

## **The Public Awareness of Heritage Monuments British Pillbox in Bachok, Kelantan from Aspect of Heritage Tourism**

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### **Abstract**

The British pillbox monument left during World War II (1941) occurred in Kelantan and damaged yet attract the tourism. However, least impacted in society except for some veterans that involve. The aims to relocate the pillbox in Bachok. The objective is to study structure and emphasize community awareness. In achieving the study's objectives, various methods was used. First is field observation and set coordinates for all pillboxes, photo-taking to consolidate data, and conducted questionnaire on 100 respondents that related. The monuments can be economic resources and raise awareness of historical value as it contributes to the formation of Malaysia.

Keywords: British Pillbox, Bachok coast, Heritage tourism, Kelantan.

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### **1.0 Introduction**

The Japanese military occupied Malaysia in world war two. Japanese forces attacked Kelantan on 8 December 1941 and Singapore on 10 December. After that, the Japanese fully occupied the whole of Malaysia on 15 February 1941 (Jeffry Heys, 2008). The outbreak of the war proves that the British were not fully prepared for the attack used by the Japanese military. The Japanese strategy was full of tricks and unpredictability. Even there are a lot of pillboxes that have been built to defend the attacked.

In Kelantan, the majority of pillbox was found located near the coast, in Bachok (Figure 1). It is also located in Kota Bharu, Machang, Tumpat, and Kuala Krai. All of these monuments were trusted to be built for British benefits logistic area. These monuments of the British pillbox proved that Malaysian were involved in World War II. The monuments contain significant values that leave scars among Malaysian peoples. It was a memory of the tragedy that cant be vanish. The war that took place in 1941 was horrendous. In this era, young generations don't care much about the history and lack of acknowledgment.

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Figure 1: On of the Monuments British Pillbox In Bachok, Kelantan.

Source: Filed study (2021).

According to the National Heritage Act 2005 (Act 645), monuments refer to architectural and sculptural work or structures of an archeological type with universal values that contain heritage history, art, or science (AW Kebangsaan, 2006). Pillbox refers to an object attained by fortifying any place to enable troops to resist a Superior force attack it. The standard dictionary mentioned that pillbox relates to a small round concrete emplacement for machine-gun and anti-tank guns. Pillbox also can be explained as a machine-gun post well protected with concrete.

After the war, the pillbox located in Malaysia remained. This research focus on pillbox in Kelantan and the awareness of the moment British pillbox in Kelantan as a heritage value among the society. The objective of the research is to relocate the location of the British pillbox in Bachok, Kelantan. It is also to measure the awareness of British pillbox in Bachok, Kelantan among society.

## 2.0 Literature Review

World War II, which took place in Malaysia in 1941, is a history that the community cannot forget, especially among veterans in Malaysia. Seen from another angle, the history of this war contributed a lot to the formation and independence of Malaysia today. After World War II, Malaysia became stronger and formed parties that collaborated to eliminate colonialism in Malaysia. At that time, Malaysian was one of the countries that had many benefits in exporting products such as rubber and tin. These benefits lead many other colonial countries to conquer Malaysia (Jeffrey Hays, 2008).

The Japanese military that invasion Malaysia in World War 2 was known as "Takumi Detachment" and lead by Major-General Hiroshi Takumi. This invasion force left the port Samah, Hainan Island, on 4 December 1941 and arrived in Thailand on 7 December 1941. The force included three large transportation ships, which are Awagisan Maru ( 9,794 tons), Ayatosan Maru (9,800 tons), and Sakura Maru (7,100 tons). There were also light cruisers, and the destroyer squad escorted them. 5 min after they cast anchor about one and a half miles from Sabak beaches, British defended troops located at Sabak beaches (Figure 2) took action and opened fire on Japanese ships after receiving the report of enemy ships. Later after the first attack, British troops were bombed by a Japanese military ship (Nik Mohamed, 1988).

