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Taiping Lake Gardens was an abandoned tin mine

TAIPING: The Taiping Lake Gardens was formerly an abandoned tin mine.

Twenty-one years after it was abandoned by Hai San clan leader Kapitan Chung Keng Kwee, work to develop the park started in 1884.

It was officially opened to the public by then Perak British Resident Frank Swettenham on Nov 17, 1893.

According to the *Selangor Journal* dated Jan 12, 1894, Swettenham's wife, Constance Sydney Holmes, got the help of a mining inspector, William Scott, to turn the area into a scenic place and subsequently a park.

The concept behind the creation of the lake gardens is attributed to the nostalgia brought by the Lake District of England and the Highland of Scotland.

The park's proximity to the foot of Bukit Larut (formerly Maxwell Hill) makes it look more majestic

and its beauty was an inspiration to artists, writers and singers.

It is divided into several components, namely the green belt; Silver Jubilee Memorial Jetty; Taiping Jubilee Memorial Pavilion; Fountain; Red Bridges and other bridges; Bougainvillea Point; Sevens Sister Point; Bamboo Point; Lotus Point; Turtle Bay; Jungle Lake; West Lake; Almanda Pond; Oblong Pond; Central Jungle; Turtle Point; and The Raintrees.

The original size of the park was 61.93ha but after additional acquisition by the Perak Government, is now located on a 96.44ha site.

It is fully administered by the Taiping Municipal Council, which also runs the Taiping Zoo located within the park.

To date, the council has officially tagged 113 raintrees at the park and also maintains over 1,300 other types of trees with help from arborists and experts from the Forest Research Institute of Malaysia.