ong kong

pek kong nia

ngiau chu hui

si pang lao

lao ya keng

kam jia hui

sa kak bo

si ki puah

qi ki puah

LOCATION SERIES

SLANG WORD

In the past, people rarely referred to each other with their real names, and often used nicknames. Most people were illiterate, so instead of attempting to remember complicated given names, they would come up with nicknames based on the person's external characteristics. These names were easily remembered, and helped others recognize the persons as well. The well-known hawkers all had their own nicknames, and one would need to know these names in order to search for the best food in Kuching!

NICKNAMES SERIES

The hawker who sold iced desserts seng means 'ice' zzui means 'water' and zek is an honorific term for a younger male who is about one's younger uncle generation.

The hawker who sold wood products from his bullock cart. gu means bull or Ox, chia means car or cart while guan is the hawker's name.

A Cantonese man who sold kolo mee and beef noodles. He liked swimming in the lake at Reservoir Park in the evenings. People who didn't know better would have mistaken him as zhui gui (water ghost)

A noodle soup hawker who earned her nickname due to her physical attributes.

Tua Pui means 'fatty' and So means 'aunt'.

73 ftc 52 i OF R f

The hawker who sold fruits and snacks at Bishopsgate Street.

H : in RE rto ist 24,52 HB

r TT A, 4 I AiE

(1T : oF t AR..

MEANING

A X

PRONUNCIATION

seng zhui zek

kek leng pek

gu chia guan

tua pui so

zhui gui

SLANG WORD i

A Teacheew term for travelling seesman or performen Both woid use pant to call for attention.

Reters to the officers of the Land and Survey Survey Department. b: Bt These nounn were either derived from classical Criness OF were rlated the been-ntellectuut who had arrived from Chita. i8 Mt: E LO (N SC 2n 3o put 30 (ER TS TH (RLB

Reters to the Land and Survey Department.

Teacherr Chiness Physician Husband avii (EEEEEE

Nurso, ofgjinttngg from the terte miss: to- difamisss

Left wing actiist or communist th F to aE F SE

'Red Hair" reters to Caucasians 28

Important Hiph-raatedd officars 1f aea fit

MEANING 2 X

Polloe Officer

Lady boss

Here are some names referring to certain organisations OF people

Boss

Dayak:

Malay

School 9612

Doctor

PRONUNCIATION

sua ngiao chu

dua liap lang

pak loh hey

te gu pang

towkay nio

towkay

huan na

ang mo

tua kao

oak tng

te gu

mi si

la kia

ma ta

sin sel

lo kun

CHARACTER SERIES

SLANG WORD

0

k S. Ai (Kaya) Roti Khawin 3 5 A A994

Red mee To add red char siu barbecued pork oil to kolo mee or kolo mi
Half boiled eggs, which are usually eaten with pepper and soy sauce.

Toasted sandwich with butter and kaya (coconut jam).

AaKopi leng st Teh Peng.

It also called 'roti kahwin' in Malay.

M E AMA tH IZ.

Teachew pronunciation of Shaomai

The slang words about food are more complete and are still widely used presently

Wanton Meat Dumplings Z

With no added milk. T AnKopi O.

Cold drinks with ice haz.i

Pork innard soup Si

MEANING

Fi ERE t 13HIT E ATE.

Phua Ceh Sek Neng

PRONUNCIATION

leng peng

Roti Kiap

ang mee

sio bee

kiaw

zen

0

SLANG WORD i

FOOD SERIES

Roti

The market slang words used in the Old Bazaar are descriptive, colourful and interesting. These words are also a window to look back on the lifestyles and distinguish features and impressions of that era. Unfortunately, as dialects begin to lose ground among the younger generation, many of these slang words have gradually disappeared from daily use.

This article has only listed some of the most commonly used slang words, and mostly those in Hokkien. A useful project would be to try to recall and record specific names and words in one's own dialect as a form of intangible cultural heritage preservation.

Undereett the stove: 30 Opeming for burning wood or channaal The other meaning Is Kilstnn Itt (ehiaaee Bi

Eloctiisity in the patly days things that emitted Night were genenaaiiee as huey (Wree) lally lees, ond would say kain huey to refor to "switch the light.