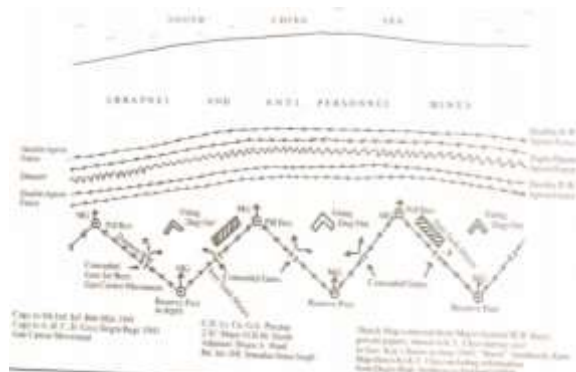


Figure 2: The Montgomery Camp Of British

Source : HL Wrigglesworth (1991) .

The British defender in Kelantan was the forces of the 8th Indian Infantry Bridged under Brigadier Berthold Wells Key. They were assigned to protect and defend the Kota Bharu airfield (Figure 3). The troops were divided into two sectors: the right sector, which consists of three areas: Semerak beach, Malawi beach, and Bachok beach. Each of the pillboxes built for defense is about 1 km apart from each other. Second sector was Kemasin beach from Kuala Kemasin to Sungai Pengkalan Datu, Sabak beach from Sungai Pengkalan Datu, and Badang beach from Kuala Pak Amat to Kelantan river. These are where the pillbox has been built, and some remain (HL Wrigglesworth, 1991).



Figure 3: The Location Of Forces Defending Malaya, 8<sup>th</sup> December 1941.

Source : HL Wrigglesworth (1991)

There are 30 monuments of British pillbox placed in Kelantan, mostly built near the coast to defend and prevent the attack from the sea. This pillbox is capable of being the economic source through the tourism sector. The monuments of the British pillbox came in almost square shape and were provided with a small hole to counter-attack and gunfire—the enter and exit of pillbox placed behind the structure. Most pillboxes have a height and width of 6 meters, and most are located near the beach. However, most pillboxes have suffered significant damage such as sedimentation, corrosion and have sunk in sand and sea. The pillbox was built by a teammate of the British army and Punjabi (DJ Dolasoh,2015).

Back then, the pillbox was important during World War II in Malaysia. The pillbox was built to defend the British logistic area and slow the attack from the Japanese military. The pillbox in Kelantan was built right after the British received a piece of information and warning that the Japanese would attack and occupy Malaysian from Thailand. The pillbox in Kelantan was built in 1940, a month before the attack (Farhana Shuhaimi, 2020).

### 3.0 Methodology

This research carried some methods to collect data and information to prove some facts and complete the analysis. The methods are used where qualitative and quantitative. The Literature review and survey was used as first method. This method was to find the keyword of British pillbox locations and the initial description of area (Figure 4). In this method, GPS (Global Positioning System) was user as instrument to record and set the exact coordinate for British pillbox in Bachok, Kelantan. The coordinate was set by 4 angle on pillbox to get more accurate locations data.



Figure 4: The view of British pillbox located in Bachok, Kelantan.

Source: Filed study (2020).

Next are observation and photography. These methods were used to focus on pillbox in Bachok, Kelantan. There are 11 locations of pillbox that can be found in Bachok. However only 6 of are still in good conditions. The methods include measuring the detail structures of British pillbox and took some photo as a prove that can be used as documentation in further (Figure 5). This methods found that all of the British pillbox was located near the coast and some of the structure was surrounded by villagers residences. Other than that, some of British pillbox highly damage and deteriorate. Qualitative methods are collected in observation, discussion, and writing materials (Patton, 1990).



Figure 5 : The process of measuring British pillbox in Bachok, Kelantan.

Source: Filed study (2020).

Quantitative methods include distributed online questionnaire using google form link to 100 respondents involved (Figure 6). Quantitative are methods that consist of quantity, amount, and some that can be counted. The questions characterized the awareness and knowledge of the British pillbox in Bachok, Kelantan. This method was used to measure the public understanding of the British pillbox in Bachok. All respondents are focused on those who lived in Bachok and aged 20 until 50 above from various careers.

