

Living On

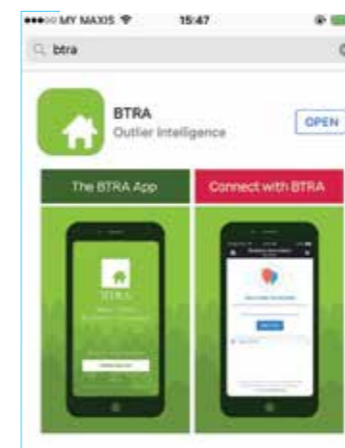
The Hill

DECEMBER 201





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GUEST EDITOR **Karen Hoh** • PRODUCTION **Sasya Ahmad Sebi** • PRINT AND DESIGN **Adat Saga Sdn Bhd**

GUEST CONTRIBUTORS **Nor Jasmin binti Mohd Azmi** • **John Smurthwaite**

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The President Speaks

Another year has flown by, and by all counts, not a great one for humankind in general. That said, a new year is upon us and we can only hope that 2017 is better for everyone.

As we close 2016 and greet 2017, I'm pleased to say that our neighbourhoods are in good stead, in general. We have a thriving little commercial hub in Taman Tunku – the aroma of fresh coffee and croissants is so alluring that sometimes I can hardly find a seat at Kenny Hills Bakers, despite its expansion! CIMB Bank, in its foresight, set up a branch here years ago, and it is a most convenient branch, to say the least. Sid's Pub is practically an institution here, and for those who like pub grub, it's the place for you.

However – there's always a "but," right? – something terrible and dangerous lurks in our neighbourhoods. I refer to the many abandoned properties in Bukit Tunku and Taman Duta. BTRA Committee Members undertook an informal survey recently to determine the state of abandoned properties in the area. Astonishingly, there are at least 16 streets with derelict properties! Needless to say, this is unacceptable and we have written to DBKL to draw their attention to the situation. That notwithstanding, if you know any of the owners of these properties, may I ask that you have a word in their ear about clearing up their properties? We want our neighbourhoods to be well kept, for that has a direct impact on the aesthetic appeal and value in general.

On a more positive note – the BTRA Mobile App is now ready for download. It's free on the iOS and Android platforms, for smartphones only at this time. Please take a few minutes to download it. Importantly, there are value-added features for BTRA members who have signed up for the Security Patrol Scheme, so if you haven't done so yet, now's the time. Since the BTRA Mobile App is new, we welcome your feedback and suggestions so the developers can improve it with updates.

Lastly, a reminder for members living in Taman Duta and Tijani, there are representatives in your respective neighbourhoods who are Sub-Committee members. Please do contact Nor Jasmin binti Mohd Azmi (Taman Duta) and Rosanna Rashid (Tijani) if you have enquiries or suggestions for BTRA.

May I take this opportunity to wish everyone Season's Greetings, Happy New Year, and Gong Xi Fa Cai for the Year of the Rooster (28 January 2017)!

Muthanna Abdullah

BTRA Security Patrol – 14 Years and Counting

Fourteen years on and the BTRA Security Patrol still roams Bukit Tunku and Taman Duta, covering the vast area that make up our respective neighbourhoods.

This news story from The Star, dated 15 July 2002, shows the humble launch of the neighbourhood security patrol at the National Tennis Stadium on the corner of Langgak Tunku and Jalan Duta.

What's changed since the early days? First, there was only one patrol car then, where today there are two patrol cars and one motorcycle. Second, and more pertinent, the density of our neighbourhoods has increased. New houses and condominium developments mean more people living in our neighbourhood. Some residents have engaged their own private security, to be sure. And Tijani is a gated community within Bukit Tunku. That said, an extra layer of security can be an advantage.

If you know of a neighbour who is not yet a member of BTRA or the BTRA Security Patrol Scheme, do let him or her know. These households can be identified because they do not have the "BTRA Security" house sign.



Bkt Tunku folks launch night patrols

By JACOBUS RAJ

BUKIT Tunku residents have taken a step in the right direction to prevent crime in their neighbourhood with the launch of nightly security patrols.

Residents Association Security sub-committee chairman Gan Tee Jin said the patrols had started in March, but were only officially launched yesterday.

He said the scheme took almost two years to plan and implement. The committee had to hold several discussions with the police and security companies before appointing Semai Hikmat Guardforce Sdn Bhd to handle the patrols, Gan said.

"Two officers will be patrolling the neighbourhood between 7pm and 7am while a guard at the office will respond to distress calls," he said.

About 50 association members have signed up for the scheme and the costs will be shared among them. Another security sub-committee member Tan Hoe Pin said response was good as more members had expressed interest in signing up.

Sentul OCPD Asst Comm Ishak Abdul Aziz, who was accompanied by senior officers from the Sentul Police district headquarters, launched the security patrol.

He said the patrols would complement that of the police, which already had a radio car making the rounds 24 hours a day.

ACP Ishak said there had been a drop in crime rate in the Sentul district with only 503 cases reported until the end of last month as opposed to over 800 for the same period last year.

"Of the 503 cases, only four occurred in the Bukit Tunku area," he said.

ACP Ishak also gave some tips on crime prevention to the residents.

He advised them to be alert always, not to be careless or give criminals an opportunity to commit theft. Among his tips were to vary the routes taken on the way home; to take all keys into the bedroom at night; light up their house compounds and to ensure that there were no trees which could serve as a ladder for thieves.

ACP Ishak and his officers later joined the residents for a durian feast at the Jalan Duta Tennis Complex in Bukit Tunku.

ACP Ishak launching the Bukit Tunku security patrols while Gan (right) and Tan look on.

The new Security Scheme contact is Adam Smurthwaite, asmurthwaite@gmail.com.



Living on the Hill Security Scheme

Dear Friends and Neighbours

The Hill has and will always be the best place to live for many of us, where we feel safe living and raising our families with strong community spirit.

With our current security scheme going into the 10th year, we have 66 paying members out of 455 individual homes. Currently we have two patrol cars and one patrol motorcycle to go around the neighbourhood, 7pm to 7am.



The benefits of this scheme are:-

- Members can expect up to **nine visits** per night.
- Those with their own security guards, can benefit from having an **additional layer of support**.
- Bukit Tunku has been one of the **safest area** within Kuala Lumpur with minimal theft.

To enhance security, we are looking to increase membership to over 100 houses. This will allow us to explore enhancement to our Security Scheme as follows:-



1 More patrol services



2 The security Committee is exploring deployment of security cameras installed at intersections and houses

These services would serve as a visible deterrent to intruders and also during its patrols, the guards are required to scan homes, often ensuring the privately engaged guards are alert and not asleep.

To make the above possible,
WE NEED YOUR FULL CO-OPERATION in joining this security scheme.

