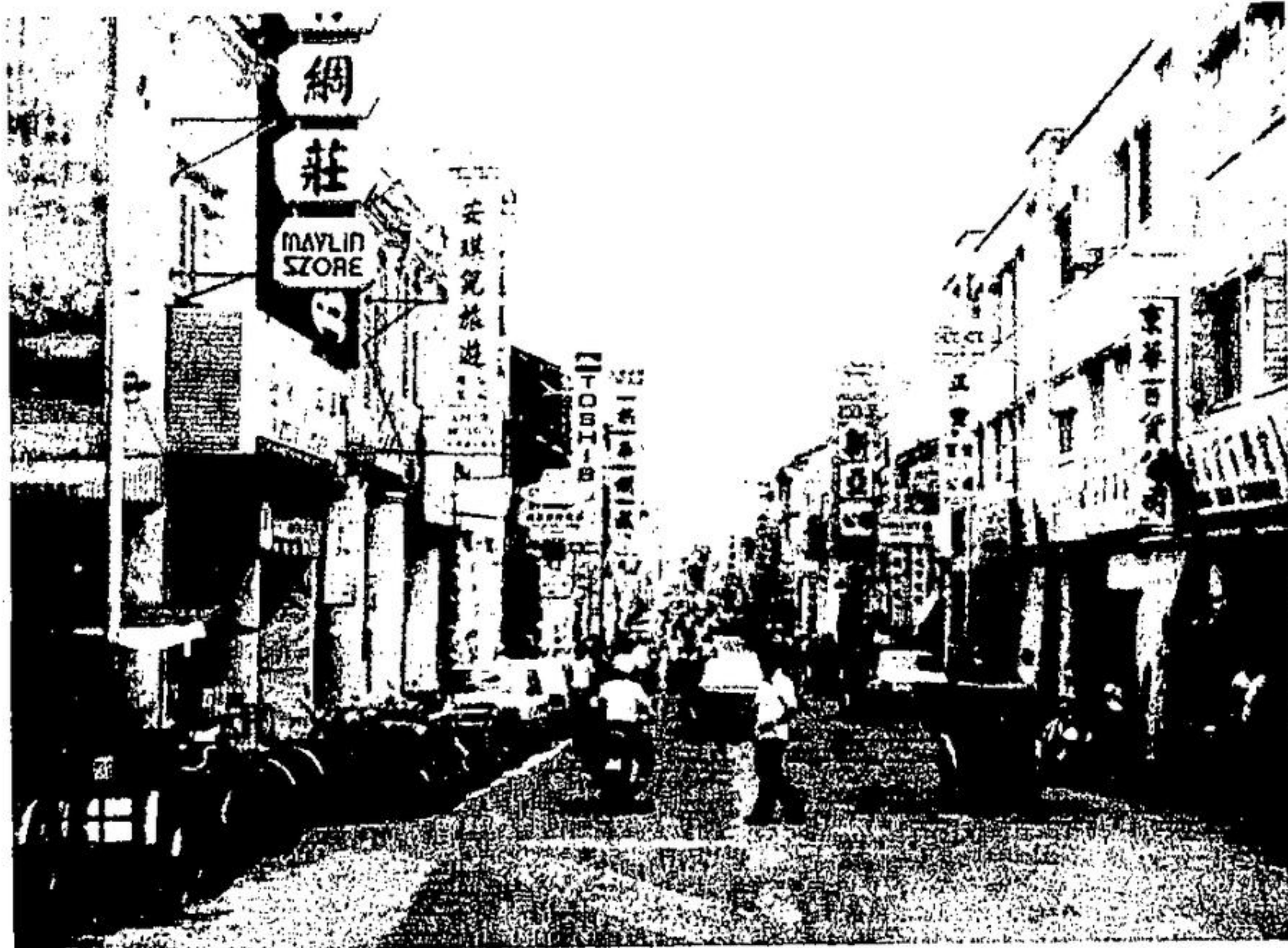


Life is slow at Batu Ferringi

Welcome to Malaysia's Georgetown



Welcome to Georgetown - on the other side of the world. This is downtown Georgetown on the island of Penang, Malaysia, where the author and his travelling companion, John Pladdy, spent eight days exploring native life and culture along the beaches of Batu-Ferringi.