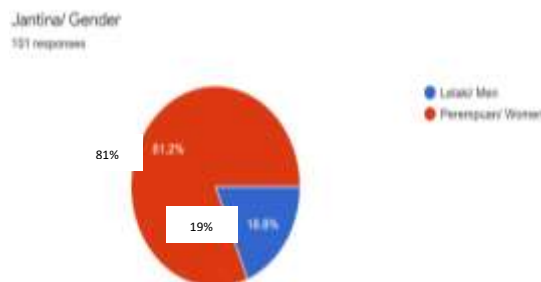


Figure 6: The pie cart of respondent that respond to the questionnaire.

Source: Filed study (2021).

## 4.0 Result And Discussion

### 4.1 Location of Pillbox In Bachok, Kelantan.

The result of research found that there are 11 monuments of pillbox that remain in Bachok, Kelantan (Figure 7, Table 1) . Some of them are highly destructed, and some are fine. Since the pillbox is located near the villager's house, it is challenging to conserve with the proven method. There is also vandalism on the pillbox. This monument has become a place to do immortality for teenagers since they lack awareness. Most of the pillboxes in Bachok are closed to the beach as it is a strategic location to prevent enemy attacks from the sea. The British army is confident that the Japanese military will capture the State of Kelantan through three directions, namely air, sea, and land. Table 1 below shows The list of British pillbox coordinates in Bachok, Kelantan that still remain.

Table 1: The list of British pillbox coordinates in Bachok, Kelantan

Location	Coordinate
Kampung Ger	(6°00'00.4"N , 102°22'55.2"E)
Kampung Tok Burung	(6°04'33.7"N , 102°23'45.5"E)
Kampung Sungai Re kang	(6°00'31.7"N , 102°25'31.5"E)
Kampung Anak Rhu	(6°00'58.1"N , 102°24'45.2"E)
Pantai Tok Abah	(6°02'32.1"N , 102°24'30.6"E)
Kampung Pantai Baru	(6°00'41.9"N , 102°24'56.5"E)
Kampung Pengkalan Chap	(5°51'09.9"N , 102°31'07.5"E)
Kampung Pulau Belongan	(6°03'29.2"N , 102°23'54.7"E)
Kampung Kubang Kawah	(6°05'10.4"N , 102°23'30.0"E)
Kampung Kubang Golok	(6°05'41.5"N , 102°23'16.3"E)
Kampung Merabang	(6°06'19.6"N , 102°22'59.3"E)

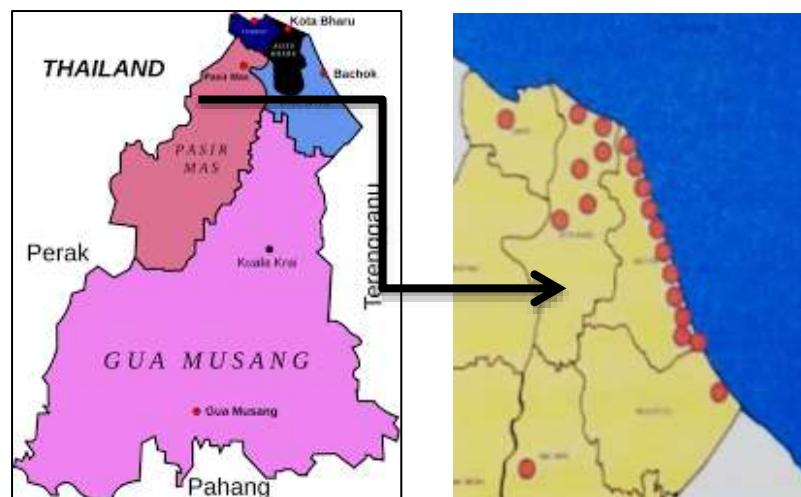


Figure 7: Show Maps Of Bachok District

Source: Derkommander (2017)