PERSATUAN PENDUDUK BUKIT TUNKU KUALA LUMPUR

No. Pendaftaran 1443/92 (Wilayah Persekutuan)
15, Dalam Tunku, 50480 Kuala Lumpur (Correspondence Address)

Tel: 012-382 7351 Fax: 03-2284 8788 Email: bukit.tunku.residents@gmail.com Website: www.btra.com.my



JOIN NOW



HELP MAKE OUR NEIGHBOURHOOD SAFER & THE BEST PLACE TO LIVE

We hope that you will participate in the above scheme by completing the attached form together with a payment of **RM 3,000** (a fee of RM250 per month paid 12 months in advance) made payable to **"Bukit Tunku Residents' Association - Security"** and return to us as soon as possible to:-

Mr. Brahma Vasudevan
1 Jalan Merchu, 50480 Kuala Lumpur

You will receive a sign and an electronic tag to be mounted on the gate, gate post or a nearby wall and the guards' contact details after we receive your cheque.

Please do not hesitate to contact any of the following security sub-committee members. We can always meet up to clear up any matters that we are not sure about.

Name	Email Address	Contact No.
Mr. Brahma Vasudevan	brahmal@me.com	012-686-6868
Mr. John Smurthwaite	John.Smurthwaite@tnsglobal.com	012-382-7351
Mr. Adam Smurthwaite	asmurthwaite@gmail.com	012-352-5373



President	Dato Muthanna Abdullah	Committee Member	Cik Khadijah Khalid
Dep. President	Dato' Tan Hoe Pin	Committee Member	Mr. Brahma Vasudevan
Hon. Secretary	Mr. John Smurthwaite	Committee Member	Mr. Vincent De Paul
Dep. Hon. Secretary	Ms. Jaspreet Kaur Gill	Committee Member	Dato' Cheah See Yong
Hon. Treasurer	Enok Mohammad bin Abdullah	Committee Member	Puan Nor Jasmin Mohd. Azmi
Dep. Hon. Treasurer	Mr. Tan Beng Keong	Committee Member	Puan Rossana Rashid
		Committee Member	Tg. Dato Rahimah Sultan Mahmud

Jalan Tunku Roundabout: A New Look?



Most, if not all, of us who live in Bukit Tunku or Taman Duta use this roundabout several times a day – you know the one, with directional street signs and a digital clock that more often than not is on the blink. The number of times it has been “repaired” probably exceeds the cost of its upkeep.

Furthermore, the whole plot looks a bit sorry, with brown patches on the grass and rather insipid looking trees attempting to grow. Not quite in line with our tree-lined streets and vibrant secondary jungle – it’s in dire need of a little landscaping!

Your BTRA Committee has submitted a proposal to DBKL to upgrade this roundabout and turn it into a nice green plot with trees and shrubs to better reflect the vibe of our neighbourhood. The proposal calls for the removal of the clock, and the installation of palm trees surrounded by short shrubs.

The placement of the trees should not obstruct the directional street signs. We await feedback from DBKL.

Derelict Properties : Update and Action

How many derelict properties lie in our midst, do you think? A recent informal survey in Bukit Tunku and Taman Duta uncovered several abandoned properties on at least **16 streets!** These places are in desperate need of clearing, cleaning and fumigation. They are a serious blight on our respective neighbourhoods, as well as a public health hazard and security risk to residents.

In November, BTRA wrote to DBKL’s Health & Environment Department (Jabatan Kesihatan & Alam Sekitar) to bring their attention to the appalling conditions of several properties in our area (which have been in this condition for several years), attaching a list and photographs of the properties.



- Swimming pools with stagnant water, which are clearly breeding grounds for Aedes and other types of mosquitoes, creating a huge public health risk to everyone in the neighbourhood and surrounding area.

Neighbours of any properties in an unacceptable condition are encouraged to report the case to DBKL.

We appeal to the owners of such properties to do the right thing by cleaning up your property to make it safe and presentable. We want Bukit Tunku and Taman Duta to be perceived as highly desirable neighbourhoods, among the safest and most liveable in Kuala Lumpur. Please do your part to make it so, and at the same time, preserve the value of your property, especially if you aim to rent or sell it. Friends of owners of these properties, please do spread the word to them!

The 16 streets in Bukit Tunku and Taman Duta:

- | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Dalaman Tunku | 9. Lurah Tunku |
| 2. Dataran Tunku | 10. Persiaran Bukit Tunku |
| 3. Jalan Bukit Tunku | 11. Simpangan Tunku |
| 4. Jalan Lembah Tunku | 12. Jalan Tunku Putra |
| 5. Jalan Merchu | 13. Lorong Duta 2 |
| 6. Jalan Tunku | 14. Lorong Duta 5 |
| 7. Laman Tunku | 15. Persiaran Duta |
| 8. Langgak Tunku | 16. Simpangan Tunku Putra |

Essentially, the following types of properties were highlighted :-

- Renovation/development work that has been halted or abandoned for more than 12 months: it is the view of the BTRA Committee that the outward appearance of these properties should be put to rights and made to look presentable. Hoardings are for construction sites only, and are extremely unsightly. Furthermore, hoardings can break off and pose a danger to passing motorists and people walking or jogging on these streets.
- Houses that are derelict and not properly secured: these properties attract vagrants, squatters, drug addicts; this presents a clear security and safety hazard to our community. This is not acceptable.

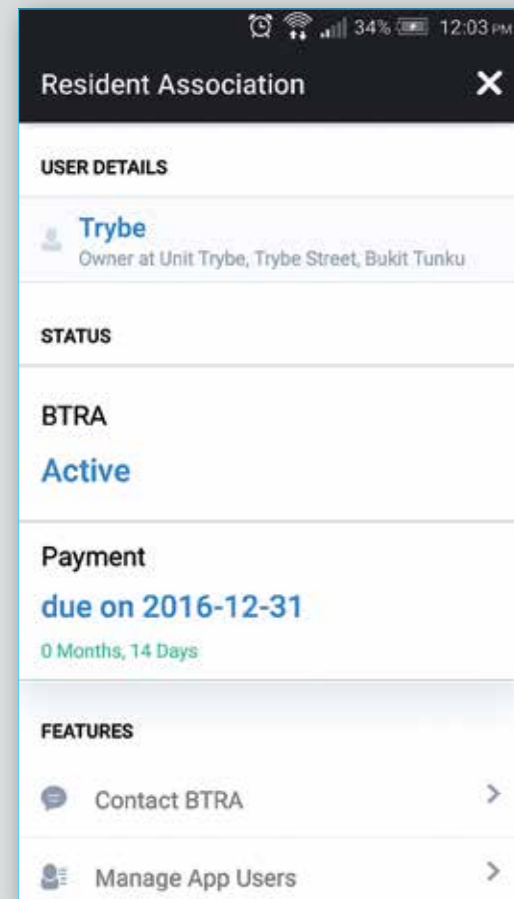
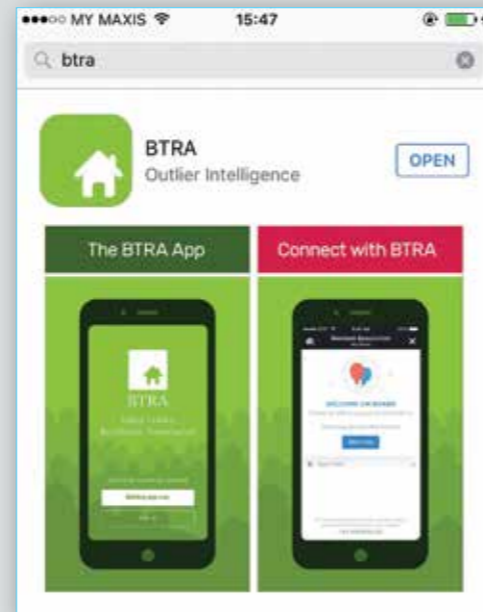
Useful Contact Numbers for Environment issues :

