

Badan Warisan Malaysia

Living in KL we could be forgiven for thinking that all buildings have to be architectural masterpieces of enormous proportions reaching ever higher and higher and drowning the streets below. We need only drive out of the city a little way to discover that Malaysia has a unique architecture but where can this be seen in Kuala Lumpur? I was relieved therefore to learn of Badan Warisan Malaysia (The Heritage of Malaysia Trust) and discover through its work that there are some who value Malaysian architectural heritage and strive to keep it alive.

The headquarters of this non profit making, charitable organisation is rightly located in a 1920s British colonial style bungalow on Jalan Stonor in the heart of the city. It occupies a spacious site that I had driven past many times without realising its significance as signs are very discreet. Badan Warisan's main purpose is the conservation and preservation of buildings of interest but the centre is also home to the resource centre which holds publications, journals, photographs, maps and drawings. A fascinating place to browse and go back in time.

Situated within the grounds is Rumah Penghulu Abu Seman and no visit to Badan Warisan would be complete without a guided tour of the fabulously restored house. Originally the headman's house in Kampung Sungai Kechil in Bandar Baharu, Kedah this challenging restoration project took over a year to complete with the official opening on 19th November 1997. Many specialists were involved in the dismantling and reconstruction process to ensure its authenticity, windows and shutters were replaced and fortunately much of the ornate carvings remained intact. The tour explains the function of each room, furnished in keeping with Malay style and gives an insight into everyday life in a traditional Malay home.

This is a must for expats and visitors alike but if you have a real passion for preserving the heritage of Malaysia why not become a member and get involved in the many projects currently underway. All details are on their website.



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Details

Badan Warisan Malaysia

2 Jalan Stonor

50450 Kuala Lumpur.

(at the corner of Jalan Stonor and Jalan Conlay, close to the Craft Complex)

Opening hours 10am to 5.30pm (Mon – Sat)

Rumah Penghulu tours: Twice daily at 11am and 3pm, minimum donation of RM 5 per person.

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Website: www.badanwarisan.org.my

by Jill Davis

Rumah Penghulu before restoration



Rumah Penghulu after restoration

