

0005 Photos of the year (2023)

These photos show some of everyday scenes that I see regularly in Malaysia and Thailand, photographed by myself when I happened to see them. This listing was started in Dec 2022 and each section covers several months.

BW



Scroll down to see the photos, arranged in date order.

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Photos of the year 2023

HINDU TEMPLE DECORATION PROGRESSES

The painting of the statuary of this old temple, following its renovation, progresses a little bit more. It's almost as though it is a giant colouring book, with the images being coloured in over time, as and when money and expertise is available.

6 Dec 2023, Sri Sakthi Durgai Amman temple, Pukau Tikus, Penang, Malaysia



Photos of the year 2022-2023

HINDU TEMPLE DECORATION PROGRESSES (DETAIL)

The painting of the statuary of this old temple, following its renovation, progresses a little bit more. It's almost as though it is a giant colouring book, with the images being coloured in over time, as and when money and expertise is available.

6 Dec 2023, Sri Sakthi Durgai Amman temple, Pukau Tikus, Penang, Malaysia



Photos of the year 2022-2023

NUTCRACKER SOLDIER

Another view of our Christmas nutcracker soldier.

6 Dec 2023, at Quayside Condominium, Penang, Malaysia



Photos of the year 2023

OFFICIAL BIRTHDAY PICTURE 2023

Brian pictured at one of the old cannons at the E&O Hotel, before the celebratory birthday meal inside the hotel. This is the same cannon pictured on the first visit to the hotel in August 1978 (see separate photo), but replanting of the gardens has made it impossible for us to take the same shot as in 1978.

6 Dec 2023, at the E&O Hotel, Penang, Malaysia



Photos of the year 2023

OFFICIAL BIRTHDAY PICTURE 2023, (CLOSE-UP)

Brian pictured at one of the old cannons at the E&O Hotel, before the celebratory birthday meal inside the hotel. This is the same cannon pictured on the first visit to the hotel in August 1978 (see separate photo), but replanting of the gardens has made it impossible for us to take the same shot as in 1978.

6 Dec 2023, at the E&O Hotel, Penang, Malaysia



Photos of the year 2023

OFFICIAL BIRTHDAY PICTURE 2023, (FLASHBACK)

This is the August 1978 picture taken at the cannon on our first visit to the E&O in August 1978.

1 Sep 1978 at the E&O Hotel, Penang, Malaysia



Photos of the year 2023

FRUITS OF THE E&O'S OLD JAVA OLIVE TREE

An interesting shot of the fruit of the ancient *Sterculia Fetida* tree (commonly known as Poon tree, Java Olive tree and various other nicknames, many of which allude to the stinking smell of its flowers). The tree is native to India and a number of other south Asian countries. At bottom can be seen some unripe green seed pods. These gradually, as can be seen in the photo, change colour to bright red and eventually split open, allowing the seed case and the seeds inside to dry out. The seeds and the case eventually fall to the ground. The seed case by then is quite hard, approximately the size of a tennis ball or cricket ball. The black seeds, when they leave the case, look like small, fully ripe olives. It is easy to understand how Java olive tree came to be one of the informal names for the tree. The botanical name *Sterculia Fetida* derives from the name of the Ancient Roman god of manure, *Sterculus*, and the Latin word *fetida* meaning foul-smelling or stinking. (Note: there are one or two other spelling variations of the God's name and the often found botanical name *sterculia foetida* contains a mistaken spelling of the Latin *fetida* – which of course is the source of the English word *fetid*.)

6 Dec 2023, at E&O Hotel, Penang, Malaysia



Photos of the year 2023

WILDLIFE AT THE HOTEL

A Common Sandpiper (*Tringa Hypoleucos*), a winter migrant from northern Eurasia, seen scavenging on the shorefront at the E&O Hotel.

6 Dec 2023, at the shorefront of E&O Hotel, Penang, Malaysia



Photos of the year 2023

BIRTHDAY DINNER

At dinner in the Palm Court of the E&O Hotel. This is a remodelled version of the old 1920s-era dining room. Although the Eastern and Oriental Hotel has operated on this site since about 1885, no parts of the present structure are older than early 1920s.