## 4.2 Structure of Pillbox in Bachok, Kelantan.

### 4.2.1 Kg Ger

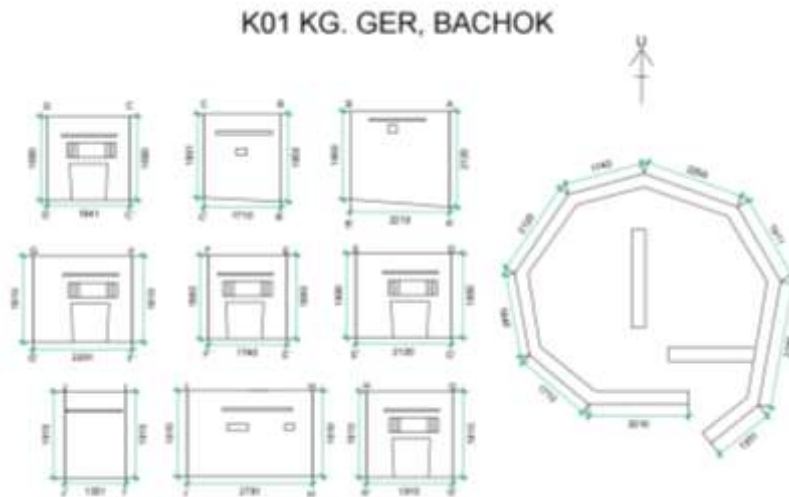


Figure 5: The measurement of British pillbox in Kg. Ger, Bachok, Kelantan.

Source: Field study.

First British pillbox in Bachok was located at Kg. Ger, in Melawi beach. This British pillbox are still showing the true structure of monument. It was strategic for tourism because there are chalet near the pillbox and provide good scenery for tourism. This pillbox was just under preservation of state government started on October 2021 (Figure 6). The pillbox structure consist of nine wall and one door at the back for enter n exit. Every wall hold the specific funtions that considered the angle for gunfire attack. The small hole on the wall of AB, BC, and HI was functioned to be gunfire attack, while wide hole on CD, DE, EF, FG, and GH was functioned to observe the movements and positions of enemy. The height of this pillbox was about 2270 mm. The longest width of the wall was H to I with 2780 mm and the shortest was I to J with 1361 mm. There are another two wall inside the British pillbox used to strengthen the structure. The angle for every wall was difference, for A and B is  $50^\circ$  and  $35^\circ$ , for C and D is  $40^\circ$  and  $20^\circ$ , for E and F is  $40^\circ$  and  $15^\circ$ , G and H is  $60^\circ$  and  $15^\circ$ , and the last wall I is  $25^\circ$  (Figure 5).



Figure 6: The British pillbox that remain in Kg Ger, Bachok, Kelantan.

Source: Field study and Nazli Ismail (2021).

4.2.2 Kg. Kuala Rejang



Figure 7: The measurement of British pillbox in Kg. Kuala Rejang, Bachok, Kelantan.

Source: Field study.

The next British pillbox was located 1 km from Kg. Ger. After the World War 2, this area became idle before IOES Bachok Marine Station, University of Malaya (Figure 8). This pillbox was outside the institution near the coast. The structure are same as other, but the measurement was slightly difference. The most wide wall was HI, shortest wall was IJ. The gunfire hole for this British pillbox was same for AB, BC, HI, and IJ. The wall inside the pillbox also same as before. The height was also different which is 1910 mm since erosion of sand at the coast happened. The angle of B is 40°, C is 40°, D is 60°, E is 60°, F is 15°, G is 60°, H is 15° and I is 40° (Figure 7). The thickness of the wall was about 1 ft.



Figure 8: The location of British pillbox in Kg Kuala Rejang, Bachok, Kelantan.

Source: Field study and IOESUM (2012).