- | | |
|---|----------------|
| DBKL Hotline | : 1800 88 3255 |
| DBKL Tree Cutting | : 2693 4132 |
| Alam Flora
[garbage collection, road sweeping] | : 1800 88 7472 |
| TNB [street lights, power failure] | : 15454 |
| Syabas/Puspel [water leaks] | : 1800 88 5252 |

BTRA Mobile App is Ready for Download Now

The BTRA Mobile App is now ready for download on your iOS or Android smartphones – and it’s free. Just enter “BTRA” in the Apple App Store or Google Play search engine, press “search” and the app should appear. It’s easy to navigate and there is useful information on the App, such as public service telephone numbers, right at our fingertips.

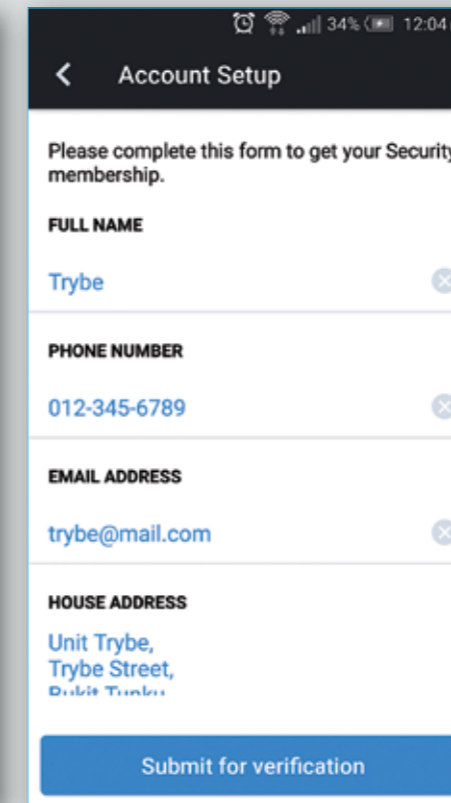
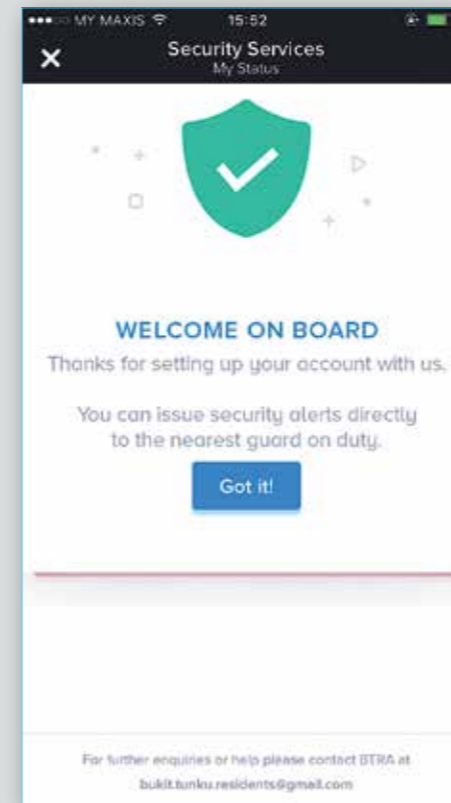
As a starting point, the BTRA App has many features that will bring residents of Bukit Tunku and Taman Duta closer together. It is designed to enhance outreach and communication among residents, such as the capability for members to provide suggestions. Additionally, residents can keep abreast of notices from BTRA Committee Members and the Executive Admin.



Once downloaded, you enter personal details and set up an account. Once your details are submitted to “central control” for verification, you will be approved. You may also receive a reminder about your membership status, i.e. if payment is due. If all’s in order, you will be able to navigate the BTRA App smoothly, using the navigation menu at the bottom of your screen.

You may also contact BTRA Committee Members or the Executive Admin through the app, either to provide feedback, or to suggest or publicise an activity, or to report neighbourhood happenings. That said, any message or notice meant for public consumption will be first reviewed by BTRA Admin and may be edited for clarity.

Perhaps most importantly, BTRA members who have signed up for the BTRA Security Scheme will have the benefit of extra features, such as the ability to alert the Security Patrol in the event of a security breach or incident. So, if you have not signed on yet to the BTRA Security Scheme, please do because you will have access to this value-added benefit on the BTRA App.



The BTRA App is in its early days, so please download it, and use it. Feedback is welcome in order to facilitate updates and improvements to make it relevant to the needs of Bukit Tunku and Taman Duta community.

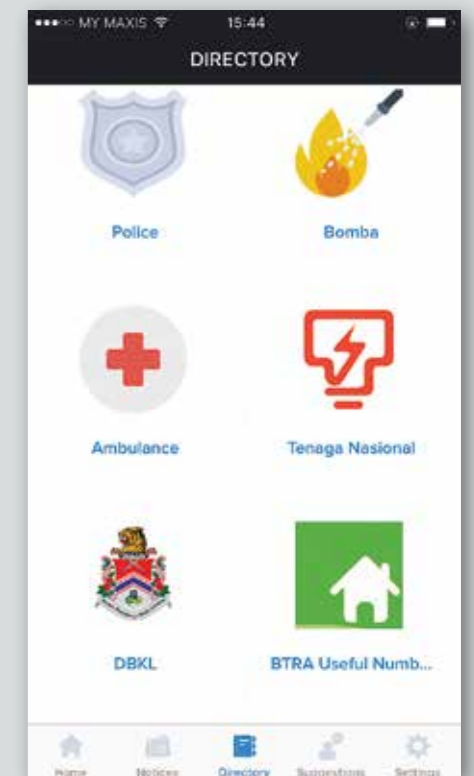
The BTRA App already has the capability to receive membership applications and payment, for both membership to the residents’ association as well as the BTRA Security Scheme. In future, we aim to introduce commercial transactions capability for selected services.

