



3. Jakarta-Batavia, History Travel

Jakarta History Museum, Taman Fatahillah, outside Dirk Teeuwen MSc



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1. Jakarta History Museum, outside

1.1 Introduction

The Museum in the old Dutch Town Hall is worth a visit. It displays a lot of art, furniture, weapons and portraits. There are dungeons, a remarkable backyard and much more.

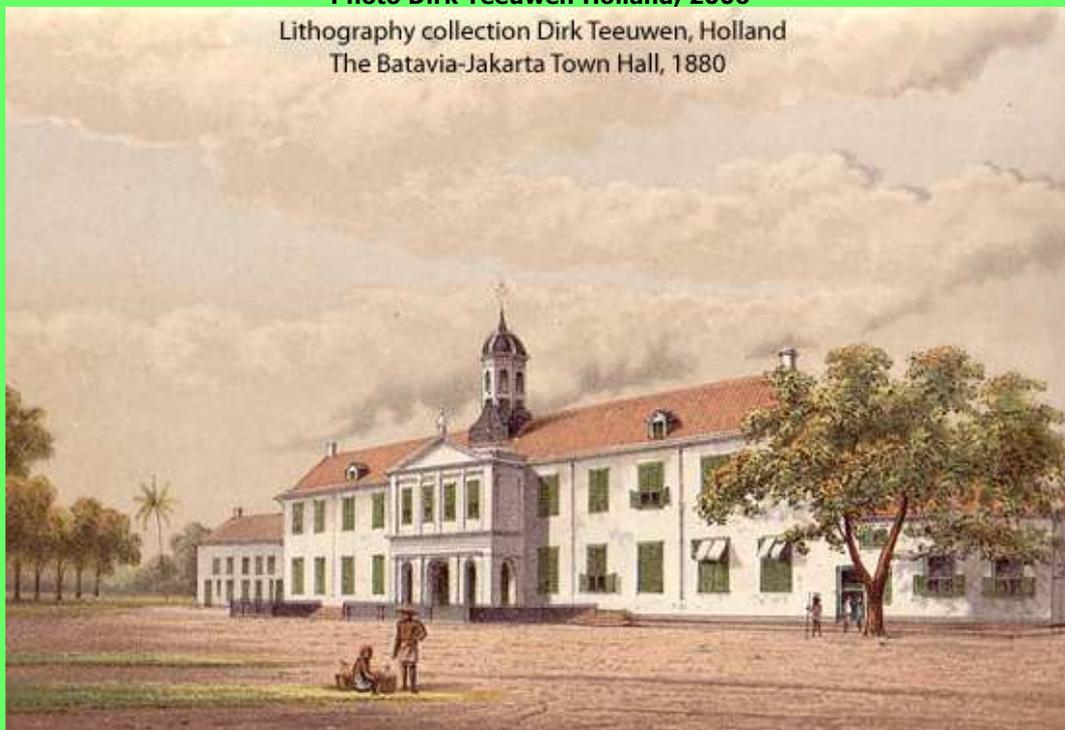
This old Dutch Town Hall is the third one in succession. The first Town Hall was built in 1620 on a site east from Chicken Market Bridge on Kali Besar. This first 17th century Town Hall was erected with a ground floor and an upper floor. The upper floor was used as an improvised church, which soon became too small. From 1627 until 1707 a new Town Hall, the second one, stood on the same site of our nowadays third Town Hall. As for the church: other churches have been built. One of them has been erected on the east side of the square, on the spot of Museum Wayang.

We discover the colonial Town Hall, Jakarta History Museum, along the south side of Taman Fatahillah. To the east of this Museum are Jalan Pos, or Post Office Street, and west of it Jalan Pintu Besar, New Gate Street. There are old entrances to the Town Hall at both sides of the Hall. Along Jalan Pintu Besar, walking along a pedestrian zone constructed in 2006, you can admire a lot of old (19th and 18th century) fronts of colonial houses. Stroll around for a while and then walk to the front of the Jakarta History Museum. Try to imagine the historic relevance of the site and the building! This imagination is exactly what we are going to stimulate now.

