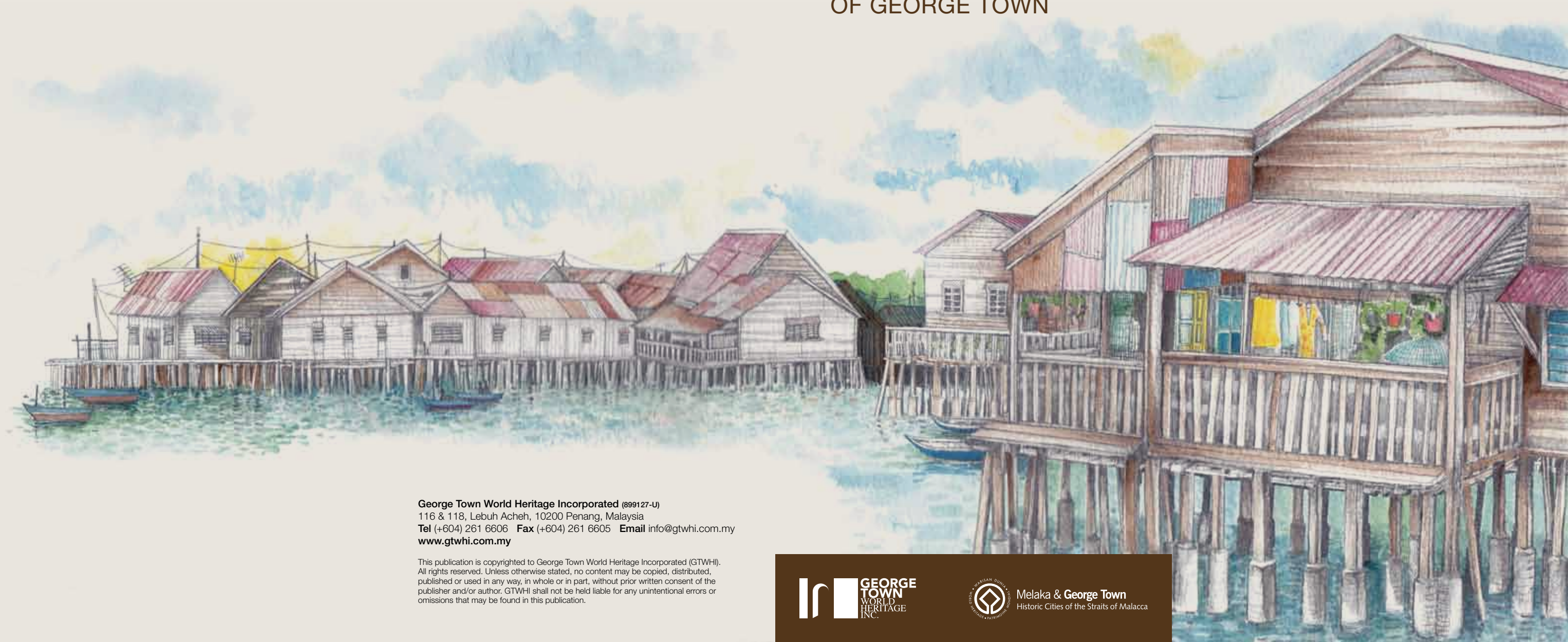


THE CLAN JETTIES

OF GEORGE TOWN



George Town World Heritage Incorporated (899127-U)
116 & 118, Lebuh Aceh, 10200 Penang, Malaysia
Tel (+604) 261 6606 Fax (+604) 261 6605 Email info@gtwhi.com.my
www.gtwhi.com.my

This publication is copyrighted to George Town World Heritage Incorporated (GTWHI). All rights reserved. Unless otherwise stated, no content may be copied, distributed, published or used in any way, in whole or in part, without prior written consent of the publisher and/or author. GTWHI shall not be held liable for any unintentional errors or omissions that may be found in this publication.



Melaka & George Town
Historic Cities of the Straits of Malacca



CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
ONG JETTY	3
LIM JETTY	5
CHEW JETTY	9
TAN JETTY	13
MAP	15
LEE JETTY	16
NEW JETTY	18
YEOH JETTY	20
PENG AUN JETTY (Demolished in 2006)	22
KOAY JETTY (Demolished in 2006)	24
CULINARY DELIGHTS IN THE VICINITY OF THE CLAN JETTIES	26
CLAN JETTIES VISITORS' ETIQUETTE	28



Lim Jetty before World War II

INTRODUCTION

Along Weld Quay which stretches lengthwise the south eastern coastline of George Town, one can find water villages with rows of wooden houses on stilts built above the sea and connected by planked walkways. These are the Clan Jetties of George Town.