ThiS was used to refer to the 8pm cantn shot from the Astana, It's alspl used to deseribe a aquacins parson who takks toe big and too much. HB 37 12 ai (g FEE FE F-RTT 18 - WUX

a6 s2 Filmee, 1 30000 JEJEE "YE SE HH HEREEEE

Toller wasse collecton truck. There were only on 34 partitons in the track, to but il was referred to as 36 doors besuus if Included the tuck's two front dodrs:

Ann Lee Restaurant at Carpenter Street was the first high end restaurant with air coonditining in Kuching. Jiak Li to 'Eaiing big at Ann Liee

The cemetery, The early Chinese association were referred to as kangsi and each of these associations had their own comeetery. 18) SEEEE "A al (kongs), mt at 22

type of stiig that was used to tle milk tYs tht contined hot coffee. of to lle up regetaatee in a burdlle.

The olothes worn by ther coole or tabourer, zong mears clstiing style. SERT BRR

In (all in Holkenn Nu means 'quat, Therefore, this pirase means to Warhouse Orginated from Enpish Godown. O.E 19-36 B8 1h: 3B 2E Geddown Refers lo a pirson who has passad away.

Oity centre, but not the wet markat. iiriiis TH 137

Live Chingsa Opera performances IN R.ABBB N8 squatin jail with nowhere go.

A LH NE SR:

MEANING 2 xX

Main bus stop B-tti8

Gook fighting 428)

Wooden oloss XJB

Kerosene tamp H8

Battories iF 1b77

Spittoon 36

Movies (8.W0

PRONUNCIATION

guan cha chia

pek diam pao

deng teng sua

ang mo zeng

toh you teng

Some slang words related to everyday life

klam chao

kuli zeng

zo lan hi

ang kong hi

gudang

sa chap lak men chia

ku ka keng

chia tao
kongsi sua
sio pak keh
kiao keng
tak ka chia
cha kiak
dian huey
dian you
tua ba sa
tam pui
jiak ann lee
zao ka

DAILY LIFE SERIES
SLANG WORD m
HEM
DE)

BANVAR PISTRINN OLD LUGETTI THE UNITER

On Christmas Eve 1941, around four in the afternoon, the Japanese forces arrived and began to make their way along the streets of the Old Bazaar. A Japanese commanding officer sat in the middle of the road and gave orders as more troops arrived on foot or by bicycle or in a stolen vehicles. By six the evening the number of troops in Kuching had swelled to over 400. A telegraph was sent from the General Post Office to the British Far East Command in Singapore with the single sentence "pussy's in the well" code indicating that Kuching had fallen. The allied forces had already pulled out and with virtually no resistance, Kuching submitted to Japanese occupation and became Kychin in Japanese (x(t))

Many people had fled prior to the invasion and the hastily abandoned mansions became the residences or headquarters for the Japanese troops. Schools were commandeered and used as warehouses, offices or ianjos ("comfort stations" 3 In July 1942, the Chartered Bank in the Old Bazaar was converted into a branch of the Yokohama Specie Bank.

Most of the European officers who remained in Kuching were sent to the Batu Lintang camp where they endured brutal treatment, forced labour and shortage of food and clothes.

PPSSSY IN THE WELL"

Once, the sirens sounded while Mr. Kho Chak Chai was getting a haircut. He and the others rushed out, kicked off their wooden clogs to facilitate their running and returned after the all clear was given to resume the haircut. The sight of the streets covered with wooden clogs left in haste by those who ran to the shelter remained with him.

Besides Wayang Street, there were also few air-raid shelters at Park Lane for the use European officers who lived nearby. Whether the officers actually ever managed to make use of the shelters remains unknown.

At 90 years old, Mr. Kho Chak Chai still remembers what it was like to grow up on Wayang Street during the occupation. He recalls that Kuching had entered a state of alert some time before the invasion. At the sound of the siren, people would swarm into the air-raid shelter constructed on Wayang Street. The shelter, located in the vicinity of the Rex Cinema, was barricaded with sandbags and covered with a thatched roof of attap leaves.

AIR RAIDS SHELTER AT WAYANG STREET TEZ Eg 5t

Mr. Kho Chak Chai recalls that many families had already evacuated the town before the Japanese arrived, to hide in the countryside or find refuge overseas. By the time the Japanese actually invaded, much of the Old Bazaar had been abandoned and many of its shops were devoid of life. The Kho family first fled to Crookshank Road and then continued to a relative's rubber farm at Simpang Tiga, where they stayed temporarily in their chicken coop. The conditions were too much to bear for his sister, who eventually moved back to Wayang Street alone.

On 19 December 1941, the Japanese suddenly launched an air raid on the Old Bazaar, targeting the Borneo Company warehouse and the Tan Boon Tien petrol station. Mr. Kho Chak Chai's sister fled with others into the woods and then, shaken from the experience, rejoined her family at Simpang Tiga.

AN ABANDONED OLD BAZAAR

Under the Japanese rule, supplies were increasingly scarce. Rice was hoarded by Japanese forces and civilians were forced to provide for themselves.