6 Dec 2023, at E&O Hotel, Penang, Malaysia



Photos of the year 2023

DINNER AT E&O - FLASHBACK

When we first stayed the hotel in 1978, we had meals in the hotel's 1920s-era dining room, seen below in a photo, probably from the 1930s. This dining room survived the Second World War and the Japanese occupation of Penang, but subsequently disappeared as the hotel was remodelled. Our usual table today in the Palm Court (see previous photo) lies approximately in the same position as the camera in the earlier postcard view.

1930s postcard of E&O Hotel, Penang, Malaysia



Photos of the year 2023

SKY AT DAWN

A view of the night sky as we go to swim before sunrise. Just above the top right of the roofline of the building can be seen the planet Venus.

9 Dec 2023, seen from the swimming poise at Quayside Condominium, Penang, Malaysia



Photos of the year 2023

SKY AT DAWN

The moon in close-up from the earlier picture.

9 Dec 2023, seen from the swimming pool at Quayside Condominium, Penang, Malaysia



Photos of the year 2023

PATTERNS ON THE WATER

Interesting patterns on the very calm sea, seen from our balcony shortly after sunrise.

9 Dec 2023, from our balcony at Quayside Condominium, Penang, Malaysia



Photos of the year 2023

NEW MOON IN OLD MOON'S ARMS

A good example of this phenomenon early this morning. It can occur when skies are very clear and when the moon is approaching the end of its 28 day cycle (as in this case), or has just started its cycle, when the phenomenon is named “old moon in new moon’s arms”. The ghostly image of the moon’s body is due to light reflected from the earth’s body back to the moon. The reflection derives from light bouncing off cloud cover around the earth – and not, as was always believed, bouncing off the oceans. So a certain amount of cloud around the earth is needed for the phenomenon to occur. American astronauts on the Apollo 11 mission in 1969 determined the role of clouds in reflecting this light during their observations of the earth from space.

10 Dec 2023, at Quayside Condominium, Penang, Malaysia



The “old” moon still visible in light reflected back from the earth.

Photos of the year 2023

FROM OUR BALCONY THIS MORNING (I)

The Palestinian flag flies from one of the makeshift flagpoles on the stone breakwater near us. For some time the flag has often been displayed on their boats by local fishermen as a gesture of support for Palestine. (The other flagpole carries the Malaysian and the Penang flags.)

11 Dec 2023, at Quayside Condominium, Penang, Malaysia



Photos of the year 2023

FROM OUR BALCONY THIS MORNING (II)

A white-bellied sea eagle (*Haliaeetus Leucogaster*) flies overhead.

11 Dec 2023, at Quayside Condominium, Penang, Malaysia



Photos of the year 2023

THE DAILY CRUISE TO NOWHERE

Our arrival at the E&O Hotel for lunch today coincided with the departure on the MV Aegean Paradise on its afternoon cruise to nowhere.

12 Dec 2023, at E&O Hotel, Penang, Malaysia



Photos of the year 2023

E&O GARDENS

Another view of the E&O Hotel's seafront gardens.

12 Dec 2023, at E&O Hotel, Penang, Malaysia



Photos of the year 2023

UNKNOWN LADY

There are several of these large terracotta medallions placed around the hotel grounds, depicting a classical style unnamed female face . We still need to check whether there is any specific historic person referenced here or whether it is all purely decorative to support the antique ambience here

12 Dec 2023, at E&O Hotel, Penang, Malaysia



Photos of the year 2023

E&O HOTEL LOBBY WITH CHRISTMAS TREE

Another view of the E&O hotel lobby. The ornate doorframe leading to the antique lift can be seen behind the tree to the left. This lobby and front desk were in fact used in the opening scene of the movie Crazy Rich Asians to represent an old-fashioned London hotel.

12 Dec 2023, at E&O Hotel, Penang, Malaysia



Photos of the year 2023

PITH HELMETS STILL IN VOGUE

Some of the doormen at the E&O Hotel still wear the tradition pith helmet of former years.