The Clan Jetties became places of dwelling only in the late 19th century by the Chinese Hokkien immigrants who shared common surnames and originated from similar hometowns in China. Before the existence of the jetties, different community groupings had existed among the clansmen who took up residence in crowded homes at places like Tok Aka Lane, Acheen Street, Armenian Street, and Stewart Lane, which are located in the vicinity of the waterfront.

Weld Quay, named after Sir Frederick Weld, the Governor of the Straits Settlements from 1880 to 1887, was reclaimed from the shallow seafront to link the ends of the 'ghauts', where boats used to land their loads of cargoes and passengers. The reclamation of the city's sea shore in 1882 enabled the

physical construction at the waterfront. Landing jetties grew over time on the foundation of the 'ghauts' provided by the colonial government to share the load of the trading traffic further north. These jetties were later identified and dominated by particular clan members for the loading and unloading of goods and for the mooring of their sampans. Simple sheds were later built to provide shelter and rest for those waiting the arrival of the bigger cargo 'tongkangs'. The sheds were soon converted into communal houses for residence and the number of houses increased henceforth.

The jetty settlements expanded in the early 20th century at the peak of the immigration waves. Occupants of the clan jetties were descendants from the coastal villages of southern Fujian Province in China. As typical of early Chinese immigration and settlement patterns, clansmen tended to band together. They emigrated as bachelors from same hometowns and helped one another to find employment and accommodation in the new environment. They also utilised clan ties for mutual help and protection. Like most pioneer

immigrants, many of them only intended to work hard for a few years, and returned to China with their accumulated savings. However, troubled by civil wars and poverty in China and retained by the abundance of work in the flourishing port, most of them chose to stay back and began to arrange for the immigration of their kinsmen and their family members. This increase in immigration was boosted by the expansion in the volume of trade in the 1910's and 1920's during the tin and rubber boom.

More sheds sprung up over time and fulfilled the dual functions of work place and residence. Soon the jetties expanded as more immigrants came and brought their families over. The jetty residents namely the Ongs, Lims, Chews and Lees capitalized on their locations at the shorefront and boatmen's skill to offer shuttle and cargo service for the bigger ships in the sea. On the other hand, the Tans, Yeohs and Koays were involved mainly in charcoal and firewood trading.

Though assured by the British of legal recognition of their houses, these squatters were only given Temporary Occupation Licenses following the Independence of Malaya

in 1957. The TOLs have to be renewed annually and fees vary according to the size of the house and no guarantee of compensation if the houses are acquired for development. The Clan Jetties constantly faced the threat of demolition by the authorities who saw their living quarters as no more than squalid slums. In the 1930s, 1941, 1960s and 2006, one or more clan jetties were destroyed, but the resilient spirit of the clans pulled them through the hard times and some were revived and reconstructed.

Like fingers that jut into the sea, Clan Jetties line the water front of George Town and here we find a tight-knit community that has existed for over a hundred years, witnessed and contributed to the growth of the Penang port and fought hard to preserve a traditional lifestyle adrift in the urban setting. Encroaching development had previously posed a formidable threat to the very existence of this unique waterborne community.

However, the Clan Jetties are now included in the Core Area of the UNESCO World Heritage Site of George Town, and are cherished and conserved as a part of George Town's cultural heritage legacy.



Clan Jetties in the 1950s. Land Reclamation at the New Ferry Terminal has begun and both Lee Jetty and New Jetty have not been relocated to their present sites.



姓王桥

ONG
JETTY

Origin of the clan: Luanmeishe, Tong An District,
Quanzhou in Fujian Province
No. of buildings: 2

Moving from the Raja Tun Uda Terminal towards the southern part of George Town, Ong Jetty would be counted as the first of a number of jetties lining the coast off Weld Quay. However, unlike the other clan jetties, Ong Jetty was not developed into a residential settlement on stilts and retains its original function as a work jetty. Common resting sheds were built to cater to the needs of the working men from the Ong clan. The jetty's former site was actually located where the current ferry terminal is.