Launch and Community Fair in February!

An event is being organised for the week of 12th or 19th February 2017, at Taman Tunku, which will include the launch of the BTRA App and our second Community Fair. We hope that the Datuk Bandar will do the honours by attending the event to launch the App and the Community Fair. More information will be shared once things have been confirmed.

In the meantime, take a few minutes to download the BTRA App and familiarise yourself with its features!

Some of the public services with contact details available on the BTRA App. Scroll for more public services.



BTRA supports “Community Against Violence” SIROM Walk

On 27th November (Sunday), a group of residents of Bukit Tunku and Taman Duta supported the efforts of the Soroptimist International Region of Malaysia in its programme to stop violence against women and girls.

Spearheaded by Bukit Tunku resident Puan Sri Siew Yong Gnanalingam (who was the President of Soroptimist International South West Pacific from 2012 to 2014), SIROM organised its 5th “Walk the Talk – Stop Violence Against Women” event in collaboration with the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development, and the Polis Diraja Malaysia.



Puan Sri Siew Yong on the left, with BTRA Honorary Secretary John Smurthwaite and some BTRA members in support of SIROM's “Community Against Violence” walk on Sunday 27th November

The theme for 2016 was “Community Against Violence,” which covered all kinds of gender violence as well as bullying. This kind of physical and mental abuse has consequences that go far beyond the individual. It harms families, communities and economies.

Through the walk and educational talks, SIROM aims to create more awareness of the need for communities to be more alert, sensitive and concerned about any type of violence that may be happening within communities. Involving residents’ associations was a key factor in spreading the word and getting more people to walk the talk and talk the talk.

Soroptimist International is a worldwide organisation for women in management and the professions with 85,000 members in over 3,000 clubs in 132 countries. Its core mission is to transform the lives and status of women and girls through education, empowerment and enabling opportunities.

SUNWAY
PUTRA
Mall
KUALA LUMPUR

Next to PWTC

雙威太子廣場
繁華風尚
THE SPLENDOUR OF SPRING 迎新春
30 DEC - 12 FEB



Gong Xi Gong Xi. This Chinese New Year, let us take you back to the beauty, grandeur and elegance of Shanghai of yesteryears. Transcend back in time as you enjoy a different kind of retail therapy. For auspicious weekends, delight in shopping privileges, activities, performances and free parking*. Have an extraordinary cultural experience fit for your family and loved ones. Wishing you a Happy and Prosperous Chinese New Year.

Prosperous Redemptions



ANGPOW PACKETS
Redeemable when you spend RM300 (RM200*) in 2 receipts



ROOSTER PLUSH TOY
Redeemable when you spend RM700 (RM600*) in 3 receipts



BEAUTIFUL GOLD PENDANT (POH KONG & WAH CHAN)
Redeemable when you spend RM1800 (RM1600*) in 5 receipts.

*For HSBC Credit Cardholders and Sunway PALS members only.
*HSBC Credit Card new sign-ups are entitled to redeem one(1) Rooster Plush Toy with any amount spent. While stocks last. T&C apply.

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HSBC

SUNWAY PALS
Loyalty Programme

MIPM ASIA AWARD 2015
Best Retail/Shopping Building
Bronze Winner

PPW MALAYSIA AWARD 2016
Best Experiential Marketing Gold Winner

BTRA SECURITY SCHEME

COST

RM250 a month, paid a year in advance. In the event of early termination, the unexpired balance shall be refunded, less RM100 administrative charge.

Please return this portion with your payment. You will receive a sign and an electronic tag, to be mounted on the gate, gate post or a nearby wall, and the guards' contact details after we receive your cheque. The sign and electronic tag are properties of BTRA, and must be returned if your subscription is terminated.

Amount : RM3,000 for 12 months
 Payee : **Bukit Tunku Residents' Association - Security**
 Forward to : Adam Smurthwaite
 15 Dalam Tunku
 50480 Kuala Lumpur

BTRA member (Please tick)? Yes No

(If not, you need to become a member first. Please email bukit.tunku.residents@gmail.com for a membership form)

Subscriber's Name

Bank

Cheque No - Amount RM .

House Address

Email Address

House and Mobile 1. - 2. -

Phone* (of residents, not of landlord) 3. - 4. -

5. - 6. -

* To enable the Caller-Line Identification system to trace your emergency calls, please give us a list of the phone numbers that might be used to call the guards. Note that if your mobile phone does not send out its ID and displays "Private number" at the receiving end, then your call cannot be traced.

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTION FORM

I hereby apply for membership of the Bukit Tunku Residents' Association Kuala Lumpur in the appropriate category:

- Ordinary Member** - Owner or Resident of property
 - Representative of Management Corporation of condominium
- Associate Member** - Applicable to family members of Ordinary Member residing with Ordinary Member
 - Resident proprietor of condominium
- Corporate Member** (Applicable to corporation owning one or more properties in Bukit Tunku)

Name :

Address :

Postcode : City :

Residence Phone: - Fax: -

Office Phone : - Fax: -

Email Address :

Mobile : -

Occupation :

Signature Of Application :

Date : (Dd/mm/yy) / /

Cheque No : - Amount : RM .

Property Ownership (Please tick) : Sole Owner Joint-owned Company-owned

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION/ VOTING

- Ordinary / Corporate RM 200 – voting rights
- Associate RM 50 – no voting rights

A PUB FOR ALL SEASONS

(WHERE EVERYONE KNOWS YOUR NAME)

Pubs, or “public houses,” can be traced as far back as the 1st century, when the Roman Empire landed on the British Isles, built a network of roads and introduced the “tavern,” a place where Roman troops could stop for food and drink. After the Romans left, the Anglo-Saxons established alehouses, which grew out of domestic dwellings. These alehouses evolved into neighbourhood

meeting places, where people would come together for food and drink, friendly gossip and assistance. (source: Wikipedia)

And this is exactly the philosophy and spirit behind Sid’s Pub, a familiar place to many residents of Bukit Tunku and Taman Duta, and across other neighbourhoods in Kuala Lumpur.



Geoff Siddle, the entrepreneur behind the eight outlets in KL and Malacca (the latest is Sid’s Pub in Jonker Street), said that Sid’s Pub must be a place where he would feel entirely at ease bringing his parents, grandparents, a place filled with warmth and familiarity, “where everyone knows your name,” to borrow a well-worn phrase.

Geoff has been in Asia for most of his life, first in Hong Kong, followed by Macau, Singapore and then Malaysia. At each port, he’s brought a little flavour of Great Britain to the local community. “I’ve always loved pubs,” said Geoff, who confessed that Sid’s Pub in Bukit Tunku is his favourite.

