

Annual Report 2018/2019 Presented to the 13th Annual General Assembly, 30th April 2019

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ABOUT SARAWAK HERITAGE SOCIETY (SHS)

SHS was set up as a non-partisan, nongovernmental and non-profit organization in 2007.

The mission of SHS is to promote the conservation, permanent preservation and sustainable management of Sarawak's unique cultural heritage assets, both tangible (buildings, monuments, sites, cultural landscapes, objects) and intangible (traditional arts and crafts, customs and traditions, food).

The vision of SHS is a Sarawak where all stakeholders value the rich and unique cultural heritage and diligently contribute, directly or indirectly, to its ongoing sensitive and sustainable protection, conservation and management.

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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (2018/2019)

President

Vice President James Yong

Secretary

Treasurer Committee Members Dato Seri Robert Jacob Ridu

Anna Wee

Sharifah Nur Hannah

John Chin Francis Frey Nicholas Gani **Paul Gerarts**

Sonia Luhong Wan

PAST SHS PRESIDENTS

2014—2016 Karen Shepherd 2012 - 2014 Hong Boon Kheng 2010 – 2012 Joseph Ingai Gasing 2008 – 2010 Mike Boon Chee Khian 2006 – 2008 Datu Aloysius Abg Dris

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

People often ask what Sarawak heritage means to me. I like to compare it to the great rivers that we have in Sarawak. Up in the mountains, stream form and make their way down, getting larger and becoming rivers. At some point, there is a confluence of rivers. The original colour and composition of the streams change as they flow down and when the rivers meet. The streams and rivers are like the different races of Sarawak – Iban, Bidayuh, Malay, Chinese, Indian, Eurasian and others. Sarawak is home to all of us. Through the years, as we live harmoniously alongside each other, there has been a great deal of inter-mingling of our cultures, traditions, arts, language, just like the colours of our streams and rivers. We celebrate our inter-cultural diversity. That is what the heritage of Sarawak means to me.



In the past year, in our ongoing effort to preserve this rich heritage, Sarawak Heritage Society (SHS) has focused its efforts on two main areas: government engagement and awareness building among the public.

Our engagement with government leadership saw us maintain an ongoing conversation with key decision makers on policy, strategy, regulatory, enforcement and project matters related to heritage management. We were invited by the Sarawak State Secretary Tan Sri Datuk Amar Haji Mohamed Morshidi bin Abdul Ghani to participate in a workshop on "Kuching Smart Heritage City". Recently the SHS executive committee also called on the Minister of Tourism, Arts, Culture, Youth & Sports, Datuk Haji Abdul Karim Rahman Hamzah, to present SHS' proposal on a new Heritage Ordinance and institutional set-up to enhance heritage management in the state.

We launched our "Heritage Quest" programme through newspaper ads, magazine articles, Facebook and website posts and other social media interactions. The goal was to get members of the public to identify items of significant heritage interest and share these with SHS. We received almost 300 varied and interesting suggestions from the public.

We organised several talks under our "Heritage Speaker Series" –Sarawakian artist Ramsay Ong recounted his artistic journey and the links between art and heritage. Dr Chua Ai Lin and Mr Fauzy Ismail from the Singapore Heritage Society shared the Singapore experience under the theme "Giving a Future to Our Past". We also had a sharing on Chinese Opera, followed by a photographic documentation of a local Hokkien opera.

We continue to highlight heritage topics through our website and social media, as well as through our "SHS Community" chatgroup. We have active conversations on Sarawak's unique cultural heritage — both tangible and intangible - and we highlight the importance of heritage protection, conservation and management.

The revised SHS Constitution that we discussed last year has been approved by the Registry of Societies (ROS). Over the year, our membership has modestly increased to around 100. We have strengthened our membership management system, with the issuance of membership cards. We still need a stronger, stable membership base to reinforce SHS' voice, credibility and capacity to engage in dialogue with government and other stakeholders that shape the future of our cultural heritage. I therefore reiterate my call to members to invite friends and family interested in our cause to sign up. I also urge again members to come forward and join our passionate team of engaged members contributing actively, with diverse talents, to our initiatives.