In present day, the sheds are used more as parking space for motorbikes, and a wooden pier can be found extended into the sea. It remains largely obscure and shadowed by its neighbouring Penang Port Commission building.





姓林桥

LIM
JETTY

.....
Origin of the clan: Houcunzhuang, Tong An District,
Quanzhou in Fujian Province
No. of buildings: 30
.....



Lim Jetty was formerly a much bigger settlement with 42 buildings before World War II. Unfortunately it was burnt down and destroyed during the Japanese bombing in December 1941. The reconstruction began slowly after the war and new temples emerged to cater to the spiritual needs of the residents. The houses with zinc roofs are split into two main separate areas with a single row of wooden huts lining along one walkway facing the sea and the other huts facing each other on the other side.



Ri Yue Than (Sun Moon Temple)



Giant walking puppets at Mazu procession

Ri Yue Than (Sun Moon Temple) was built in 1976 to worship the Lim Clan's Ancestral God Lim Tai Chor and Jintian Emperor God, together with other 15 Chinese deities to offer full protection to the clan jetty residents. The temple holds a special religious procession during the birthday of the Goddess of Seafarers Mazu on the 23rd day of the 3rd lunar month. The devotees will parade the statue of Mazu and cross the sea channel from Butterworth to the temple in an entourage of many boats. On land, the statue will be carried on a sedan chair for a street procession led by giant walking puppets and dragon dance. The devotees believe that crawling under the table where Mazu's statue is placed will bring them good luck and blessings. The temple is open 24 hours a day.



Main altar at Suan Hai Ing Yang Tian (Mountain Sea Ying-Yang Temple)

The other temple, Suan Hai Ing Yang Tian (Mountain Sea Ying-Yang Temple) depicts scenes of Hell on its walls and it is dedicated to the God of Hades, better known as Taiseh-yah by the locals. During the Hungry Ghost Festival which falls in the 7th Chinese lunar month every year, the temple is bustling with activities to please the wandering spirits who are allowed to return to the human world for a month. Giant paper effigies and images of the God of Hades with his collection of new paper clothes, are on display and smoked by continuous joss-stick burning and numerous other offerings. The festival ends in a spectacular bon-fire ceremony to send off the spirits back to where they belong.

Tucked in a small side alley near the end of Lim Jetty is the shrine dedicated to "Wu Gu Xian Zu" (Five Cereals God Shrine) also known as God of Herbs Shennong. This small shrine with windows designed like old Chinese-coins offers to protect the worshippers from diseases and calamities.



Wu Gu Xian Zu shrine



Origin of the clan: Xinglinshe, Tong An District,
Quanzhou in Fujian Province
No. of buildings: 75



Chew Jetty is the biggest and most visited water village amongst the Clan Jetties. The closed-knit Chew community played an important role in settling the Chew clan immigrants from the same hometown in the old days and it has largely been spared from the ravages of war and grew undisrupted over the years. The jetty offers boat shuttle service for the public to reach the ships parked in the middle of sea lanes and it is a favorite venue for shutterbugs and movie-setting catching a glimpse of the layback pace of the friendly villagers with small sundry shops, hair salon, beverage outlets and souvenir stalls lining the narrow alleys.



Chew Jetty circa 1960s

The annual prayer ceremony of 'Thi Kong Seh' held to commemorate the Jade Emperor God's birthday on the eve of the 9th day of the Lunar New Year is particularly celebrated on a grand scale here and remains one of the highlights in Penang's calendar of festivals.

Resident would prepare their offering of food like roast pigs, pastries and fruits and lay them on a 50 meter long altar by the side of the main road. The table sides are tied together with sugarcane, a symbol of gratitude to the God and auspicious red paper cuttings are hung from the sugar cane stems and pasted on the food offerings. The altar is surrounded by huge stands of colourful giant joss sticks and at the stroke of midnight fireworks are let off, turning the street into a magical sight.



Jade Emperor God's Birthday Celebration

There are two temples found on both ends of the Chew Jetty. Chao Yuan Kong (Temple of Good Health) at the entrance of the Jetty is dedicated mainly to the Baosheng God of Health who protects the clansmen from sickness and diseases. Kang Thean Kong (Temple of God's Blessings), which faces the sea venerates Xuantian, the North Polar God in charge of water and fire safety.