4.2.3 Kg. Anak Rhu

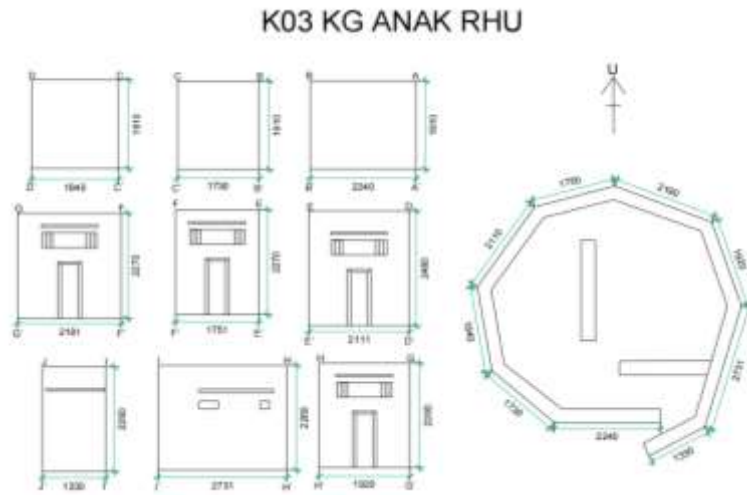


Figure 9: The measurement of British pillbox in Kg. Anak Rhu, Bachok, Kelantan.

Source: Field study.

The third British pillbox in Bachok, Kelantan located in Kg. Anak Rhu. After the World War 2, this area became an area population of villagers. This British pillbox was surrounded by house and there are also cowsheds (Figure 10). This British pillbox can be attraction in tourism, however it cannot be preserved since it was near the villagers houses. The structure of this British pillbox was a bit difference in terms of gunfire hole. There are no hole on wall AB, BC, CD and IJ. The gunhole only provide on wall HI. This pillbox still remain and in good structure, only the minor cracks and vandalisme (Figure 11). The angle of B is 40°, C is 40°, D is 20°, E is 35°, F is 35°, G is 40°, H is 60° and I is 10° (Figure 9). The thickness of the wall was about 1 ft.



Figure 10: The structure and surrounding area of pillbox in Kg. Anak Rhu, Bachok, Kelantan.

Source: Field study.



Figure 11: The Vandalisme on the wall of entrance British pillbox in Kg. Anak Rhu, Bachok, Kelantan.

Source: Field study.



#### 4.2.4 Kg. Pantai Baru

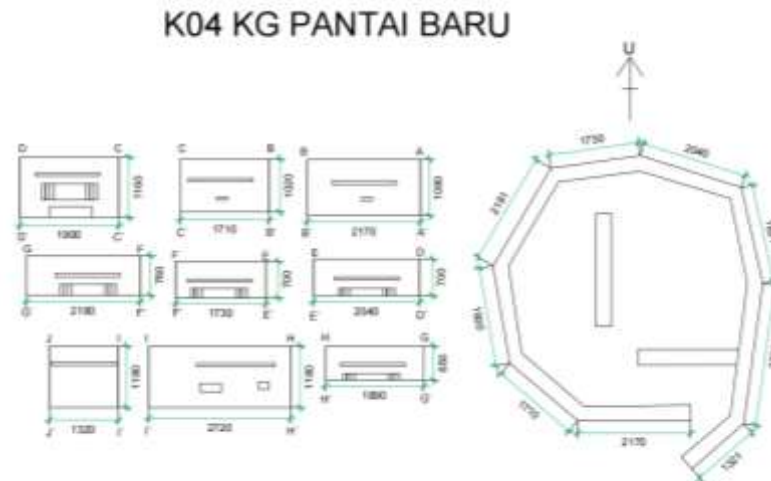


Figure 12: The measurement of British pillbox in Kg. Pantai Baru, Bachok, Kelantan.

Source: Field study.

The fourth British pillbox was located in Kg Pantai Baru. There are villagers population near the pillbox same as pillbox in Kg. Anak Rhu. This pillbox was in the bushes and to be garbage disposal. The population of villagers there majority was a fisherman. Since it was near the fisherman equipment storage, this British pillbox function to be a garbage dump (Figure 13). This British pillbox can be seen suffered from dirty surrounding and been embedded in the sand, only a quarter of it is visible. However the structure of pillbox still can be seen especially the wall inside of pillbox still same as all pillbox satated before. The angle of B is 40°, C is 30°, D is 25°, E is 60°, F is 60°, G is 60°, H is 20° and I is 40° (Figure 12). The thickness of the wall was about 1 ft.