The tops of Batu Ferringi's houses can be seen from the Penang beach. The Malaysian village is supported by fishing and tourism.

By STEPHEN FROST Herald Special Perhaps the less said about Kuala Lumpur the better.

I will say that it certainly has a lot of local color and a YMCA that has air-conditioned rooms available for \$5 a night, but it is not a city that leaves me with fond memories.

Both John Pladdy and I managed to get a case of food poisoning; however, mine was more severe. Perhaps it was due in part to the scotch consumed the night before.

At any rate, we were happy to head out of "K.L." and up the coast to the island of Penang. John and I spent eight days here lazing on the beaches outside a town which, by the way, is called Georgetown.

John and I chose to stay out on one of the beaches on the north end of the island called Batu Ferringi. Here we rented a room with a local Chinese family for approximately \$1 U.S. a night and only a stone's throw from the beach. Life is very easy at Batu, and very inexpensive.

A typical breakfast of fresh pineapple, juice, porridge topped with honey, bananas and sugar and an omelet with toast costs roughly 70 cents. At dinnertime, you can wander across the road to the Malayan village (the Malays live on one side of the road while the Chinese live on the beach side), and you can find Papa Din's Bamboo Restaurant. Here a Malaysian meal can be had for 90 cents and is topped with the best tapioca pudding in Southeast Asia.

In the yards near our rooms, chickens and cows meandered

and scratched their way around in the hot afternoon sun. One day pretty much runs into the other on beaches like these and it's the little discoveries that make your day.

HUMBLE PALACE

For instance, my journal recalls that "last night the owner of this humble palace, Ah Seng, came and sat down with us and offered us some Chinese cigarettes which turned out to very good.

"Ah Seng also turned out to be as scrupulously honest as he was meticulously clean."

Understandably, Batu is visited by a large number of young and not-so-young travellers. Most of these people are Europeans (Swiss, French and German) and Australians. Occasionally, one bumps into the odd Canadian or displaced Welshman. The Chinese gentleman we stayed with wanted to know where in Europe Canada was. He was surprised when he learned that there was indeed a large if somewhat obscure country north of the mighty USA.

After dinner we usually went down to the beach to watch the sunset.

"From my journal: "There was a rather spectacular sunset this evening. As the sun set, huge black clouds to the south swept over the island, lighting up the beach with an awesome array of thunderbolts. Did crazy things to the sun's color."

All the natives disappeared after the sun set and left the "foolish" Europeans on the beach. If you listened closely, you could hear a smattering of French, German and English.

Around the World in 380 Days

Eleventh in a series

After the mosquitos drive everyone from the beach, there are the roadside cafes to go to. Here we could drink some of the rose tea that is quite popular among travellers or have fresh juices or some of the local beer.

Usually we would get into conversations with fellow travellers who would regale us with stories and experiences of where they've just come from. That was always enjoyable and helpful, especially if we were headed anywhere in the direction people had come from.

IDYLIC PARADISE

An idyllic paradise, you might say. Yes, but unfortunately not for long. Batu Ferringi is the last stronghold of this leisurely kind of life on the island.

Already there are signs of encroachment by the big multinational hotels. On the south end of the beach, the omnipresent Holiday Inn sits majestically tacky among the few palm trees left after its construction. A sign promises a further 150 rooms by the end of 1980. Lovely.

At the north end of the beach, a mile from the Holiday Inn lies the vast Cassurina Hotel, owned by God knows who. On the Batu side of this hotel, there is a site for yet another hotel, to begin construction this year.

In two years, possibly three, people like Ah Seng will be offered amounts of money so large, they too will sell out. Their small seaside shacks and homes will be bulldozed to make way for expensive, packaged holidays. The process seems to be as inevitable as it is sad.