The other temples found in the vicinity are Hai Gua Kiong (Temple of Sea Blessings), with several Taoist deities including Taishang Old Master, Confucius and Daerye, offering fortune, safety

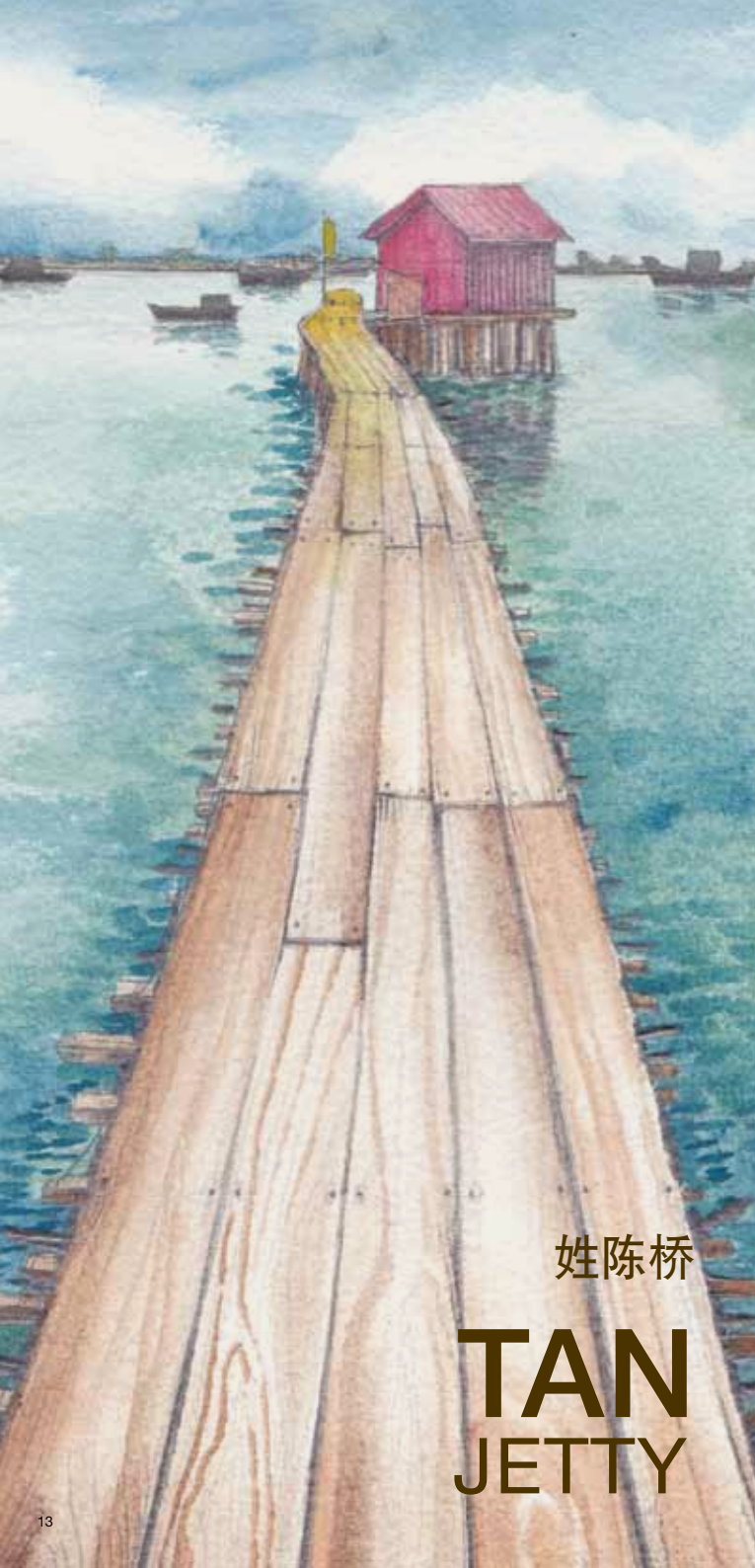


Chao Yuan Kong (Temple of Good Health)

and wisdom to the worshippers. Another nearby Taoist temple, Ting Hai Keong (Temple of Storm Calming) has the North Polar God Xuantian and 14 other deities seated on its altars. Qing Yan Gong (Clear Rock Temple) on the main road is one of the few temples in the country where the patron god is the Monkey King Sun Wu-kong.