12 Dec 2023, at E&O Hotel, Penang, Malaysia



Photos of the year 2023

FARQUHAR'S BAR

The remodelled bar at the hotel still carries the name of its predecessor bar. It is now positioned as a smart cocktail type bar, as distinct from the informal pub-type bar that preceded it. The bar is named after the street in which the hotel stands. The street was named after an early Lieutenant-Governor of Penang, Sir Robert Townsend Farquhar (1776-1830), a colonial administrator from the British East India Company. Robert Townsend Farquhar (not to be confused with the much better known William Farquhar (1774-1839) who served with the East India Company in Singapore in the early 1800s and was associated with Stamford Raffles) served in Penang for only two years, 1804-1805, when he was 28-29. He had by then been 10 years with the East India Company in several locations in SE Asia. His career after leaving Penang included several other British colonial Governor posts and MP back in the UK.

12 Dec 2023, at E&O Hotel, Penang, Malaysia



Photos of the year 2023

WHITE TRUMPET TREE (*Tabebuia Roseoalba*)

One of the trees in the E&O's seafront gardens is a flowering White Trumpet tree, which was in blossom during our visit today. Other subspecies of this tree have pink or yellow flowers. It is planted quite widely in Malaysia, Singapore and other parts of SE Asia, especially along the sides of roads, where it provides impressive displays of blossom during its flowering seasons. The tree is originally a native of tropical central America, in particular the north-west corner of South America.

12 Dec 2023, at E&O Hotel, Penang, Malaysia



Photos of the year 2023

ANOTHER SUNSET

From our balcony. Chennai (Madras) in India lies 2,350km (1,460 miles) away in this view to the WNW. A line from here to Chennai passes through the Nicobar Islands in the middle of the Indian Ocean.