The last haven for young and easy-going travellers will become one more highrise motel complex.

Optimistically, I feel it may not happen. Perhaps the tourist market will bottom out. After all, how many of these hotels can the island support? Obviously, a few more, but surely not another half dozen.

At any rate, John and I were pleased to have stayed there before the final construction boom destroys what is left of what was once an island fishing village. It would have been



a shame to have been a year too late.

LAST DAY On our last day in Batu Ferringi, the rain kept us off the beach all day long. The wife of the proprietor of this place made me two pairs of cotton pants with matching shirts. This cost me about \$12 American.

All the fishing boats were out that day, so we wouldn't have been able to dive from them even if the weather had been good. The rain in Malaysia is remarkable. That day it was raining so hard it appeared to be bouncing off the thatched roofs of the buildings.

From my journal: "I've only seen it rain this hard in Canada once or twice and then only for a short period of time. But here I've seen it do this twice in seven days, and for an hour or two at a time. It's really quite incredible."

After eight days here, John and I took the Butterworth-Bangkok express into Thailand. Next week, I will be writing about our experiences and impressions from this portion of the trip.

Radio Shack ready for second annual MD campaign

Georgetown Radio Shack dealer Leonard Day has announced his store will participate in Radio Shack's second annual campaign to raise money for the Muscular Dystrophy Association of Canada (MDAC).

The campaign, which runs from August 4 to 16, donates every dollar earned from the sale of Radio Shack General Purpose batteries to the MDAC for research purposes and to help pay for expensive spinal support wheelchairs,

braces, lifting devices and even transportation to MD clinics.

"It's my way and my company's way of telling these fellow Canadians that we care," Mr. Day said. "It's also a way of letting the community participate."

Muscular Dystrophy strikes young children in a variety of forms and only two of these respond to treatment. Twenty thousand Canadians are afflicted with the crippling, muscle-wasting disease.



The author (left) poses for a holiday snapshot with fellow traveller Larry, an American, Shane, an Australian, and Papa Din, proprietor of the "five-star Bamboo Restaurant". The beach diner is home to what the author claims is the best tapioca pudding in Southeast Asia.

the HERALD Community

Legionnaires invest in Marathon

ON THE HOMEFRONT

Now for the good news...

By SUSAN De FACENDIS Herald Columnist According to my husband, I am once again in that most unpleasant of abodes, the dog house. He informed me that I should stop 'putting my children down' each week in print and start stressing the positive side of their many accomplishments. Believing that the sanctity and peace of a marriage, not to mention the financial support, should be preserved at all costs, I have given the matter some serious thought and, under the circumstances, have come to the rapid conclusion that he is absolutely right. We have three beautiful, healthy, intelligent children and I am sure that if I just concentrate hard enough, I shall be able to come up with some startlingly brilliant evidence to prove this fact over the next few weeks. GIANT STEP Strangely enough, whether due to ESP or just plain coincidence I cannot say, on the very day my husband made his pronouncement, Richard actually took a giant step forward in maturation, intelligence and physical prowess. He closed a cupboard door. No - I did not receive this as hearsay evidence, I witnessed it. He reached out one beautiful 18 year old arm and literally closed a kitchen cupboard. How many other mothers can claim to have seen this feat performed by one of such tender years? In a voice trembling with barely suppressed emotion, I asked him if he realized what he had done and requested that he repeat the act, so that I could be quite certain I was not suffering from a delusion brought about by years of wishful thinking. Slowly and gently, but firmly, he did it again. Despite my excitement, I naturally, as a concerned and loving parent, checked him over for a possible fever of 106 degrees and assured myself that he had not suffered any physical damage, such as stretched tendons, pulled muscles or water on the elbow. Amazingly he appeared to have no ill effects at all - in fact he was in better condition than his mother, who was definitely in shock. LONG SHOT While it could be a one-in-a-million long shot comparable to holding a winning lottery ticket; seeing your ship finally come in or backing the winner of the Queen's Plate, I have been given enough hope to believe in the future possibilities. I can clearly see, now that he has taken such a giant overnight leap into a 'new phase', that his bedroom dresser drawers may now be closed by a newly firm hand. It is even within the realm of credibility that he may very soon bend down and pick up the chewing gum wrappers littering his bedroom floor; untie the laces when removing his shoes; take out the garbage; eat his vegetables; speak nicely once a week to his sisters; turn off the television and smile while sitting at the breakfast table. It is positively mind-boggling. He may even prove to be an inspiration to the other two. My husband is unquestionably right. How can motherhood be a bummer when one is surrounded by so much gratification? From now on I am turning over a new leaf. Positive thinking obviously brings its own rewards.