Finally, let me express my sincere appreciation to all who have helped and supported SHS throughout the year. We hope you will continue to play an active role and help us protect the unique heritage of Sarawak.

Dato Sri Robert Jacob Ridu

President

Sarawak Heritage Society

2018/2019 AT A GLANCE

1,797

Facebook Likes

10

Public/Member Events

320+

Participants at Events

3

Key Govt Engagements (State Secretary; Minister of Tourism, Arts, Culture, Youth & Sports; Sarawak Musesum Department)

15

Media Mentions

1

Issue of MISC HERITAGE NEWS e-newsletter

100

SHS Members





REPORT OF ACTIVITIES

Launch of WhatsApp chatgroup

SHS WhatsApp chatgroup "SHS Community" was launched on 20 May 2018 on an "opt-in" basis. This allowed members who were interested in ongoing conversations on topics related to Sarawak's cultural heritage, tangible and intangible, to participate online. Relevant news and articles pertaining to heritage were regularly shared on current happenings in the heritage scene, both locally and overseas. As at April 2019, there were more than 40 participants.

More information on how to join can be found on the SHS website.

Talk by Ramsay Ong & Visit to his Studio, Kuching

On 10 June 2018, SHS organised a visit to the private studio of Sarawakian artist Ramsay Ong. This was in a heritage shophouse on Jalan Padungan, Kuching. Ramsay also gave a talk on his artistic journey in Sarawak and overseas, as well as his views on art and heritage. Throughout his fifty years in the world of art, Ramsay has evolved his techniques and medium from batik painting to painting on organic handmade paper and on tree bark.

This members' event attracted 14 attendees.



Discussions on St James' Church, Quop

On 29 July 2018, some members of SHS ExCo had a discussion with representatives of St James' Church at Quop. The meeting was called by SHS to explore the idea of a fund-raising music event at the old wooden church in the following month. The concert appeared not to be feasible as works had been scheduled around the church on the date the performers would have been available.

SHS ExCo also had a wider discussion on the conservation/restoration of the old church. The main issue faced by the parish appears to be a lack of space on its grounds for the construction of a parish hall. The old church is currently partially used for that purpose and for Sunday School. Our interlocutors recognized that the old wooden church is in dire need of restoration but indicated that they had no clear plan for it as a result of lack of funds.

This may be a conservation project that SHS could revisit and help raise funds, on condition that there is a clear commitment on the Quop / Church side and other stakeholders, and if all parties can agree on shared objectives.

Heritage Quest



This was SHS' campaign to engage with the public at large. The objective was to call for members of the public to help identify "items of significant heritage interest" in Sarawak and to submit these to SHS, via whatsapp, sms, email, website, Facebook or any other means, for our collation and further research. The "Heritage Quest" programme was launched through a media conference and received coverage in local newspapers (Utusan Borneo, Borneo Post and See Hua Daily News), magazine (KINO) as well as social media.

Over the course of less than three months (from 11 November 2018 to 31 January 2019), members of the public submitted more than 260 names of heritage assets for protection, preservation and conservation. The submissions have since been organised and categorized.

This project was also shared with YB Datuk Abdul Karim Rahman Hamzah, Minister of Tourism, Arts, Culture, Youth and Sports when SHS Committee met him in April 2019.

Heritage Strolls - Under SHS

As part of the "What About Kuching!" (2018) festival, SHS volunteer and later committee member, Paul Gerarts conducted five "Brooke Gallery" tours at Fort Margherita for a total of 85 participants.

In addition, between May 2018 – Mar 2019, six other guided Kuching Heritage walks were carried out by Paul Gerarts. Total attendance was 89 persons, which included both locals and foreigners.

This makes a total attendance of 174.