Tapioca, sweet potatoes, bananas, sago and the like became staple foods.

Some people traded their sarongs for little rice the natives had. Others made shoes out of plastic and clothes out of gunny sacks. The shortage of oil meant that paraffin lamps were lit with coconut oil or animal fat.

There were few street crimes during the harsh Japanese rule. Japanese language schools were set up, as were brothels; girls were forced into prostitution (becoming ianfu, or "comfort women" (while boys were forced into the army. A young Mr. Kho Chak Chai was persuaded by his older brother to attend one of the Japanese language schools to avoid forced conscription.

The sword-carrying instructors, intimidating to look at, treated him less harshly than he had feared. Mr. Kho had a good voice and was picked out to perform singing, dancing and gymnastics for the troops. The language training took place on the first storey of the Kwong Wai Siew Association on Carpenter Street.

Everyone was required to bow 90 degrees deep to Japanese officers when meeting them on the streets. Non compliance to this was rewarded with slaps. While the Malay government officers were usually treated well, the local Chinese were treated more severely because of their assumed connections to Allied or communist forces. Under the oppressive regime and the shortages of all goods, days were passed in terror for the Old Bazaar shopkeepers.

SARONG FOR RICE

On 11 September 1945, the Japanese forces in Kuching surrendered ending the era of fear!

Photo: 1884 Kuchin
(sketched by Kho A

In the wee hours of 20 January, 1884, a shophouse at the intersection of Carpenter Street and China Street caught fire. Back then, as now, the shops were all built next to each other sharing common walls. However, the shops of the day were all built of highly flammable wood with palm leaf thatched roofs. Very soon, the small flame became a sea of fire.

The alarm was raised and everyone came out and did what they could in an attempt to put out the fire. The European government servants, missionaries, local residents, and the Malays from across the river all worked together to form a line to pass buckets of water from the river. However, all these efforts were in vain as the fire spread wide and wild. In the end, there was nothing they could do apart from watching rows and rows of shophouses burn and turn to ashes. The only saving grace was when a rainstorm came and put out the fire after about 5-6 hours. In the end, only the shop fronts were left.

Most of the goods saved from the fire belonged to Ghee Soon Company, and these goods were piled up at the wharf, the stores and even in the jail. The goods included raw opium, alcohol, jungle products, gambier, silver coins, etc. This fire dealt a huge blow to the most influential businesses back then including Ghee Soon Company. Two of the other prominent Teachew tycoons, Law Kian Huat and Sim Ah Nio not only suffered huge financial losses, but they fell ill after inhaling too much smoke, probably damaging their lungs. Both of them passed away in less than six months after the Great Fire.

Most of the 160 destroyed shophouses belonged to Ghee Soon Company. In addition, the Teochews' Hiang Thian Siang Ti Temple was also burnt down. The loss of all these

THE 1884 GREAT FIRE THAT REWROTE HISTORY 1884 5 FF 5

buildings not only transformed the appearance of Old Bazaar, it also rewrote Kuching's history. After the fire, it took several years to rebuild the Old Bazaar due to a shortage of building materials. Formerly built of wood, now in order to prevent the devastating history from repeating, Rajah Charles ordered that all the shophouses be rebuilt with brick walls.

The underlying factors in the rapid spread of the plague was of course a general lack of hygiene, and especially the lack of a clean water source. The occurrence of the plague forced Rajah Charles to expedite measures to solve the clean water supply management issues. However, water continued to be an issue with insufficient tap water supply even after a few years, resulting in another cholera outbreak between 1910 and 1911.

In the absence of medical technology and lacking an understanding of the cause of the plague, the locals resorted to folk beliefs to interpret and deal with the calamity. Their solution was to hold a Chingay procession to ward off the plague gods, through the Wangkang ritual. The noisy procession was held four times in the Old Bazaar.

By 1926, tap water was made available throughout the entire area of Kuching. And this, coupled with improved hygiene, had the effect that the plague occurrences were significantly reduced. However, there continued to be occasional minor localised disease outbreaks, but certainly nothing on the scale of the 2020 Covid-19 pandemic. The pandemic has affected public hygiene and global finances severely and will probably go down in history as the new great plague.

Between May and July 1902, the southern part of Sarawak was experiencing an intense drought. At the same time, there was an ongoing battle between the warring Dayak groups and the Rajah's government in the Simanggang Division. With the large gathering of humanity and unhygienic conditions, cholera soon began to spread quickly on the battlefields. By June, the plague had also reached Kuching, where hygiene was not much better, and there was no escape for the Old Bazaar. This was the deadliest plague in Sarawak's history, causing the deaths of more than 1500 souls.