“I was determined to open a Sid’s Pub here. Back then, a lot of the staff of the British High Commission used to live here, and I really liked the area. It seemed a perfect location for a Sid’s Pub, right within a neighbourhood with a strong British heritage,” Geoff added.

It was December 1996 when Geoff landed in Malaysia and his pub trail adventure started. He opened his first pub – The Long Island Iced Tea House – in May 1997 in Cangkat Bukit Bintang, then known as Jalan Hicks. “Back then, there were only two watering holes on that street – Little Havana and mine,” he said. After that maiden adventure and a subsequent stint opening three Finnegan’s Pub outlets in five years, Geoff returned to entrepreneurship and fully immersed himself in his labour of love. The first Sid’s Pub was born in Taman Tun Dr Ismail in 2007.

The rest is history, as they say. In rapid succession, Sid’s Pub outlets sprouted up in Bangsar South (May 2009); Bukit Tunku (November 2009); Plaza Damansara (2011); Medan Damansara (El Sid’s, serving Latin American food and drink); Jalan Tandok in Bangsar (Sid’s Handle Bar, inside a motorcycle accessory shop, opened in January 2015); and at KLGCC (2014, at the public driving range). The latest is Sid’s Pub at Jonker’s, opened in June 2016 by the British High Commissioner.



Geoff has held Oktoberfest and a fund-raising event for the SPCA. He is very open to exploring activities that bring people of the neighbourhood together for some fun, food and drink, as well as to support a cause.

“This crescent, Taman Tunku, is a perfect spot for a community activity. Selangor Properties has been supportive in the past by allowing us to use Taman Tunku. I hope we can collaborate again to create memorable events, not only for this neighbourhood, but also to do something for those in need,” Geoff said.

Many factors combine to make Sid's Pub special. In addition to preserving the tradition of British pub culture, Geoff has brought the community ethos to life across his outlets. Whatever the occasion – whether it's sports nights, fund-raising events, or Oktoberfest – one constant theme is clear: Sid's Pub is part of the community and brings people of that community together, many times for a specific cause.

A check on the Sid's Pub website (www.sidspubs.com) shows a list of events and sponsorships that Sid's Pub outlets have hosted or been associated with, from fund-raising for animal welfare groups and NGOs, to sporting activities and clubs. Perhaps unwittingly, there appears to be an overwhelming British theme when it comes to sports – football, cricket and especially rugby dominate the field of play.

Sid's Pub outlets are also involved in other more adventurous undertakings. The annual Ashes to Ashes Run sees a convoy of Harley-Davidson owners from KL cruise the highway to Singapore and back. The flag-off point is at Sid's Handle Bar and the bikers make a pit stop at the new Sid's Pub at Jonker's on the outgoing and return legs. Another is the Tour de Sid's, a cycling event in which participants start from Sid's Pub at Bukit Tunku, follow a route with pit stops at all seven Sid's Pub outlets, and return to the Bukit Tunku pub. For their efforts, Geoff makes sure that each cyclist is well watered and fed – offering each participant half a pint of beer, some food and plenty of water at each stop.

Geoff said that he would like to continue to involve Sid's Pub in such community events. Specifically at the Bukit Tunku pub,

Geoff credits the success of Sid's Pub to his long-serving staff – outlet managers and servers – who have taken on the mantle of bringing the traditional British pub culture to life at each outlet. It's no surprise, then, that Sid's Pub has been recognised in The Daily Telegraph's “Best of British” awards, a poll that celebrates the very best of British around the world.

In 2010, Sid's Pub at Bukit Tunku achieved the “Highly Commended” award in the “Best British Pub or Bar” category, while in 2012, Sid's Pub at Plaza Damansara was voted as the Best British Pub or Bar.

Sid's Pubs and Restaurants are firmly rooted in Malaysia, said Geoff. “There are plans for more outlets, but it's important not to over-stretch and risk losing the essence of our legacy. It's not about the number of outlets, but the experience and feeling that people get when they walk into any Sid's Pub. It has to be a place where you can get a proper pint and pub grub, and a place where everyone knows your name.”

SOURCES:

The Daily Telegraph Best of British 2010 results:

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/expat/expatpromotions/7616878/Best-of-British-awards-2010-the-results.html>

The Daily Telegraph Best of British 2012 results:

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/expat/9887564/Best-of-British-competition-the-2012-winners.html>

Hello From The Other Side (of the Hill)

Nor Jasmin binti Mohd Azmi

In the early 1990s, it was agreed that residents of Bukit Tunku and Taman Duta share a common interest in the overall well-being and sustainability of our respective neighbourhoods. The BTRA Constitution was thus amended to include and encourage residents of Taman Duta to join BTRA and increase our collective voice on matters of importance to our community.

Long-time Taman Duta resident, Nor Jasmin binti Mohd Azmi, shares memories of living on the other side of the Hill.



My late uncle and brother sharpening their badminton skills in our driveway. Nice cars in the background!

My family (parents and three children – I have a brother and a sister) have lived in Taman Duta, in this very same house on Lorong Duta 1, since 1976. That's 40 years, how time has flown! I stayed in the family home until 1988, when I moved to the “other side of the world,” aka PJ and Shah Alam, only to

return this year (2016). It's quite amazing how much one can accumulate over the years. Unloading and unpacking is one thing, but my mission now is to spring-clean and de-clutter, not just my belongings but all the “stuff” in the family house!

In those early days, our address didn't have “Taman Duta.” It was just street names and easy to remember. That said, it's kind of nice for our neighbourhood to have some kind of identity.

I recall we were the only house on our street, and there were two or three other houses on Lorong Duta 2. Taman Duta in general was sparsely populated. Those were the days when we could walk or cycle from one the end of Persiaran Duta to the other – where Hentian Duta is located now – without much thought for traffic hazards.

I wonder how many among us are aware that Lorong Duta 1 and Lorong Duta 2 (both dead-end streets) were known as a “lovers' lane” because of their seclusion? It's quite a different story now, of course.



*Down memory lane
My late mother with one of
her bird houses*

Today, there are four houses on our street, which, as a dead-end, has no through traffic. That said, living in the corner house means we can sometimes hear wild-riding motorists who rev their engines and speed along Persiaran Duta as if it was the Sepang race track – sometimes even drifting! Loud, obnoxious and inconsiderate people who do this in the dead of night. The first couple of times I heard the commotion, I thought there was an accident, and I almost went out to check! But these are road menaces, which I'm sure many of my neighbours in Taman Duta and Bukit Tunku are familiar with.