A multi-purpose community hall is located behind the Chao Yuan Kong Temple and it is used by the residents for various activities including meetings, computer classes, performance shows and banqueting. It also serves as an interpretative centre for the Clan Jetties with several big panel boards explaining the history of the Clan Jetties in Malay, English and Chinese.





姓陈桥

TAN JETTY

.....
The origin of the clan: Bingzhoushe, Tong An District, Quanzhou in Fujian Province
No. of buildings: 11

The ancestors of Tan Jetty community were believed to be fishermen and oyster harvesters from a remote island off the coast of Fujian Province and arrived in Penang over an extended period of time. Initially they had a 'kongsi house' or common dwelling at Armenian Street where cooking and accommodation were shared. Tan Jetty began its existence when the clansmen erected stilts to tie their sampans after offloading the shipment. A simple shed was built as rain shelter on top of the stilts and by 1917, the number increased to 5 and those with families started to move in. This is how a clan jetty typically began.



Temple of Goddess of Seafarers Mazu

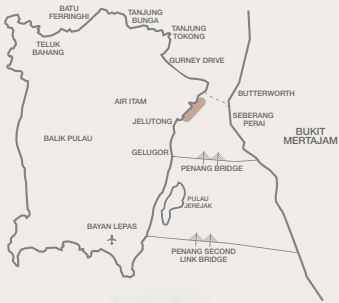
Chow Eng Tien (Temple of Reflection) was established in 1917 and rebuilt in 1968. The Patron God is General Tan Guan Kwong who lived in Tang Dynasty and honoured as the founder of Zhangzhou in Fujian. Twice a week, devotees can seek for the solutions to their problems through a medium, but the requests are restricted to non-fortune hunting (e.g. gambling) queries.



Chow Eng Tien (Temple of Reflection)

Tan Jetty ends with a solitary Temple of Goddess of Seafarers Mazu in a distant walkway. Among the deities revered here are the Child Prince Nazha and Prince Tan. Tan Jetty is also the venue where the sacred boat of Nine-Emperor Gods from the Kuan Im See Temple at Burmah Road is sent-off to the sea.

CLAN JETTIES OF GEORGE TOWN



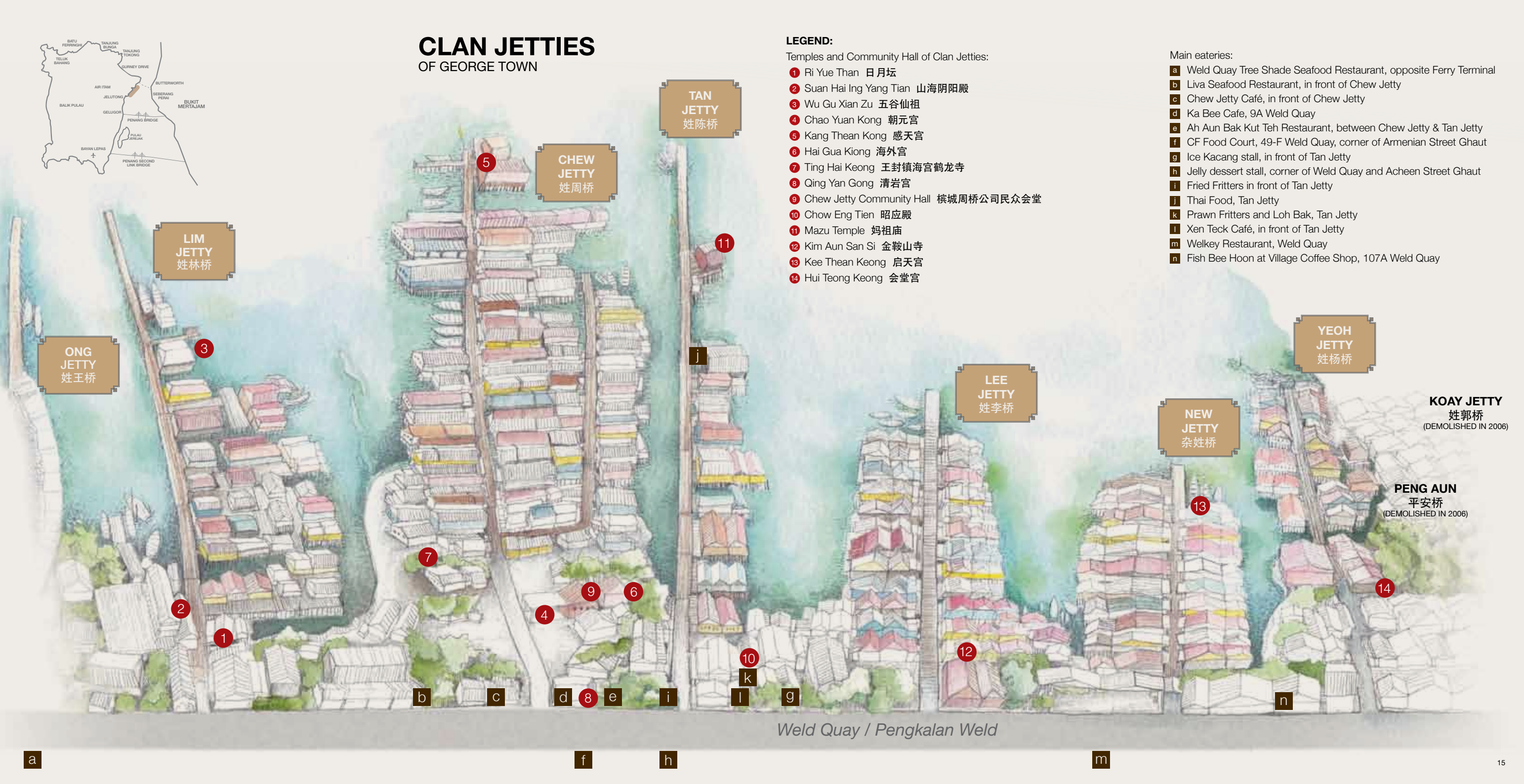
LEGEND:

Temples and Community Hall of Clan Jetties:

- 1 Ri Yue Than 日月坛
- 2 Suan Hai Ing Yang Tian 山海阴阳殿
- 3 Wu Gu Xian Zu 五谷仙祖
- 4 Chao Yuan Kong 朝元宫
- 5 Kang Thean Kong 感天宫
- 6 Hai Gua Kiong 海外宫
- 7 Ting Hai Keong 王封镇海宫鹤龙寺
- 8 Qing Yan Gong 清岩宫
- 9 Chew Jetty Community Hall 檳城周桥公司民众会堂
- 10 Chow Eng Tien 昭应殿
- 11 Mazu Temple 妈祖庙
- 12 Kim Aun San Si 金鞍山寺
- 13 Kee Thean Keong 启天宫
- 14 Hui Teong Keong 会堂宫

Main eateries:

- a Weld Quay Tree Shade Seafood Restaurant, opposite Ferry Terminal
- b Liva Seafood Restaurant, in front of Chew Jetty
- c Chew Jetty Café, in front of Chew Jetty
- d Ka Bee Cafe, 9A Weld Quay
- e Ah Aun Bak Kut Teh Restaurant, between Chew Jetty & Tan Jetty
- f CF Food Court, 49-F Weld Quay, corner of Armenian Street Ghaut
- g Ice Kacang stall, in front of Tan Jetty
- h Jelly dessert stall, corner of Weld Quay and Acheen Street Ghaut
- i Fried Fritters in front of Tan Jetty
- j Thai Food, Tan Jetty
- k Prawn Fritters and Loh Bak, Tan Jetty
- l Xen Teck Café, in front of Tan Jetty
- m Welkey Restaurant, Weld Quay
- n Fish Bee Hoon at Village Coffee Shop, 107A Weld Quay



Weld Quay / Pengkalan Weld



姓李桥

LEE
JETTY

.....
Origin of the clan: Duishancun, Tong An District,
Quanzhou in Fujian Province
No. of buildings: 24
.....



Coming from the impoverished village in China, the Lee kinsmen began their new lives in Penang as coolies and stayed in the narrow 'Sampan Lane' next to Stewart Lane. The original Lee Jetty was built and located at where the Ferry Terminal lies today. The residents were forced to evacuate when the new ferry terminal began its construction in early 1960's and they moved to the current site and started a new jetty. Life was hard for the Lees who had to eke out a living as boatmen competing with other clan jetties to shuttle sailors from the ships to the shore and vice-versa. Disputes and quarrels broke out frequently in the old days but with the help of inter-clan mediators and gentlemen agreement on the rules of conducting shuttle business, the relationship among the clan jetties took a turn for the better and became more harmonious.