Heritage Ordinance

SHS President DS Robert Ridu worked on a draft of amended Heritage Ordinance. A "Heritage Ordinance Legal Drafting" team was formed for discussion and legal input. The output was presented to YB Datuk Haji Abdul Karim Hamzah, Minister of Tourism, Arts, Culture, Youth and Sports Sarawak on 17 April 2019 for consideration.

SHS members involved in TV documentaries

Several SHS members were interviewed on heritage related topics for different episodes of two TV documentaries "Jate Man" and "Colours of Sarawak", which will be aired on a Malaysian TV channel and other networks.

SHS sharing session: "Reviving the Magic of Chinese Opera"

On 13 March 2019, we had the first of our SHS thematic "sharing sessions". The topic of Chinese Opera had emerged as a subject of interest in the SHS Community chat group.

The talk, held at the Museum Café, Main Bazaar was given by SHS Vice President James Yong, together with SHS member John Soo. It was followed by a presentation by members of the Yi Sing Fukien Dramatic Association, who displayed some of the opera costumes and demonstrated make-up and acting. A discussion with the participants on the heritage value of Chinese Opera in Sarawak and the opportunity/ways to preserve it.

In total, there were 29 persons at the session.



Heritage Speakers Series: "Giving A Future to Our Past: Civil Society and Sustainable Heritage"

On 11 April 2019, we had two guest speakers from the Singapore Heritage Society - Dr Chua Ai Lin, Executive Director and Vice President and Mr Fauzy Ismail, architect, SgHS volunteer. Their talk covered the role of placemaking, communities and civil society in sustainable heritage conservation, as well as an educational programme on heritage value for children.

About 80 attended, including representatives from government, private sector and academia.



UNIMAS Heritage Awareness Week Talk

On 23 April 2019, SHS committee member John Chin gave an interactive and engaging talk to UNIMAS undergraduates during Heritage Awareness Week. This was held at UNIMAS and officiated by the Deputy Dean. John introduced to about 80 people in attendance, the definition and importance of cultural heritage and the role of SHS. In turn, he was introduced to an array of exhibition posters on heritage cultural assets in Malaysia, prepared by the students themselves.



Meetings and Government Liaison

Participation in meeting on revision of SCHO (1993)

On 1 Nov 2018, two SHS members participated in a discussion workshop on the revision of the Sarawak Cultural Heritage Ordinance (1993) convened by the Sarawak Museum Department.

Participation in "Kuching Smart Heritage City" Workshop

On 6 and 7 December 2018, SHS President and Vice President were invited to participate in a "Kuching Smart Heritage City" workshop chaired by the State Secretary Tan Sri Datuk Amar Mohamad Morshidi Abdul Ghani.



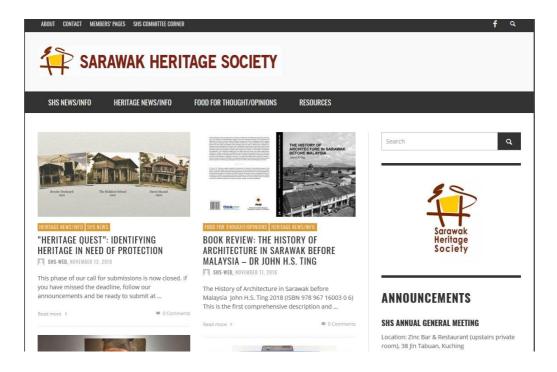
SHS Committee Meets Minister of Tourism, Arts, Culture, Youth & Sports

On 17 April 2019, the SHS Committee met with YB Datuk Abdul Karim Rahman Hamzah, Minister of Tourism, Arts, Culture, Youth and Sports. SHS highlighted the "Heritage Quest" project, presented ideas on ways to elevate Sarawak's heritage management via enhancing the Heritage Ordinance and institutional set-up, and proposed a technical and socio-economic baseline study on the old Kuching precinct.



SOCIAL MEDIA

The SHS **website** (<u>www.sarawakheritagesociety.com</u>) and enhanced Facebook presence continued to contribute to the visibility of the Society.