One of my enduring memories of living here in the early days was my mother planting many fruit trees, as well as keeping a herb garden. She was gifted with green fingers. We had durian, rambutan, rose apple (jambu air), pulasan, jackfruit, as well as the standard kaffir lime and pandan plants. Harvest season was fun and I remember our extended family members and friends would be invited to share in the bounty – whether fresh or in some of the delicious recipes that made their way to our dining table. Bordering secondary jungle, we had some interesting and

inquisitive four-legged visitors occasionally. As long as they didn't threaten or harm us, we were fine with the local wildlife.

Most of the original land owners of Taman Duta are retired senior civil servants. My own late father was a Supreme Court judge, who served with the late Lord President of Malaysia, Tun Salleh Abas. Other land owners in this neighbourhood comprise senior government bankers, military officers, and members of the judiciary. Some of them have sold their land to non-civil servants, which is positive for diversification and neighbour dynamics. There are some unoccupied houses, which I hope will be resolved soon.

Now that I'm back home and the Taman Duta representative on the BTRA Committee, I hope to get to know my neighbours more, perhaps meet them at my favourite watering hole, Kenny Hills Bakers. I'm all for meeting over a cup of coffee and a Danish – email me at azmijamin@gmail.com. I welcome a break from spring-cleaning and de-cluttering!

She was gifted with green fingers. We had durian, rambutan, rose apple (jambu air), pulasan, jackfruit, as well as the standard kaffir lime and pandan plants.

From Havana, With Love

John Smurthwaite

Tireless world traveler John recently visited Havana, a city seemingly caught in a time capsule and one that conjures images of classic vintage cars, Hemingway, cigars, Che Guevara and that unique Caribbean salsa vibe.

"Time-worn but magnificent, dilapidated but dignified, fun yet maddeningly frustrating, Havana is a city of indefatigable magic" – an apt description filched from a guidebook.

Old Havana – a 17th Century European Baroque and Neo-Classical-style city blended into a semi-tropical climate. Spanish buildings from previous centuries are "the magnificent and the dilapidated". The entire old city, I understand, is UNESCO Heritage unspoiled by any new buildings that don't match the old. In the pre-Castro days, Havana was a playground for American tourists, with casinos and a lively, exotic nightlife (those who have seen the movie *Godfather 2* will know what this looks like). When Castro emerged victorious in 1959, he nationalised foreign assets and confiscated the homes of the wealthy and foreigners, moving homeless and very poor families into these confiscated buildings. Over the next 50 years these buildings became badly run-down but still remained structurally sound.

Now with tourism strongly encouraged, ancient buildings are being restored at a rapid rate. "Magnificent" is an understatement for Old Havana though only a fraction of the buildings have been



beautified so far. The Plaza Vieja with its many cafes is an example of the proud classical homes from the past. The 150-year-old Opera House seating 1500 is another building so imposing and so beautiful. Right next door is the glorious Hotel Inglaterra.

Just nearby is perhaps the grandest of all, the Congress building, which is actually larger than, but a copy of, the US Congress edifice.

Havana boasts 49 – yes 49! – museums ranging from those displaying historical artifacts to a cigar and art museum to, of course, a museum that highlights the revolution. Signs of the revolution still abound with every tourist shop displaying Fidel and Raul mementos. But Che Guevara, the revolutionary Argentinian doctor, is the real hero. Caps, badges, paintings, fridge magnets and t-shirts presenting Che are absolutely everywhere.

And something else is ubiquitous – music! Every coffee shop, bar, restaurant and food outlet is not complete without a five-



piece band playing local music. You can salsa all day. And I mean all day. From mid-morning, those Cuban sounds begin and can be heard all over the city till late.

And where better to hear the best music than to follow the path of Ernest Hemingway. Tourists flock to the two bars that he apparently frequented to savour his favourite drinks - the daiquiri and mojito. El Floridita is crowded from mid-morning to late in the night as a constant stream of foreign visitors pass through seeking a daiquiri or two combined with non-stop salsa music. La Bodeguita del Medio is open to the street and curious tourists spill on to the walkway. And here you enjoy a mojito, not a daiquiri!

Writer and adventurer, Ernest Hemingway, tasted many of life's flavours while leading quite a tumultuous life. He saw action in the First World War as an ambulance driver, reported from the front lines in the Spanish Civil War and witnessed the landings on D-Day. He was injured countless times, including two plane crashes in Africa, and married four times! And to create an environment in which he could write, he repaired his farm outside Havana. When those surroundings became less conducive to his creativity, he rented a room on the fifth floor of the Hotel Ambos Mundos in Old Havana where he wrote some of his more important work. That was in the 1940s and 50s. Today his room pulls foreign tourists in like magnets at US\$2 a visit.

If alive today, he would be amused to see just outside the hotel on the walkway, dozens of foreigners, mainly youngsters tapping away on their smartphones in language less rich than his. The Hotel Ambos Mundos is one of the few wifi spots available in Havana. Wifi is still limited in Havana with many hotels not yet online. Another frustration is the inability to use credit cards, except in very few outlets and then only if from a country that



doesn't support sanctions. A few ATMs are available but basically you need cash, and preferably Euros as the exchange rate for US currency is appalling.

When problems arose with the West in the early 1960s, imports of cars virtually ceased right up until the past few years. So no visit to Havana is complete without a ride in a 1950, 8-cylinder gas-guzzling but glorious Buick, Chevrolet or Cadillac. 60,000 of these have been preserved and play a huge part in the tourist business and, of course, are a reminder of the days when Cuba was virtually a colony of the USA.

Commercial flights from the US were banned for 50 years by the US Government. Only in September 2016 did the first flights commence following a new deal by President Obama to try to normalise relations. This change was just too late for us and we had to fly to a third country first - in our case Grand Cayman.

The one slight disappointment was the food. The cuisine is mainly centred on seafood, which of course suits many but the menus were all very similar and not exciting. Desserts are almost unheard of but the coffees are excellent.

And as everyone knows, the cigars are excellent too, though only slightly less expensive than outside the country.

If you visit Havana, I strongly suggest accommodation in the old city. Hotels are not five-star but they are interesting and right in the action. You can stay in modern hotels outside the old city but that means daily transport into Old Havana.

Visiting Havana was like stepping into a time capsule. It's certainly time for Havana and other places in Cuba to join the 21st century and rise to its potential in the region. On the other hand, it's a little bit sad to think that in a few years, this land, steeped in culture and history, might succumb to the darker side of progress and modernisation. I, for one, hope that the inevitable development to follow will try to retain the beauty, romance, charm and magic of this sun-kissed island.



What's in a Street Name? (Part Two)

Part One of *What's in a Street Name?* in the last issue provided a snapshot of the history behind the name "Kenny" and naming of roads in the neighbourhood. There may be many long-time residents of Bukit Tunku who remember the early names of our streets - Jalan Kenny Timor, Jalan Kenny Dalam, Jalan Kenny Selatan and the like. "Kenny" has now been relegated to archival records, and soon it will only be the Baby Boomers among us who may feel a touch of nostalgia for the name "Kenny Hills."