1902 DEATH PLAGUE

1902 EIT THE

The great flood of 1963 is something that many residents remember as the flood waters reached the highest water level of 20 feet above chart datum and affected the lives of some 35,05,000 people. Kuching was not the only place affected as the rainfall was widespread with floods affecting the entire state of Sarawak. According to the Sarawak Gazette, on 28 January 1963 (the fourth day of Chinese New Year that year), the flood had reached knee-level (close to 3 feet deep) along the Old Bazaar.

Old Bazaar local resident, Kueh Geok Boi recalls that the water had already entered most of the shophouses. The then 12-year-old insisted on helping her mother deliver goods. She waded through the water at India Street and the Open Air Market. All these streets were flooded with water and the drains were overflowing. The floods lasted for several days prompting the Chinese associations and organisations to initiate fundraising for flood relief for those most affected.

According to local legend, the reason behind the great flood was because the Sarawak Museum had caught a red-headed turtle. The red turtle is believed to be the reincarnation of Sea Dragon Deity's daughter and unless the turtle was released, the flood water levels would continue to rise until the hill of the museum. According to this prediction, Kuching and its neighbouring towns would surely all be deluged by the flood.

This prospect was a matter of life and death. After knowing this, Ong Kee Hui, the President of the Sarawak United People's Party, and Tom Harrisson, the director of the museum, released the red-headed turtle into the sea at Muara Tebas. It intriguing to note that once the turtle was released, the flood waters gradually receded and the towns were saved. The details of this mystical event was recorded and illustrated in the Sarawak Gazette.

THE GREAT FLOOD OF 1963 1963 51 Bn 4

CONCLUSION: PRESENT DAY KUCHING OLD BAZAAR 5H: do T x

As much as the historical Kuching Old Bazaar is a trading area, it has also always been a settlement. Countless people were born, grew up and lived in this area, and some have continued to live in the Old Bazaar until this day. Their tales have been passed from generation to generation; remembering the old stories and accumulating new stories. The different cultures, practices and delicacies from the different dialect groups have intertwined and melded to make the Old Bazaar the colourful and interesting place it is today.

The Old Bazaar has not remained immune from the of time and there have been many changes of families and businesses over the years. Nonetheless, a few families and businesses have remained as central pillars Of community.

For
the

example, the Lee family of Ann Lee Restaurant, Kiew family of Nyan Shin Caf and the Au Yong family of Yeck Sung Frame Maker all continue to operate businesses in their original shops. In addition, a few of the famous grocery, incense, gold, Shanghai carpenter shops, tinsmith shops and hawker stalls still operate along the streets of the Old Bazaar. A few generations of people have lived and conducted businesses here, with some

Some of the old neighbours have moved away, while new neighbours have moved in. The new neighbours are certainly not the migrants who once travelled across the sea to Nanyang seeking for new opportunities. These new neighbours today are likely to be those coming from other parts of Kuching or Sarawak. Their arrival and presence in the Old Bazaar has resulted in some changes to the original structure of the bazaar community, which was once based upon dialect groups and ethnicity. However, just like those who came before, the new neighbours have added new and different content into the life of the Bazaar community and also brought new business opportunities.

Inevitably, some old trades have disappeared while some have taken a different business direction. While the restaurants and food shops still thrive, the wooden clogs shops no longer exist, and the number of tailor shops have decreased greatly. Many of the former grocery shops along Main Bazaar have ceased operation with the shops now transformed into souvenir shops.

This book represents one of the major components for the Kuching Old Bazaar Cultural Mapping Tourism Promotion Programme, The book started with the social history of the bazaar and its community and combined this work with the field study conducted by Dr. Elena and her Unimas team. The types of shops currently in the bazaar are presented in Figure 1.

The categories of shops are shown in Figure 2. The Information on categories of shops published in Sarawak Chinese Commercial Yearbook of 1965 (published by Kuching Chinese General Chamber of Commerce) is presented in Figure 3. By comparing these records, from periods separated by 55 years, it is evident that the business models of Kuching Old Bazaar have undergone tremendous changes. The previous Old Bazaar was dominated by trades related to

livelihood purposes, while the present Old Bazaar has become more dominated by service and tourism related businesses.

During the survey, a total of 75 shops were visited and interviews were conducted. The shops included tourist agencies, bookstores, frame makers, coffee shops, shops, hardware

transformation of the bazaar structure from pred o Eminantir Teochew and Hokkien, present

tailoring etc. Many of the old trades remain with many having been in operation for more than 50 years. study social

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b cackk g tro u n community structure.