Car club draw winners: 354 Cliff McDonald, 33 John Doherty, 63 Irene Curry, 167 FER Armstrong, 424 Max Stafford, 480 Marg Hale. Doug Browne was recently approved for membership; we all welcome you to the branch, Doug.

It was an honor for Georgetown last week when Terry Fox, the marathon runner for life, came to town. Tut and Grace Harrison represented the branch at Tuesday's Cancer Society banquet. The Branch stewards would like to thank all the members and guests for supporting them in raising a donation of about \$60 for Terry Fox, and a big thanks to the stewards, is also in order.

The Saturday entertainment continues quite strong, with the vacation season in full swing, attendance was expected to drop, but this has not been so. Norm Ayres will be in the lounge Saturday, so another good evening is coming. There is a fun golf day August 10 for branch members at \$15 a head. Unfortunately, only 52 members can be accommodated, so it must be on a first-come basis. There are a few openings left, so get your name on the list as soon as possible to avoid disappointment. The Air Cadet garage sale

had to be postponed. A new date will be published shortly, giving everyone another chance to get behind the Cadets, with donations of knick-knacks, etc. The more that is donated, the better sale it will be. Joe Poirier and Bill Moore will pick up all donations; all we have to do is dig something out to donate. Get moving on this, comrades, the Cadets are our responsibility, and this is a good way to do something personal for them. Just a follow-up on donating blood August 11th between 1:30 and 6:45 at the Holy Cross auditorium. Comrade and Mrs. Keane and his brother and wife, who are on vacation from Liverpool as guests in the branch, also comrade McHugh's daughter,

Ballinafad

Many attend Plouffe funeral

By WINIFRED SMITH Herald correspondent Mr. and Mrs. Morgan Madill, accompanied by Mr. and Mrs. Walter Linham returned home Saturday from a two-week conducted bus trip to the east coast. Members of the W.I. neighbors and friends joined with the family of the late Emily Plouffe and attended her funeral Thursday from the Shoemaker Funeral Home in Acton. She was laid to rest in Fairview Cemetery in Acton. Following the service the U.C.W. served a cup of tea to the mourners at Ballinafad church.

Ada Kirkwood attended the memorial service in Toronto Thursday evening for her cousin, the late Vera McEachern. Rev. John Vincent was in charge of the service at Ballinafad church Sunday. The baskets of flowers placed in the front of the Sanctuary Sunday were in memory of the late Emily Plouffe. Rev. Don Sillies, who is back from vacation, will occupy his regular place in the pulpit next Sunday. The U.C.W. catered for a wedding party Saturday at the church. Mr. and Mrs. Bob Harmon are home from vacation. They



Legion Lines

By Tom Elliott

Susan and her husband from Alberta were guests in the branch celebrating their 1st wedding anniversary.

spent an enjoyable holiday in the eastern provinces and a cruise around the Thousand Islands. The east seems to be popular place for those on holidays this year. Mr. and Mrs. Archie Lawr recently returned from a motor trip east. His sister accompanied them. Relatives from the area including Ada Kirkwood attended the 40th wedding anniversary celebration for Mr. and Mrs. Wilfred McEachern at Acton Saturday. Agnes McEnery is still a patient in the Georgetown hospital but is progressing favorably.