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Building (Bangunan Dewan Undangan Negeri (DUN) Sarawak) Sarawak Steamship Building 17. General Post Office

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was demolished to make way for the new

golden-domed temple which was opened

in 1982. It is one of the city's most notable

landmarks and is the religious and cultural

centre of Kuching's Sikh community. When

viewed from the Padang Merdeka end of

Jalan Masjid it forms a stunning panorama

together with the Kuching City Mosque,

a visual testament to Sarawak's racial and

religious harmony.

Old Fire Station

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The Sarawak Islamic Museum is housed in the Maderasah Melayu Building, built by the Brooke Government in 1930 as a boy's secondary school to educate Malay students. The school was closed in 1964 and the building taken over by the Education Department. It was extensively renovated and opened as the Islamic Museum in 1992. It presents a clear picture of the rich historical heritage and special culture of the Muslim community in Sarawak and throughout the Malay-Indonesian archipelago, and traces connections with the development of Islam in the rest of the World. It consists of 7 galleries set around a central courtyard garden, each with a different theme.

Old Government Printing Office

The old Government Printing Office was

built in 1908 at the junction of Khoo Hun

Yeang Street and Barrack Road, on the

former site of the first Ladies' Club. When

the Printing Office moved out in 1951,

the building was extensively renovated

to house the newly-formed Kuching

Municipal Council, later Kuching City South

Council. When the council moved to its

new premises in Jalan Padungan, the

building served as the Kuching Resident's

Office until 2014. It is now occupied by

the Sarawak Museum Department.



The Central Police Station was built to replace the old police station formerly located on the site of the General Post Office. It opened in 1931 and has retained its original function and façade to the present day. It stands out prominently among the buildings lining the Padang Merdeka thanks to its blue and white colour scheme, common to all police stations in Malaysia.



The Masjid Bandar Kuching (Masjid India) is accessible via a narrow lane from India Street or through its main cortage. or through its main entrance on Gambier Road. It is the oldest intact mosque in the State, built in 1876 on the site of an old wooden surau (prayer room). Prominent members of the Indian Muslim community constructed the shophouses that surrounded the mosque in the early 20th Century and donated them to the mosque as a revenue source. Inside the mosque is a huge drum or bedok, which accompanies the call to prayer.



The Astana, across river from the

Kuching Waterfront, was built in 1870 by

Charles Brooke as a bridal gift to his wife
Margaret. Laid out in the style of an

English manor house, it is the third and

last residence built by the Brooke Rajahs

and was occupied by the reigning Rajah

until the Japanese Occupation in 1941.

Now the Official Residence of the Yang

di-Pertua Negeri Sarawak (Governor of

Sarawak), the Astana has occupied a

significant place in the history of Sarawak;

The Astana

Built in 1879, the Square Tower is situated at Pangkalan Batu on the south bank of the Sarawak River at the eastern end of Kuching Waterfront. Originally intended as a fort and jailhouse, with its stout walls and massive gun emplacements, it fortunately never fired a shot in anger, unlike its wooden predecessor which was burnt down in the 1857 gold miners' rebellion. It has served as a jail, administrative office and even a dance hall, and is currently used as a fine-dining restaurant.



Kuching's Reservoir Park is a green lung in the heart of the old city, centered around two small lakes that were dug in 1895 to serve as reservoirs for Kuching's piped water supply. By the 1930s, the reservoirs fell into disuse, replaced by a much larger nstallation at Matang, but remained a popular recreational area. In 1975 the entire area was landscaped and footbridges, pavements, walkways and an auditorium built. The park is equally popular with joggers and wedding photographers thanks to its serene atmosphere.



The Siew San Teng Temple is popularly known as the Tua Pek Kong Temple after the name of its principal deity. Although the name translates to "Big Grand Uncle" in Hokkien, the deity is worshipped here by all dialectic groups. The temple has existed on this site since 1770, undergoing major reconstruction in 1856, 1965 and 2002. The site was carefully chosen, in accordance with feng shui principles, and it is believed the temple will bring peace, harmony and eternal prosperity to Kuching's Chinese



Fort Margherita

Margherita Fort built was to guard 1879 river Kuching's approaches from Named pirates. Charles after Brooke's wife.

Ranee Margaret, it was never put to the use for which it had been originally intended; only attack on the fort, though unsuccessful, came from the air when the Japanese bombed Kuching on Friday, 19 December 1941. This imposing land served as a Police Museum from 1971 before being handed over to the State Government. After extensive restoration work, it now houses the Brooke Gallery which showcases the history and legacy of Sarawak under the Brooke era.