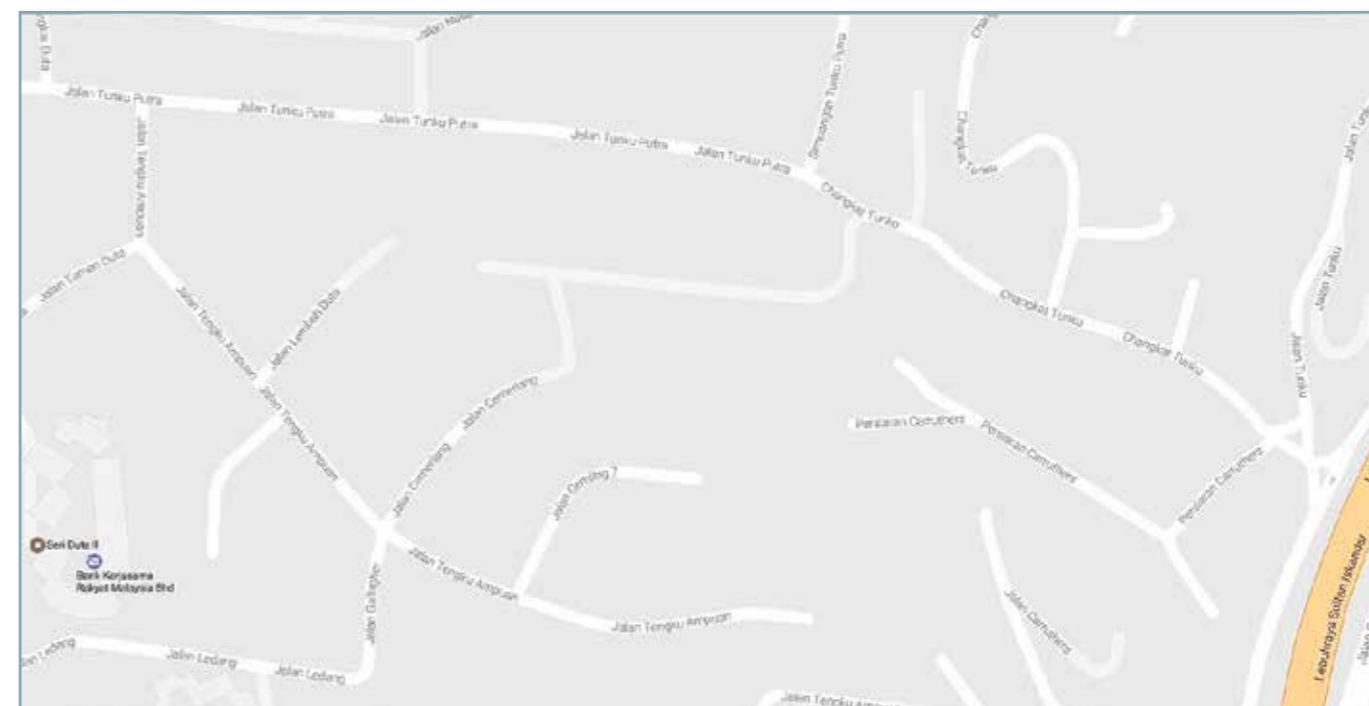
What of the names of some of the other streets in and around Bukit Tunku and Taman Duta?

There is the main thoroughfare we all know as Jalan Duta. "Duta" is the Malay word for "ambassador" or "envoy." The background to this street name is that a diplomatic enclave was planned for an area of about 250 acres between Lake Gardens and Segambut, adjacent to Kenny Hills. This scheme was scheduled for completion at the end of 1958, but a decade of price negotiations stalled the project. Foreign embassies, originally

enthusiastic, moved to other locations in the city, releasing this parcel of land for private residential development. Felix culpa, as it turns out!

Then, in 2014, as part of an initiative to rename major roads in the city, Jalan Duta and Persiaran Duta were renamed Jalan Tuanku Abdul Halim and Persiaran Tuanku Syed Sirajuddin, respectively. However, many people, especially residents of Bukit Tunku and Taman Duta, continue to refer to these roads as Jalan Duta and Persiaran Duta, mostly out of familiarity, and perhaps to hang on to that little bit of history and heritage. Other minor roads in the Taman Duta enclave - for example Jalan Taman Duta, Changkat Duta, Langgak Duta - have retained "Duta" in their names.

The connection between Bukit Tunku and Taman Duta is most clear in the street now known as Jalan Tunku Putra. This street's former name was Jalan Natesa (Natesa Road), and was renamed in 1981 for Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra Al-Haj, Malaysia's first Prime Minister. In fact, Tunku's presence is felt all the way down Jalan Tunku Putra. A street called Simpangan Tunku Putra

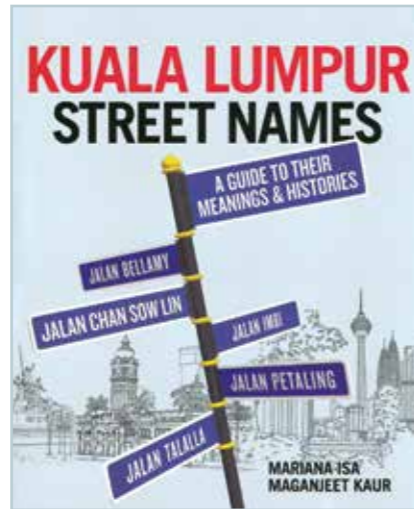


branches off from Jalan Tunku Putra, while Jalan Tunku Putra changes into Changkat Tunku, which leads to Jalan Tunku, the entry point to Bukit Tunku from Taman Duta.

The book *Kuala Lumpur Street Names: A Guide To Their Meanings & Histories*, states that Natesa Road was likely named after K. Natesa Iyer, who was a member of the Legislative Council of Ceylon (Sri Lanka), representing the Indian community there. His connection to Malaya was spending four months here in 1926 studying labour conditions.

Two streets that have retained their colonial names are Jalan Carruthers and Jalan Gallagher, both on the fringes of Taman Duta. Both are associated with Malaysia's agriculture heritage. It seems it is no coincidence that the Agriculture Department is located close to Jalan Carruthers and Jalan Gallagher.