The SHS **Facebook** page currently has around 1,400 followers. We have recently also created an Instagram account.

STATUS OF MEMBERSHIP

Up to end April 2019, we have 100 members, of whom 32 are in the process of membership renewal.

MEDIA COVERAGE

SHS events and activities were covered by print publications such as The Borneo Post, See Hwa Daily and The Star, with a total of 15 media mentions in 2018/2019 to-date:

2019

Heritage Speakers Series: Dr Chua Ai Lin and Fauzy Ismail, Singapore Heritage Society, 11 April 2019.

"保护遗产讲座" - Sin Chew Daily, 13 April 2019.



[&]quot;SHS to hold talk on sustainable heritage" – Borneo Post, 7 April 2019.

Interview with Nicholas Gani and DS Ridu

[&]quot;Sarawak Heritage Society to host special public 'Heritage' talk - Dayak Daily, 6 April 2019.

[&]quot;Sarawak drafting new heritage law" - Sin Chew Daily, 13 April 2019.

[&]quot;<u>Keeping Sarawak tribal spirits safe in their jungle megaliths</u>" – Free Malaysia Today, 28 January 2019.

[&]quot;Sarawak drafting new heritage law" - Dayak Daily, 9 January 2019.

[&]quot;<u>Identify heritage assets that should be protected and conserved, public urged</u>" –The Star, 3 January 2019.

2018

"Society wants old railway track sites repurposed as heritage" - Borneo Post, 20 November 2018.



"<u>Let's save, repurpose, our 'fascinating' railway heritage, urges NGO</u>" – Dayak Daily, 19 November 2018.

"WAK: Stroll through history of Brooke Rajahs this October" - Borneo Post, 30 September 2018

Launch of Heritage Quest campaign (November 2018)

SHS advertisement on Heritage Quest – Utusan Borneo, 10 November 2018.



"SHS launches Heritage Quest campaign" - Borneo Post, 10 November 2018.





"<u>發现文化遗产速通知</u>" – See Hua Daily, 10 Nov 2018.



"<u>Help save Sarawak Heritage</u>" – *KINO*, November 2018.

KINO HERITAGE QUEST

Help Save Sarawak Heritage!

by James S.L. Yong



[&]quot;A country without a past has the emptiness of a barren continent... And a city without old buildings is like a man without memory."

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

REGISTRATION DETAILS

Joining Fee RM100 is WAIVED during recruit Ordinary Annual Membership Fee RM50 Student Annual Membership Fee RM25	Ordinary 3 years RM120
Name :	×
Age:	Gender:
Address:	
*Malaysian NRIC No. :	
*Non-Malaysian Passport No.:	
Mobile : Office / Home:	
Email :	
Signature :	Date :
How would you like to contribute to the Soci Video and documentation of events Website / Social Media Event planning	ety (Please tick) Graphic design Fund-raising Any others
I enclose RM (Cash/Cheque	No.) :
made payable to Sarawak Heritage Society Acco	Kuching Selatan
FOR OFFICE USE	FOR ALL ENQUIRIES, PLEASE CONTACT :
Membership status : Approved / Not approved / KIV SHS Membership No. :	Sarawak Heritage Society 3 rd floor, Sublot 16, Eastmoore Centre Jalan Rock, 93200 Kuching, Sarawak
Approved by : Date of application : Date joined :	Email: sarawakheritagesociety@gmail.com Fax: +60 82 426 992 Tel: +60 82 235 333 (Mr.Man)

Membership renewal: 2019 form can be downloaded from our website:

http://sarawakheritagesociety.com/storage/2019/03/SHS-Membership-Renewal-Form-2019.pdf



A montage of built heritage in Kuching. From top left, clockwise: Darul Maziah, Round Tower & Pavilion buildings, Main Bazaar shophouses, Museum Bandstand, Tua Pek Kong Temple, Square Fort, Hokkien School, and Brooke Dockyard