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reveals

This simple data reveals much information about the Kuching Old Bazaar as one of the earliest settlements. Based on the tourism resources related to the physical structures and its older history and stories, there is undeniable tourism potential for this area. Therefore, the Kuching Old Bazaar must be protected and safeguarded. not only for its physical structures, but also for its cultural assets. The traditional celebrations, food, old trades, old families and the traditional lifestyles of the community should be recognised as important cultural assets not just for Kuching Old Bazaar, but for all of Sarawak.

The Kuching Old Bazaar is not only a commercial area but a place with a strong sense of community. The bazaar folks knew one another and also cared about one another. The atmosphere along the streets was always warm and lively. The vitality of the community has thrived for more than a hundred years and the area remains the true heart of Kuching. Over the past hundred years, there have been changes, and without doubt changes will inevitably continue. By remembering and recording the history of the bazaar, the cultural values and norms of the community will persist and presevere for future generations. The Kuching Old Bazaar and its community has managed to retain its strong characteristic and atmosphere, creating an identity that is distinctively unique from other communities.

To love Kuching starts with loving Kuching Old Bazaar!

PERCENTAGE

100

24

13

20

10

6

10

3

5

2

7

FIGURE NUMBER OF SHOPS IN KUCHING OLD BAZAAR

NO. OF SHOP

2 10 H At EE

285

70

36

57

29

17

29

7

13

6

21

TOTAL 5 Jk2

Jalan Tun Abang Haji Openg t BUA

STREET NAMES

Upper China Street

Bishopsgate Street THRt

Green Hill Road F Fuli

Ewe Hai Street

Temple Street Ur

China Street f

Carpenter Street

Wayang Street

Main Bazaar

This book contains eight chapters of historical anecdotes, 11 chapters related to changing lifestyles and a concluding chapter. The timeline of Old Bazaar is presented to facilitate the understanding of the history and significant events. The old photos of the Bazaar were reproduced from published works and from those shared by bazaar residents which the sources is indicated.

The publication Of this book brings about three important connotations. (1) It the first monograph focusing both on the social history and oral history of Old Bazaar. This book combines information obtained from both Chinese and English literature, and importantly, materials from the Chinese associations which are largely missing in official

This book, presented in both Chinese and English, focuses on the historical anecdotes of the Old Bazaar and the memories of the community. References were made using existing documents including the Sarawak Gazette, English and Chinese academic papers, monographs, and publications of the Chinese associations etc. Supporting these documents, interviews were conducted with more than 10 Old Bazaar residents between the ages of 45 to 95 years. At the same time, the assistance from Dr Elena Chai and her students from Universiti Malaysia Sarawak were solicited to conduct interview surveys of 75 shops in Old Bazaar.

The publishing of Kuching Old Bazaar: Its History and Changes is the most important tasks in Kuching Old Bazaar Cultural Mapping Tourism Promotion Programme.

As one of the earliest settlements in Sarawak, Kuching Old Bazaar has witnessed many important historical moments over the course of 200 years. The Old Bazaar community also kept with them many precious collective memories. From the collection of these memories, we can trace the footprints of the development of Kuching from the past and its transformation until present day.

EPILOGUE Fizz

records and publications. The complementary information from the Chinese community and Chinese associations enabled a more comprehensive perspective on the Old Bazaar. 33 Although this book is written based on academic work, it is presented in an easy-to-understand and relaxing manner for the reading pleasure of the local resident and tourist alike.

Under the daunting threat of coronavirus pandemic and other related factors, the process of writing and interviewing were met with many unprecedented challenges. Time was also a major concern as there were a series of lockdowns. As such there may be content that is missing and corrections that still need to be made. The publication of this book is just a beginning, not an end and readers are welcome to share their opinions. The interviews and work on Old Bazaar will continue and progressively be made available through the official website of Kuching Old Bazaar (kcholdbazaar.com).

Last but not least, would like to express my sincere gratitude to the Kuching Old Market Community Association for their trust and the opportunity to publish this book. would also like to thanks Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture Sarawak for their support; Dr. Elena Chai and her team for their help; The Chairman of Sarawak Heritage Society Mr. James Yong for his help; all the respondents who have shared

their exciting life stories, important information, and precious old photos. I am especially grateful to my team members who have contributed their time and effort in writing, translating, illustrating, photographing, design and layout of the book, especially the other two authors Helen and Yit Ping. Through this collective effort and dedication, we have completed the publication task within a short timeframe.

I believe our effort and dedication come from our shared passion; WE LOVE KUCHING.