Figure 13 : The garbage damp on British pillbox in Kg. Pantai Baru.

Source: Field study.

#### 4.2.5 Kg. Pantai Chap

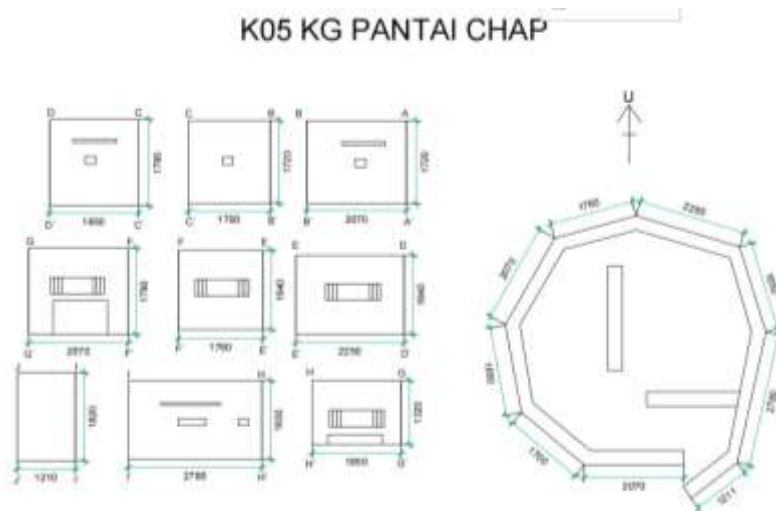


Figure 14: The measurement of British pillbox in Kg. Pantai Chap, Bachok, Kelantan.

Source: Field study.

The fifth British pillbox in Bachok was located near the chalet and fisherman villages. The condition of structure are still can be categorised in good structure with the minor damage and people able to see the structure of pillbox (Figure 15). However, The pillbox also became garbage dump. The strategic place for attract tourism was obvious yet it stil be abandoned for some reason. The heritage value still cannot be seen by society. The angle of B is 40°, C is 40°, D is 40°, E is 60°, F is 60°, G is 60°, H is 20° and I is 40° (Figure 14). The thickness of the wall was about 1 ft.



Figure 15: The structure of British pillbox in Kg Pantai Chap, Bachok, Kelantan.

Source: Field study.

#### 4.2.6 Kg. Pantai Tok Abah

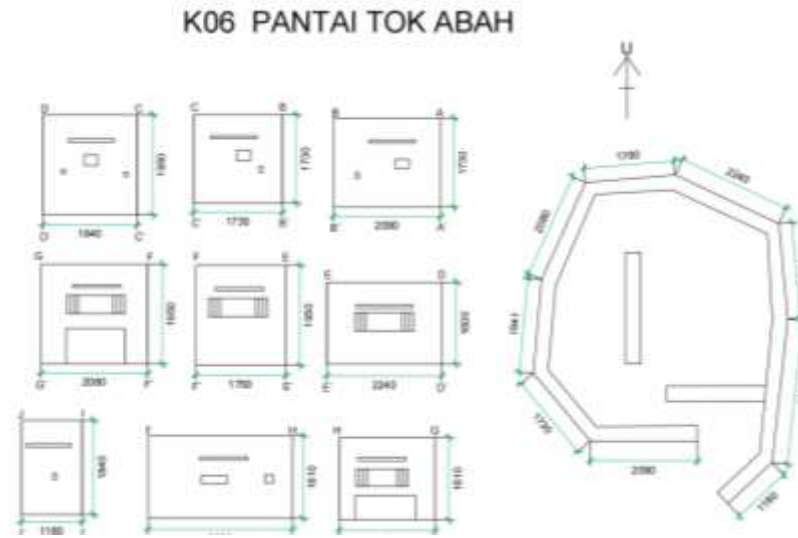


Figure 16: The measurement of British pillbox in Kg. Pantai Chap, Bachok, Kelantan.

Source: Field study.