Kim Aun San Si (Golden Saddle Hill Temple) which is main temple for Lee Jetty residents started in 1972. The main deity worshipped here is the Baosheng God of Health, brought over from the



*Kim Aun San Si
(Golden Saddle Hill Temple)*

home village in China, a common practice among the temples in Clan Jetties which treasure their ancestral and spiritual links to the home towns. Another 2-foot high idol of Child Prince Nazha who is well revered by the locals is believed to be smuggled out from the main shrine in China during the Cultural Revolution to save it from destruction.



杂姓桥

NEW JETTY

.....
Origin of the clan: No particular affiliation with any village in Fujian Province
No. of buildings: 20



Unlike the other clan jetties, the New Jetty which was formed in 1962, catered mainly for people from different backgrounds and family names. Many of the residents moved here from the nearby Chew Jetty when they were allowed to begin a separate jetty. The new site followed more stringent planning requirements from the Land Office and essentially maintains the look of the 1960s with the old-fashioned window grills and appears neater than the other clan jetties.

Two houses were removed when the water pipe connection project from the mainland to Penang Island passed through the jetty.



*Kee Thean Keong
(Temple of Heaven Ascension)*

A small temple named Kee Thean Keong (Temple of Heaven Ascension) is found at the end of the jetty, worshipping Xuantian God, Tua Pek Kong and a corner shrine is dedicated to Dato' Kong.



姓杨桥

YEOH JETTY

Origin of the clan: Xiayangcun, Haicheng District,
Zhangzhou in Fujian Province
No. of buildings: 20



Lesser known among the existing clan jetties, Yeoh Jetty is the last clan jetty along the coast and much of it is standing on dry land due to the reclamation done in the past few decades. The jetty suffered bombing damage during the war and many residents did not return to live at the jetty. It is quiet place nowadays except during the Nine-Emperor Gods Festival when the pier in front of the jetty is used as the send-off point for the sacred boat from the Hong Kong Street Tow Boh Keong Temple.



*Dog Idol at Hui Teong Keong
(Temple of Meeting Hall)*

Hui Teong Keong (Temple of Meeting Hall) is an interesting shrine which incorporates a number of deities including a canine god. The Patron God Wu Xian is the God of Fire and Chor Soo Kong is in charge of curing sickness. A

dog idol sits underneath the main altar and it is believed to possess special power. During the end of 9th Lunar Month, a festival to celebrate the birthday of Patron God Wu Xian is held.



平安橋

PENG AUN JETTY

(demolished in 2006)

Origin of the clan: No particular affiliation with any village in Fujian Province
No. of buildings: 20



Old signboard of Peng Aun Jetty

Peng Aun (Peaceful in Hokkien dialect) Jetty was set-up in 1960s by people from different clans not long after Koay Jetty was established. The given name was chosen to reflect its peaceful set-up, unlike other clan jetties which faced the threat of demolition right from the beginning. However, Peng Aun Jetty did not withstand the tide of change after half a century and finally gave way to a new high-rise housing development project in 2006.



Peng Aun Jetty circa 2005



姓郭桥

KOAY JETTY

(demolished in 2006)

The origin of the clan: Baiqipu, Hui An District,
Quanzhou in Fujian Province
No. of buildings: 35



Old signboard of Koay Jetty

The Koays were descendants of the Chinese Hui Muslim minority originated from Quanzhou, the main Chinese port where sea silk-route began and Arab traders used to frequent. This group of Koays who chose to emigrate to Penang was integrated into the greater Chinese society and drifted away from their ancestors' religious belief through the years. However, one unique Muslim custom remained and was faithfully followed. When a family member passed away, the other members would refrain from consuming pork for an extended period up to 3 years. To ensure everything is pork-free, entire different set of utensils would be used. The Koay Jetty which began in 1950's was demolished together with Peng Aun Jetty in 2006 and the entire community dissipated as a result.