Chinese History Museu

The building housing the Chinese History Museum was originally the Chinese Courthouse, completed in 1912. It was taken over by the Sarawak Chinese General Chamber of Commerce in 1930, then restored and converted into the Chinese History Museum in 1993. The museum portrays the rich and fascinating history of Sarawak's diverse Chinese dialectic groups, their respective traditional skills and cultural heritage, and the involvement of the Chinese community in modern, multi-racial Sarawak.



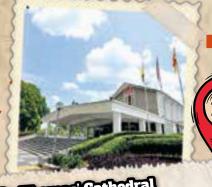
Hong San Si Temple

The Taoist Hong San Ti Temple is one of the most ornately decorated houses of worship in Kuching, with beautiful ceramic artwork, ceramic carp and other creatures adorning its rooftop. Dedicated to the Hokkien child deity Kong Teck Choon Ong, it is claimed to date from 1848. It is widely believed that the child deity appeared on the rooftops of Ewe Hai Street during the Great Fire of Kuching in 1884, warning the people and summoning the rain to put out the fire. The temple's annual procession, to commemorate Deity's birthday, falls on the 22nd day of the 2nd lunar month.



Hiang Tiang Siang Ti Temple

The Hiang Tiang Siang Ti Temple (also called Lao Ya Keng in Teochew) is dedicated to the Taoist deity of the same name and was built in 1889 to replace a smaller and simpler temple on the same site that had been razed by the Great Fire of Kuching in 1884. It features a small turtle pool and has a stage erected directly across the street for opera performances to entertain the deities. An imposing procession is held by the temple devotees on its feast day, which falls on the 4th day of the 12th lunar month.



The current St. Thomas' Anglican Cathedral was completed in 1956, exactly 100 years after Frank McDougall was consecrated the first Bishop of Sarawak in 1856. It replaced the old neo-gothic wooden built by McDougall with the assistance of a German carpenter in 1857. in typical mid-20th century British style and has an imposing bright red barrel-vaulted ceiling.



(Ethnographic Museum), opened in 1891, was originally designed in Queen Anne style but after many renovations nowadays more closely resembles the French provincial style. It was built by Rajah Charles Brooke to house and display indigenous arts and crafts and collections of local animals, encouraged by the famous naturalist, Alfred Wallace, who was collecting specimens in the country. It formerly housed an exceptional ethnographic collection but is currently closed until mid-2020 for conservation work before the collection is relocated to the new Sarawak Museum Campus, a major exhibition and research centre currently under construction across the footbridge.



The Old Fire Station was constructed to

house the first coal-powered fire engine

to be delivered from the UK in 1917. It was

later demolished when the new Fire Station

at Jalan Padungan was completed, but the

Drying Tower survives as a notable local

landmark. An alfresco food court sprang up

around the Drying Tower, and even though

it is now roofed-over, locals still fondly refer

to the location as the 'open-air market'.

This magnificent building has been in continuous use as the General Post Office since its completion in 1931. Designed by Denis Santry of Swan and Maclaren Architects, Singapore, it is the only building in Sarawak to employ the use of Corinthian columns in its facade treatment, along with semi-circular arches and ornamented column capitals and friezes. Deep parapet walls hide the pitched roof while the colonnaded portico serves as a corridor, while the rear of the building is simple and



The Sarawak Steamship Company and its predecessor, the Sarawak and Singapore Steamship Company, helped build Sarawak's infrastructure and encourage trade since 1875. The Sarawak Steamship Building was built to house its offices in 1930. It is nowadays used as a restaurant, with adjacent retail and display space.



The Pavilion Building, designed in the style of

a New Orleans Creole townhouse, was the first building in Sarawak to use reinforced concrete. Completed in 1909, it housed the Medical Headquarters and Hospital for Europeans until the mid-1920s, was then occupied by various government departments and was the Japanese propaganda centre during the nation. It was extensively restored in 2005, and opened to the public as a Textile Museum, housing a remarkable collection of traditional Borneo textiles.



the nine-storey State Sarawak

Legislative Complex (Dewan Undangan Negeri Sarawak or DUN) is where Sarawak's 82 elected state assemblymen meet and preside over debates and the passing of laws. It is fully equipped with high-tech information and communication technology. Described as one of the most beautiful buildings in Southeast Asia with its distinctive payung (umbrella) roof, it is an iconic landmark for Sarawak. It was officially opened by the Yang di-Pertuan Agong (King) of Malaysia, Tuanku Mizan Zainal Abidin of Terengganu, on 27 July 2009.



The Round Tower is an austere, fort-like building and may have been originally intended for military use, but became the new Public Dispensary on its completion in 1886. It replaced the former dispensary and hospital operated at Mission by Bishop Frank McDougall (a qualified surgeon). It remained a dispensary until 1947 and was later used by the Labour Office and the Subordinate Courts Registry. It is nowadays, the headquarters of the



The Japanese Building was the only administrative building constructed by the Japanese Occupational Force in Sarawak during World War II (1941-1945). Prisoners of war from Sabah and Sarawak (detained at Batu Lintang Camp) were marched daily to the site to provide the labour force for its construction.