The last British pillbox in Bachok that can be measured was located near the chalet of Tok Abah. The condition of structure are still in good structure with the minor damage and people able to see the structure of pillbox (Figure 17). The location was strategic that attract some tourism from Japanese. According to the owner of chalet, in past year, there are 5 tourists from Japanese came to do live record of the British pillbox structure, and it was a jackpot for them because the number of viewer keep increase. They were wonder about the heritage monument British pillbox, but the owner cannot give the detail information since lack of some knowledge. The owner urged some parties to tke the action since it is opportunity to attract tourism using Heritage monuments. In addition, the view of location was fascinating and peace (Figure 17). The heritage value still cannot be seen by society. The angle of B is 40°, C is 40°, D is 40°, E is 60°, F is 60°, G is 60°, H is 20° and I is 40° (Figure 16). The thickness of the wall was about 1 ft.



Figure 17: The view of British pillbox in Kg Pantai Tok Abah, Bachok, Kelantan.

Source: Field study.

### 4.3 Analysis of Respondent.

This questionnaire contains two sections which section A for demographics including gender, age, and profession. For part B, this questionnaire is aimed at community awareness of pillboxes in Bachok, Kelantan. There are 100 respondents for this questionnaire that live in Bachok.

#### 4.3.1 Section B: The Awareness Of Heritage Monument British Pillbox In Bachok, Kelantan.

Table 2 : The Result Concerning The Awareness Of Monuments British Pillbox In Bachok, Kelantan As a Heritage Monument.

Participant (n=100)			Percentage %				
Male	Female	Construct	1	2	3	4	5
19	81	The British pillbox is one of the heritage monument.	0	0	4	25.7	70.3
19	81	The pillbox in Bachok, Kelantan has a historical value.	0	0	5	21.8	73.2
19	81	The pillbox in Bachok, Kelantan can be one of the object for heritage tourism.	0	0	8.9	22.8	68.3
19	81	The pillbox capable in generating economy through heritage tourism.	0	1	12.9	33.7	52.4
19	81	Has a high historical heritage value.	0	2	6.9	25.7	65.4
19	81	Can be transformed into a tourist area.	0	0	5	25.7	69.3

Source: Field Study.

The questionnaire of the awareness of heritage monument British pillbox in Bachok, Kelantan was distributed by 100 respondents included 19 males and 81 females (Table 2). The British pillbox is one of the heritage monuments, the percentage of strongly agree is 70.3% and agree with 25.7%. Next is pillbox in Bachok have historical value, there are 73.4% strongly agree, and 21.8 % agree. For statement pillbox can be one of the objects for heritage tourism are 68.3 % strongly agree, and 22.8 % agree. Strongly agree with 52.4 %, and 33.7 % agree for the statement pillbox capable in generating economy through heritage tourism. For pillbox has a high heritage value, 65.4% strongly agree, and 25.7 % agree. The last statement, pillbox can be transformed into tourist area 69.3% for strongly agree, and 25.7% agree. There is a minimum society that does not approve and is not sure about the statements. This proves that some people lack awareness of heritage monuments of the British pillbox in Kelantan.

### 5.0 Conclusion

In conclusion, the monument of British pillbox has their own significant value since it was created by British during World War 2 in 1941. It was a historic monument that must be preserved since it prove the success of Independant Malaysia. It also give positive impact on the field of tourism and education of heritage. This heritage monument can be one of material in education and create the awareness in society about the heritage monument that exist in Malaysia. Other than British pillbox, there are many others heritage monuments that was build. Society should aware of heritage monuments to prevent from recurrence of historic of colonialism. Therefore, the awareness should be create among young generations by heritage knowledge. As a result, young generation will still have the opportunity to learn about the original structures monuments of the British pillboxes on the shores of Bachok. Furthermore, this monuments of British pillbox contributes to economic of Kelantan and Malaysia by enhancing the heritage tourism sector.

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### Paper Contribution To Related Fields Of Study

This paper of research was contribute to several factors in heritage fields. This research paper focus on monuments that own significant value and heritage value that should be preserved and conserved in many way to remaining the importance arts of architecture and heritage cultures. This research also stated some idea for economic growth in country through heritage tourism.

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