Koay Jetty circa 2005

CULINARY DELIGHTS IN THE VICINITY OF THE CLAN JETTIES

The Clan Jetties area is well known to be the place for reasonably inexpensive and delicious food in Penang. Long associated with the working class, the eating outlets are simple and the food is mainly Hokkien-style with seafood as the principle ingredient. Some of the favorite local dishes found in the vicinity of Clan Jetties are:

1. Hokkien Mee (prawn soup noodle)
2. Loh Mee (noodle in savory gravy)
3. Lok-Lok (skewered food in boiling water)
4. Oyster Porridge
5. Fish Head Bee Hoon (rice noodles)
6. Tom Yam Noodle
7. Loh Bak (meat roll)
8. Pisang Goreng (banana fritters)
9. Banchang Kuih (pancake)
10. Oh Kio (jelly dessert)



MAIN EATERIES:

- a. Weld Quay Tree Shade Seafood Restaurant, opposite Ferry Terminal
- b. Liva Seafood Restaurant, in front of Chew Jetty
- c. Chew Jetty Café, in front of Chew Jetty
- d. Ka Bee Cafe, 9A Weld Quay
- e. Ah Aun Bak Kut Teh Restaurant, between Chew Jetty & Tan Jetty
- f. CF Food Court, 49-F Weld Quay, corner of Armenian Street Ghaut
- g. Ice Kacang stall, in front of Tan Jetty
- h. Jelly dessert stall, corner of Weld Quay and Acheen Street Ghaut
- i. Fried Fritters, in front of Tan Jetty
- j. Thai Food, Tan Jetty
- k. Prawn Fritters and Loh Bak, Tan Jetty
- l. Xen Teck Café, in front of Tan Jetty
- m. Welkey Restaurant, Weld Quay
- n. Fish Bee Hoon at Village Coffee Shop, 107A Weld Quay



CLAN JETTIES VISITORS' ETIQUETTE

BE A GOOD VISITOR TO THE JETTIES:

1. Smoking is strictly prohibited.
2. Do not litter. Make sure all waste is properly disposed of or taken away from the site.
3. Avoid shouting, yelling or talking loudly.
4. Please avoid coming in huge numbers. This may affect the structure of the fragile timber jetties.
5. Use toilets only at the designated locations.
6. Be sensitive to local customs. Some residents are conservative and require more personal space.
7. Request permission before photographing people, events or sacred objects.
8. Some areas are designated for the exclusive use of local residents.
9. Good etiquette during the visit is appreciated.

SUPPORT THE LOCALS:

1. Support the host community in ways beneficial to sustain the Clan Jetties.
2. Purchase locally produced items and services that can benefit the local community.
3. Consult local heritage guides or residents of host community as to how you can assist the community even after your visit.
4. Share this freely distributed guidebook with your friends to help disseminate information and promote awareness for a better understanding of the heritage site and its community.



George Town World Heritage Incorporated (GTWHI) was established by the Penang State Government as the State Heritage Agency in April 2010 to spearhead efforts to ensure that George Town's legacy will not be lost.

GTWHI is an organisation dedicated to protecting, promoting and preserving George Town as a sustainable city. GTWHI works in cooperation with the federal, state, and local governments as well as several non-governmental organisations to manage, monitor, promote, and execute heritage-related activities. We identify the problem areas, build a strategy, and call on experts and stakeholders in our vast network to work with us towards the solution.

George Town is a living legend, but it will disintegrate before our very eyes should we fail to nurture it. Therefore, research, impact studies, site usage, public awareness, branding, promotion, public transport, tourism, and security must be given equal attention.

To ensure the sustainability of the World Heritage Site, we work with many partners and collaborators, from conservation specialists and state and city authorities for better planning, conserving and management of the physical site; to historians and arts practitioners on a programme of educational and cultural activities.

We provide advice to property owners, architects and builders; conduct skills development workshops; provide resources on George Town and heritage through our library and digital archive; and we engage with school children, students of institutes of higher learning, and the public through our programme of talks and activities.



Research and Documentation by:
Clement Liang

Clement Liang is an ardent history researcher and serves in a local NGO advocating the conservation of Penang's heritage. He was involved in the "Save Koay Jetty" campaign in 2005 and led a project in exhibiting the history of Clan Jetties in time for International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) inspection before the inscription of George Town as World Heritage Site. His other activities include conserving the historical cemeteries, producing brochures and signboards on the German and Siamese heritage trails in Penang.



Paintings by:
Eric Yeoh

Artist **Eric Yeoh** is a true Penangite at heart who simply adores the island. He has had solo and joint exhibitions in the past and has collaborated with Penang Heritage Trust and Penang Players Music & Drama Society. Apart from capturing Penang's charms through his artworks, like most Penangites, he enjoys eating!