

Nostalgia: Remembering New Pasir Puteh

By Ian Anderson

Three of ipohWorld's staunch supporters Mano, LMS and SK, lived in New Pasir Puteh in the late 1950s and early 60s. Their homes were at numbers 7, 24 and 429A respectively.

Their memories remain strong. Do yours?

There was the small sundry shop, Tong Huat opposite No. 7, while diagonally across the road was a coffee shop whose owner had a shining bald head like marble top. The elders always poured their coffee onto the saucer and blew on it to cool it as that was the only way to enjoy it! Just in front of Tong Huat, there was a man selling a round pan kueh (dai gou mian)made of flour, margarine and ground peanuts. What more could a boy ask for!



Close by Tong Huat there was this factory making Coconut Candy, but ice balls were the fashion then. Just a few steps along the road, and for only 5 cents, the lady ice-seller would roll a handful of ice with some red beans and coat the ball with sugar. Next door was the barber with his, often painful, hand clippers and terrifying razor. Next door was an Indian grocery shop and at the end of the row was a corner bungalow with a big compound occupied by a Malay family.

On the other side of Tong Huat there was an area of open land which, by default, became the unofficial local playground, where sportsmanship and sporting skills were honed. The boys from the adjacent kampung even built a badminton court on the sandy ground using jute string for the lines. Hockey was played often, using anything that resembled a hockey stick! Then, somehow, somewhere, two pairs of boxing gloves were found. So a boxing ring was assembled, again with the jute strings, this time for ropes! This was at the time that Cassius Clay became a household name.



Opposite there was a bicycle shop where local children (and often parents) watched the Black and White TV. On the July 21, 1969, adults and children alike thronged the shop for the first lunar landing and Neil Armstrong's historic steps on the moon. Very few people had TV sets of their own

in those days.

On the same side on the road as the bicycle shop, there was a Kway Teow Factory and a Chinese Medical Shop. The latter was famous for its salted tidbits mixed with herbal powder and their herbs mixed with roots, certain to cure everyday ills.

On more open land, just around the corner from the bicycle shop at election time, opposing parties would show popular movies on a portable screen to encourage the crowds to attend. Tarzan and P. Ramlee were the favourites with Cowboys and Indians always attracting the youngsters. How they would cheer when the U.S. Cavalry arrived to save the day. The organisers would show one half of the movie, break to make the election speeches, and after all the politicking was over, finish the movie. Usually, only the kids stayed to the end.

As one of our readers put it, “Yes, growing up in New Pasir Puteh in the 60s was a time when ownership of toys was only for rich kids and for the rest of us, imagination and improvisation, which provided education as well as good clean fun!”

Oh to bring back the good old days!