14 Dec 2023, from our balcony at Quayside Condominium, Penang, Malaysia.

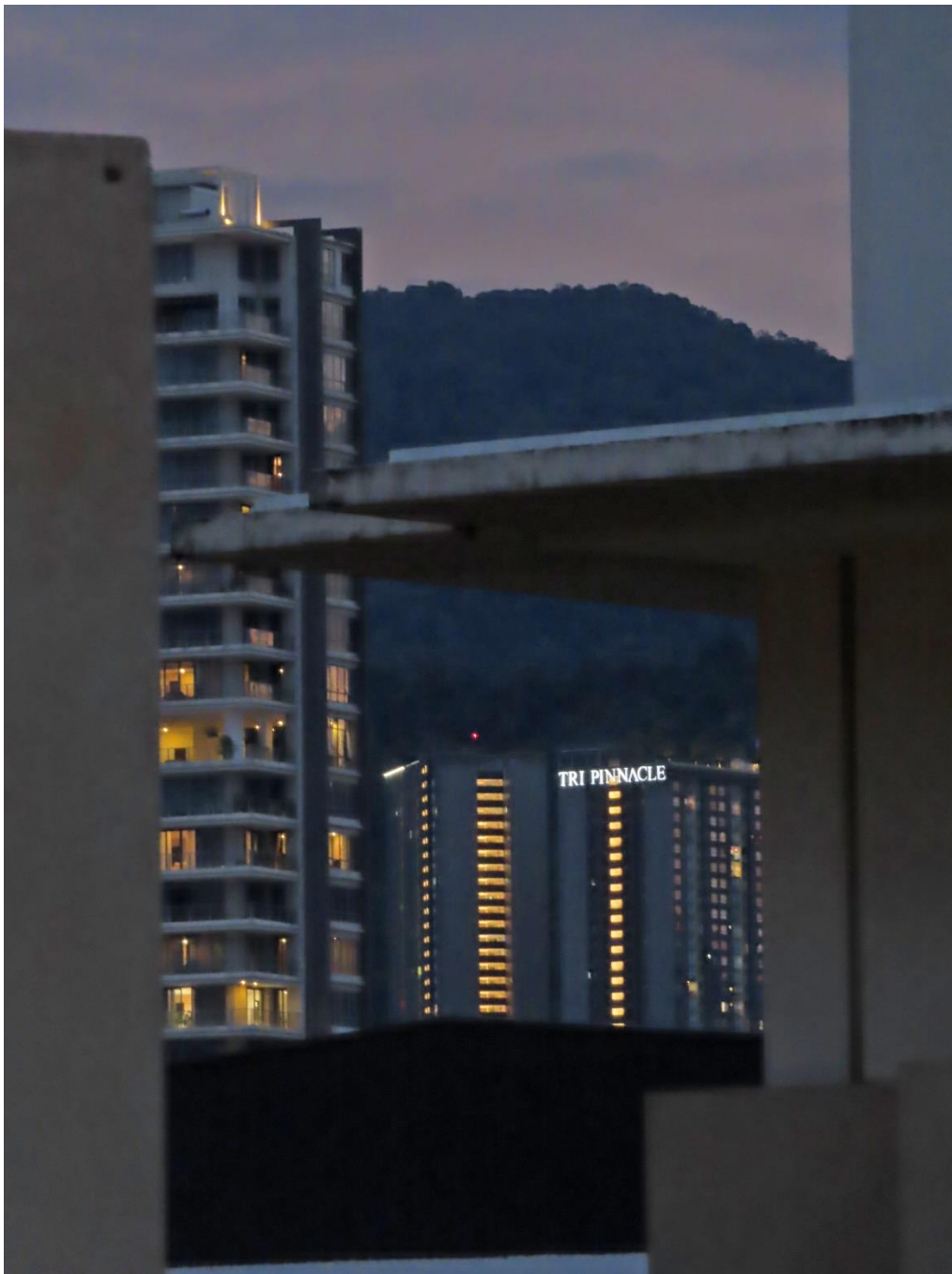


Photos of the year 2023

SCENERY FROM OUR BALCONY

Away from the sea view the outlook is becoming increasingly built-up, as in this evening view south-west from our balcony through the buildings up to the top of Penang Hill (833m or 2733 ft), which is about 6km or 4 miles distant.

14 Dec 2023, from our balcony at Quayside Condominium, Penang, Malaysia.



Photos of the year 2023

THE WOODDED HILLS OF PENANG

Another view towards the top of Penang Hill (833m or 2733 ft), see from the shopping area of Pulau Tikus.

16 Dec 2023, from the Gurney Plaza Shopping Mall, Penang, Malaysia.



Photos of the year 2023

MORE AND MORE HIGH RISES

Another view of new residential buildings, see from the same viewpoint as the previous photo.

16 Dec 2023, from the Gurney Plaza Shopping Mall, Penang, Malaysia.



Photos of the year 2023

VIEW ACROSS THE CHANNEL

A long-shot view across the North Channel, separating Penang Island from the mainland. The Channel is about 12 km wide at this point. All shipping to and from the port of Penang passes through here. The beach at Kampung Kuala Mudah is visible in the centre of the image.

