

**PENAONG : PATRONS**

Duli Yang Maha Mulia Sultan Sharafuddin Idris Shah  
Ibni Almarhum Sultan Salahuddin Abdul Aziz Shah Alhaj, Sultan Selangor  
Duli Yang Teramat Mulia Paduka Seri Pengiran Perdana  
Wazir Sahibul Himmah Wal-Waqar Pengiran Muda Mohamed Bolkiah  
Lee Kuan Yew, Esq.

**YANG DI-PERTUA : PRESIDENT**  
Tun Mohammed Hanif bin Omar

You are cordially invited to the first of the MBRAS' Annual Quarterly Lecture Series for 2013 by Mr. Marcus Langdon, whose talk will highlight aspects of Franco-British rivalry as it affected the Indian Ocean port city of Penang in the early 19th century.

**Date:** Saturday, 30 March 2013, 6-7 p.m.

**Venue:** Badan Warisan Malaysia, 2 Jalan Stonor, Kuala Lumpur

The Talk

**Napoleon Comes to Penang**

Turbulent times during the wars between France and Britain — the two global superpowers of that period — in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries caused a ripple effect which spread across the globe. Napoleon Bonaparte's dramatic rise to power in Europe led to vigorous rivalry between the two superpowers for economic and strategic overlordship of the East.

Although an increasing burden to the British taxpayer, the British East India Company was still an entity which promised much for a Britain that was still smarting from the loss of America. The maritime trade route between Britain and China — crucial to the struggling British economy — came increasingly under threat from French warships and privateers. Faced with a hostile maritime power, the ever-increasing importance of the Company's settlements in India was too hard to ignore.

In 1805 Penang, then a newly-established port in the Indian Ocean, was but a mere speck on the global map. But in time, the island would find itself promoted as a key player in defensive measures designed to protect British interests in the East.

This short lecture by Mr. Langdon will explore the ramifications the Franco-British rivalry had for Penang.

**Marcus Langdon** is an emerging authority on early colonial history of Penang and the author of a recently released publication by Areca Books and ThinkCity entitled *Penang: The Fourth Presidency of India, 1805–1830, Volume One: Ships, Men and Mansions*.

Admission is free but seats are limited. You would, therefore, be strongly advised to confirm your attendance via telephone at 03-22835345 or through email at [mbras@tm.net.my](mailto:mbras@tm.net.my). Limited copies of Mr. Langdon's book as well as the MBRAS' recently published titles may be purchased during the event. Please visit the MBRAS's website at <http://www.mbras.org.my/index.html> for further details about the event and our publications. There is ample parking space at the venue and light refreshments will be served afterwards.

Thank you.

Dr Neil Khor Jin Keong  
Honorary Secretary

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**Secretary's Report on 30 March 2013 Lecture by Mr Marcus Langdon**

Mr Marcus Langdon, the author of "Penang The Fourth Presidency", presented a half hour lecture on the early history of Penang. Derived from his research into British colonial records, Langdon described how Anglo-French rivalry contributed to the English East India Company's decision to establish a trading factory in Penang.

The lecture also focused upon chief personalities in India and Southeast Asia like Lord Cornwallis, the future Duke of Wellington, Captain Francis Light and others who played an important role in securing the future of the settlement in Penang. Particularly interesting is the strategic dimension that led to the eventual building of Fort Cornwallis on the island. Mr Langdon also put up interesting early maps of Penang and the region, with very clear indications of the early Malay settlements on the island.

The talk was well-attended with some 50 participants filling up Badan Warisan Malaysia. Members had a chance to pose questions to Mr Langdon. On offer were old issues of the Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society being sold at RM 50 per-issue. Most of the monographs featuring subjects related to the early history of Penang were also put on sale. One particularly interesting volume is the MBRAS' reprint of Anderson's "Political and Commercial Considerations Relative to the Malay Peninsular", which was first published in 1824. The reprint is still available for sale.

The next MBRAS lecture will be in June so please keep an eye out for future announcements. For more information, please address your emails to: [mbras@tm.net.my](mailto:mbras@tm.net.my)

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