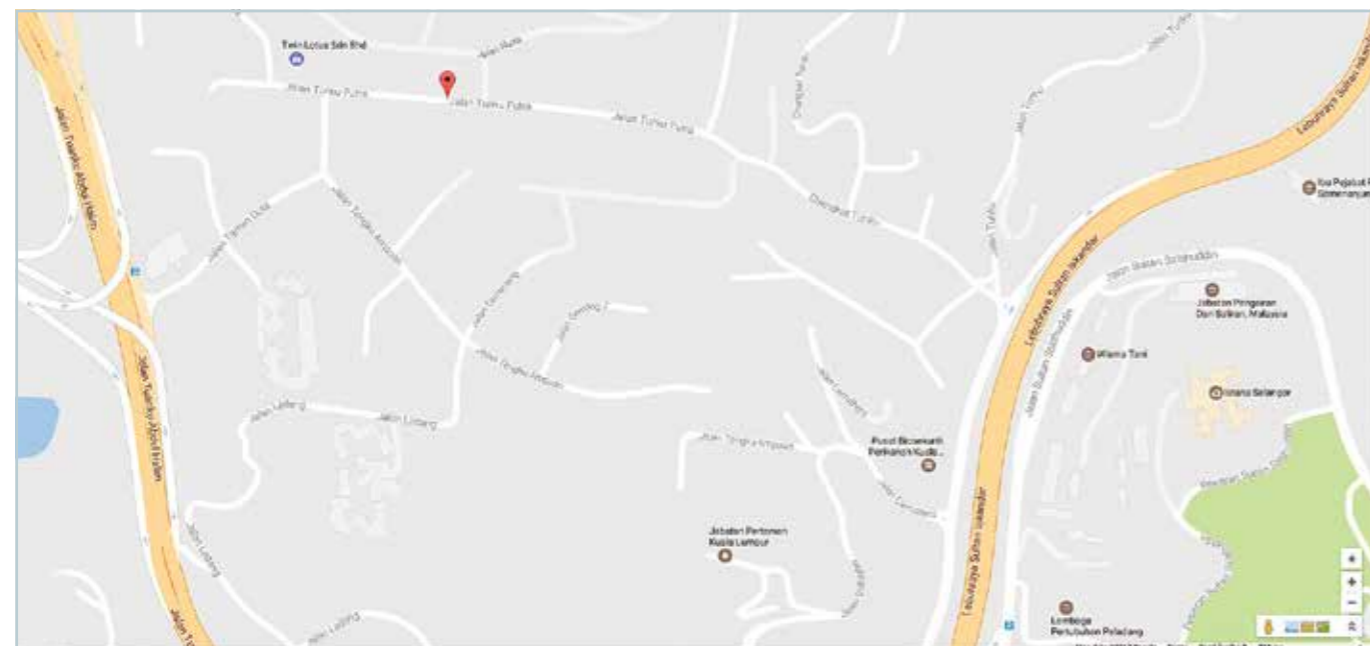
Carruthers Road was named for John Bennett Carruthers (1869-1910), an Englishman who was appointed the first Director of Agriculture and Government Botanist of FMS* in 1903. Prior to this appointment, he was Demonstrator of Botany at the Royal Veterinary College of Great Britain (appointed in



1893), as well as Government Mycologist and Director of the Botanic Gardens, Perademya in Ceylon (appointed in 1901). During his time in Kuala Lumpur, he was co-editor of the local *Agricultural Bulletin* with botanist Henry Nicholas Ridley. Carruthers left Malaya in 1909 for a position in Trinidad.

Meanwhile, Gallagher Road's connection to the Malayan Agriculture Department lies with William John Gallagher, who was the second Director of Agriculture (1908 to 1910). Educated in Ireland, Gallagher arrived in Malaya in 1906 as FMS Government Mycologist. A well-known and reputable scientist, he toured the country speaking about rubber planting, which was a new enterprise at that time. Gallagher helped set up the plantation of the United States Rubber Company and eventually became Managing Director of the Holland American Plantation Company. He retired from the East in 1927, and was appointed Chairman of the Rubber Growers' Association (1933 to 1934), during which he saw the enactment of the International Rubber Regulation Agreement for rubber production.

Finally, two streets in Bukit Tunku that have retained their original names so far: Jalan Girdle (Girdle Road) and Jalan Syers (Syers Road).



Travers was named), Captain Syers formed the Selangor Pack, which went on hunting expeditions to the jungles of Selangor, Pahang and Negri Sembilan. Alas, it was this very passion that would be Captain Syers' undoing. The story of Seladang vs Syers goes like this:

The name Girdle Road was a suggestion by the developer of Kenny Hills Estate, Messrs. Ewart Land Development Company, an Anglo-Thai corporation, which also suggested names for many streets in the neighbourhood (in Part One of *What's in a Street Name?*). The reason for "Girdle" was not specified in the street naming application, but speculation is that the road forms a virtual "belt" around Bukit Tunku; hence the word "girdle" was proposed. "Girdle" certainly sounds more refined than "belt"!

Syers Road was named for Captain Harry Charles Syers (1853-1897), the first Commissioner of Police FMS. He was initially based in Melaka as a Private of the 1st Battalion, 19th Regiment of the Foot. Captain Syers arrived in Klang in March 1875 under instructions to establish a police force in Selangor; he was subsequently appointed its first Commissioner in 1896. Police stations were built in major towns of Selangor and eventually along the key routes into interior Selangor.

Beyond his professional duties, Captain Syers had a passion for big game hunting. Together with Dr EAO Travers (for whom Jalan

In July 1897, Captain Syers and a planter friend, Robert Meikle, went on a hunting expedition in central Pahang. Encountering a solitary bull seladang (Indian bison), both hunters attempted to kill it. After the hunters had wounded the retreating animal and tracked it down, the resilient and enraged seladang knocked Captain Syers to the ground, gored him and flung him more than 30 feet into the air. Syers hit his head on a branch before landing on the ground, after which the seladang once again catapulted him into the air, this time to a height of between 18 and 20 feet. Syers insisted that Meikle kill the animal before transporting him by boat down the Pahang River. After a much protracted hunting expedition and rescue mission by river, Syers died after midnight while still on the boat to Pekan. The memory of Captain Syers is honoured by the street named for him in Bukit Tunku.

Only time will tell if the names of our streets will undergo another change. But regardless of any new initiative to change the names of the streets we live in, absolutely nothing can take away the splendid and colourful history of Bukit Tunku and Taman Duta, told through its street names!

Notes and Acknowledgements

*FMS: Federated Malay States (Perak, Selangor, Pahang, Negri Sembilan)

Sources:

- Various documents from Arkib Negara Malaysia (National Archives of Malaysia)
- *Kuala Lumpur Street Names: A Guide To Their Meanings & Histories* by Mariana Isa and Maganjeet Kaur, published by Marshall Cavendish International (Asia) Pte Ltd, 2015
- "Seladang vs Syers" from the website Museum Volunteers, <https://museumvolunteersjmm.com/2015/08/01/seladang-vs-syers/>, accessed 13 April 2016



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