16 Dec 2023, from the entrance to our building at Quayside Condominium, Penang, Malaysia.

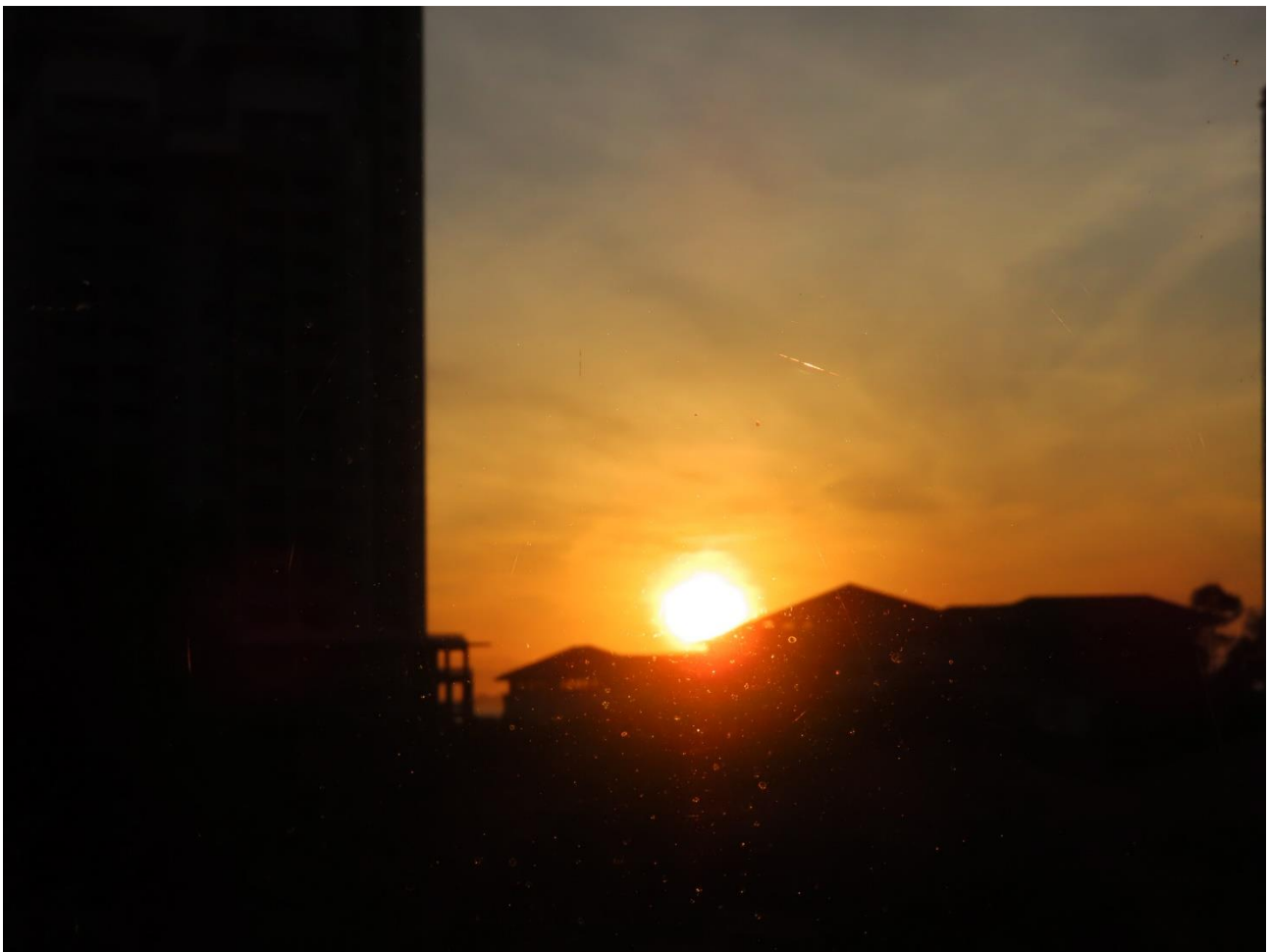


Photos of the year 2023

SUNRISE GETS LATER

Sunrise is currently becoming later each day as we approach the winter solstice (and thus the shortest day) in five days' time. However, even past the solstice and as the days start to lengthen, the sunrise will continue to become later – until about mid-February. The view here across the rooftops is at 07.30, 10 minutes after the sun's rise over horizon at 07.20 today. The sunset-sunrise difference (ie the day's length) today is 11h 48min.

17 Dec 2023, through the windows of our building at Quayside Condominium, Penang, Malaysia.



Photos of the year 2023

UNUSUALLY BLUE SEA

The sea just after dawn looked very blue this morning

19 Dec 2023, from our balcony at Quayside Condominium, Penang, Malaysia.



Photos of the year 2023

UNUSUALLY BLUE SEA (2)

Same view as previous, but this one a close up of the fishermen's boats inside the breakwater.

19 Dec 2023, from our balcony at Quayside Condominium, Penang, Malaysia.



Photos of the year 2023

MORE COLOURS

The Palestine flag still flies on its lengthy bamboo pole and makes a colourful splash against the unusually blue sea this morning.

19 Dec 2023, from our balcony at Quayside Condominium, Penang, Malaysia.



Photos of the year 2023

OPTICAL ILLUSION

The MV Aegean Paradise returns early this morning from its overnight “cruise to nowhere” and seems to be lower than usual in the water – until you realise that part of its hull is the same colour as today’s sea.

19 Dec 2023, from our balcony at Quayside Condominium, Penang, Malaysia.