1.2 Pictures



1. Jakarta History Museum, the old Dutch Town Hall from 1710
Photo Dirk Teeuwen Holland, 2006



2. The old Town Hall in 1880, the wing left (east) and the wing right (west) are clearly visible

Litho by J.C. van Rappard Esq. From M.T.H. Perelaer: *Het kamerlid Van Berkestein in Nederlandsch-Indië*; Leiden Holland 1888 p. 91

Photo Dirk Teeuwen, Holland
The left wing of the old Town Hall



3. The eastern wing of the old Town Hall, this wing was used by the Dutch East-India Company (VOC), the ground floor was a prison
Photo Dirk Teeuwen Holland, 2006

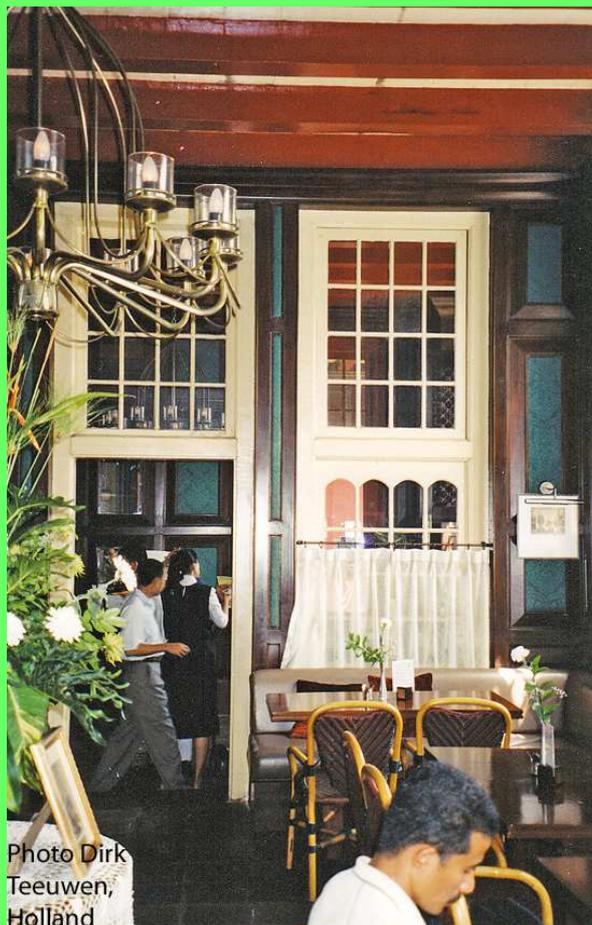


Photo Dirk Teeuwen, Holland
The right wing of the old Town Hall

4. The western wing of the old Town Hall, this wing was used by the Municipality of Batavia, the ground floor was a prison
Photo Dirk Teeuwen Holland, 2006



5. Door at the very left side of the building (lower wing), an entrance of this prison of the Dutch East-India Company, now the access to the Indonesian Café "Stadhuis" (Café Town Hall)
Photo Dirk Teeuwen Holland, 2006



6. The interior of Café Stadhuis
Photo Dirk Teeuwen Holland, 2006

1.3 Tour Guide

Please, stand still in front of the Town Hall

The old Town Hall, the third one, is a museum since 1974. Its construction started in 1707 and was finished in 1710. It was mainly a centre of government administration. Nevertheless the first Town Hall on Kali Besar, as well as the second as the third one on Taman Fatahillah, served also as a prison. The last prisoner left the Town Hall in 1846. A part of the Town Hall was an orphanage from time to time. The room right from the balcony has been as a place of worship in the 18th century as well as the meeting room of the municipal Batavia Bench of Magistrates. Until 1846 the backyard was meant to give prisoners an airing. Until 1815 the backyard of the Town Hall was a sort of station for the local militia also. Town Hall Square was the militia's training area and parade ground.

Nevertheless the Town Hall has always been an administrative centre in the first place: the administrative centre of the city of Batavia until 1925 and thereafter it was the office of the - Dutch and later Indonesian - Governor of the province of West-Java. It is a Museum since 1974.

Officially the Dutch East-India Company, VOC, had their headquarters in the Batavia Castle from 1619. From about 1730 until its bankruptcy in 1800, the Company resided more and more within the walls of Batavia Town outside the Castle.

Please, stand still in front of the Town Hall for one more moment
Standing in front of the old Town Hall we see a building with a ground floor, an upper floor, an attic floor and a small cupola on top. On the left as well as on the right side of the building we notice lower wings with the same structure. The ground floor of the eastern lower wing was a prison used by the Dutch East-India Company, VOC, and it is a nice and cheap restaurant today. The ground floor of the western lower wing was a prison used by the Municipality of Batavia, it is a bookshop now. The upper floors of these lower wings were inhabited by the staff, the wardens and other personnel. The prisons on the ground floor of these wings were meant for frauds, for bankrupt citizens; mainly white citizens, mixed blood people and Chinese: most of them were held in captivity because of offences with an economic character. Their accommodation was reasonable by standards in those days.