The second Rajah, Sir Charles Brooke, died in England on May 17, 1917 and was buried in the England on May 17 shared of Shapetor Devon The country churchyard of Sheepstor, Devon. The government erected a memorial in the form of a 6-metre granite obelisk with a bas relief of the Rajah in marble, with bronze panels on each corner depicting raised figures of a Malay, a Dayak, a Chinese and a Kayan. During the unveiling ceremony, on October 16, 1924, Kuching received its first ever visit from an aircraft, a British navy seaplane. When it landed in the Sarawak River, some of the more superstitious members of the audience fled for cover, thinking it was the spirit of the old Rajah came to express his displeasure.



The Old Court House was built in 1871 as the seat of Sarawak's government, replacing an earlier wooden court house built in 1847, and was used for this purpose as late as 1973, with all Council Negeri meetings being held there since the fifth meeting in 1878. It is a superb collection of buildings, possibly influenced by Roman courthouse design, with magnificent belian (ironwood) roofs, massive columns enclosing outer galleries and beautiful detailing inside and out, reflecting local art / forms. The colonial-baroque Clock Tower was added in 1883. The Old Courthouse has recently been transformed into a dedicated cultural and art space, with frequent exhibitions, concerts and other activities.



Sarawak Tourism Board

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Kuching and you will certainly notice a historical building or site, stately and unique, enchanting always; these are just some of the attractive charms of the city. Singularly or clustered, these fascinating cultural and historic icons are found at almost every turn and step you take around the city.

Starting from the Brunei Sultanate Empire during the 17th and 18th Century to the White Rajahs for much of the 19th and 20th Centuries, the city's wealth of heritage sites offer an exciting mix of western and eastern influences spread within walking distances of each other. A haven to most, it is also bewilderment in choice of venues to visit for those with premium on time.

Amidst the skylines of the City today, you will also find distinctive buildings from the days gone by, from the Brooke Era and British Colonial style architectures, archaic Chinese temples and alleyways to surprisingly fresh new looks for centuries old shophouses. This once riverine trading post has since then grown to be a strategic port, administrative town, business centre and capital city. Almost all the modern amenities expected of a city are available here, minus the hustle and bustle of a metropolis. Careful planning of the surrounding environment to maintain this leisurely pace is Kuching's gift to residents and visitors alike, a feeling of warmth and comfortable existence that

is real and stimulating.

Kuching; most visitors cannot tell the residents from the out-oftowners as this melting pot of ethnic diversity is both fascinating and interestingly confusing. The rich varieties of food can be tempting, challenging; indecisions on choices are positively understandable. Also, those travelling with pocket dictionaries quickly discover their usefulness - inside the backpacks! as English is both spoken and welcomed here. Discover Kuching and be prepared to be surprised by its rich historical, cultural treasure trove and warm friendly people.

Sarawak's Early History (1841-1941)



he early history of Sarawak is unique in Malaysia as the state was ruled not by a foreign empire, but by a family. The Brookes (also called the White Rajahs) were responsible for most of the early architectural and urban development of Kuching, having been in rule for 100 years.

The First Rajah, James Brooke (born 29 April 1803, died 11 June 1868) was a man of adventure. Born in Benares, India, he served in the Burmese war in 1825 and began his sailing adventures with the purchase of a schooner, The Royalist, in 1835 from an inheritance of 30,000 Pounds upon the passing of his father.

On April 15 1839, James arrived in Sarawak and was enlisted by the then Governor, Pengiran Muda Hashim, uncle of the Brunei Sultan, to put down a revolt. With superior weapons and tactics, he quickly quashed the rebels and in return, was made Rajah in 1842, thus initiating the reign of the White Rajahs here.

Kuching then consisted of humble timber huts with nipah thatched roofs nestled along the Sarawak river, primarily the stretch along the present Main Bazaar. Some of the notable buildings during James' reign were Bishop's House (1849), old State Mosque (1847), the Government House (1857), the St. Thomas Cathedral (1857) and the Tua Pek Kong (pre1839).

Charles Brooke (born 3 June 1829, died 17 May 1917) was the nephew of James and succeeded the first Rajah in 1868. Charles was the consummate administrator and a sticker for order and decorum.

Mr. A.B. Ward, a civil servant who served under the Rajah from 1899 to 1923, had remarked that dinners at the Astana were always formal and punctuality was obligatory. At the sound of the guns from Fort Margarita at 8pm sharp, diners were led in personally by the Rajah.

Punctually at 10pm, the Rajah would bid his guests and officers good night before retiring to bed, leaving his guests to depart as best they could.

