

**REPORT ON REVIVAL (SECOND YEAR) OF CENOTAPH REMEMBRANCE HELD  
ON FRIDAY 12TH JUNE 2009**

**(By Dato R. Thambipillay)**

The first Remembrance ceremony was revived on Friday 12 June 2008. It is going to be an annual program. On Friday 12 June 2009 a similar Remembrance was held at 9.00 am with an attendance of about 300 persons. Many expressed their appreciation for reviving the remembrance.

Distinguished guests were the Mayor of Ipoh City YBhg Dato' Roshidi bin Haji Hashim,

YDH Dato Zulkifli bin Mansor,

Brigadier General 2 Infantry Brigade,

YDH Dato Pahlawan Zulkifli b Abdullah Chief Police Officer Perak,

Col. Ahmad Tarmizi Commander Royal Malaysia Royal Air Force Perak,

His Excellency Mr Boyd McCleary, British High Commissioner,

His Excellency Mr. Ashok K.Kantha Indian High Commissioner,

Senior Counsellor Arthur Spyrou on behalf of Her Excellency Ms Penny Williams  
Australian

High Commissioner,

Nepalese Attache Dr.Rishi Adhikari,

Defence Advisers from the aforesaid High Commissions including Australia and New Zealand

High Commissions.

Retired Commissioner of Police Dato Seri Yuen Yuet Leng & Datin Seri Linda, Dato Lee Hau Hian, Dato Azumu bin Tak, Steven G.Foster,

Deputy Chairman of the British Malaysian Chamber of Commerce, other distinguished guests, government officials, ex-servicemen from NMBVA UK,

Australia, the Royal British Legion South Thailand, members of Royal Green Jackets UK,

local ex servicemen, Penang Veterans Association founder Harold Speldewinde and led by its President G.Thiagarajah (Rtd Lt.Commodore),

CO of 2nd/30th Training Group Australian Army Butterworth led by Lt.Col. Campbell W.Paine and Col. Robin Kenneth CO 324 CSS (RAAF),

Voluntary services, and local citizens.

The remembrance ceremony commenced with a lively band provided by the Royal Malaysia Air Training Wing which also played the National Anthem, followed by two Gurkha Pipers from British Gurkha Regiment Brunei played the 'lament and quick march' to the delight of those present. The Gurkha Buglers sounded the 'last post', which was very solemn, followed by a minute's silence. Prayers were rendered by five priests, each representing Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Hindus (includes Gurkhas) and Buddhists. After the wreath laying ceremony, all those present were entertained to a 'buffet lunch' with music and a multi-cultural dances by D'Bougainvillae Troupe sponsored by the Ipoh City Council.

For those who are not so familiar, this Cenotaph is ideally situated in the heart of Ipoh city, open at all times to visitors, tourists, researchers and historians. This single Cenotaph symbolizes the past historical and dangerous times Malaya (now Malaysia) was faced with. Many are under the impression that Malaya was not directly involved in WW 1, but the roll of honour which contains names of 92 British civilians, who were residents in Perak, enlisted themselves in the defence of their motherland UK and died in the trenches and battle fields in France dictates this Cenotaph's very special significance. It is in memory of them this bronze plaque was erected in 1926. With the end of WW 2, a marble plaque was added on for those who gave their lives in WW 2, followed by one tablet in the National language by the Perak state in memory of those killed in WW 1 & WW2. As there was space on another side of this Cenotaph, he took the initiative to add a new tablet in memory of those who fell in the Emergency and Confrontation. So, this Cenotaph reminds us of the various conflicts faced by Malaya. We should be happy that this Cenotaph will remain as a symbol of pride and as Perak's permanent heritage of great historical significance in a unique multi-racial society.

In fact, this once not so much known Cenotaph is now seen with families relaxing and with more train service already introduced by the Malayan Railway authorities this Cenotaph will also enlighten the people of our past difficult years, besides providing as a Memorial Garden and a place to relax. It is heartening to note that some of those attending this ceremony have even encouraged to keep this Cenotaph remembrance going for at one gathering all those who gave their lives, from whichever country, race, colour, religion or gender in the various conflicts are remembered.

Incidentally, many may know Sir Henry Gurney was killed at the Gap road in Pahang in 1951. But it was very interesting to learn from Frank Heron of 1st Battalion of the British Loyal Regiment during his visit to Ipoh with fellow ex-servicemen to Ipoh on 10th March 2009 that the leader of Sir Henry Gurney's killer,

Siu Mah was tracked down by the Special Branch of the Royal Malayan Police Force in the lime stone caves of Gunung Lang, Ipoh. Frank Heron and party deployed on this operation heard a gunshot and was told that Siu Mah was killed by his body-guard on 10th November 1958.

These are important historical events and beneficial to the public, tourists, historians and researchers. Hence, it has been brought to the attention of the State government that it may be worth putting up a signage at this popular Gunung Lang recreational centre so that they will know the historical significance of Gunung Lang and the Cenotaph.

Owing to the popularity of the remembrance ceremonies, it is heartening to say that even now there are children and grand children from overseas of those who fell in WW

2 and Emergency seeking information or desirous of visiting the Memorial places in Perak or graves of their loved ones not only in Perak but even other states.

He has given a willing hand and recently extended it to, two separate groups of very caring and responsible government officials from Australia and the Australian High Commission Kuala Lumpur who were desirous of seeing the cemeteries (particularly graves of Australians). They are very thankful and expressed their happiness that the fallen are being remembered.

It is his earnest desire that this Cenotaph remembrance will sustain and make it an annual event for which he has already written to the Perak State Economic Planning Unit who would include it in the 'Perak State Calendar of Events' in 2010 which will make this remembrance event official.

Next year this event is scheduled for 9.00 am Friday 11th June 2010 at the Cenotaph opposite Ipoh Railway station. WELCOME.

