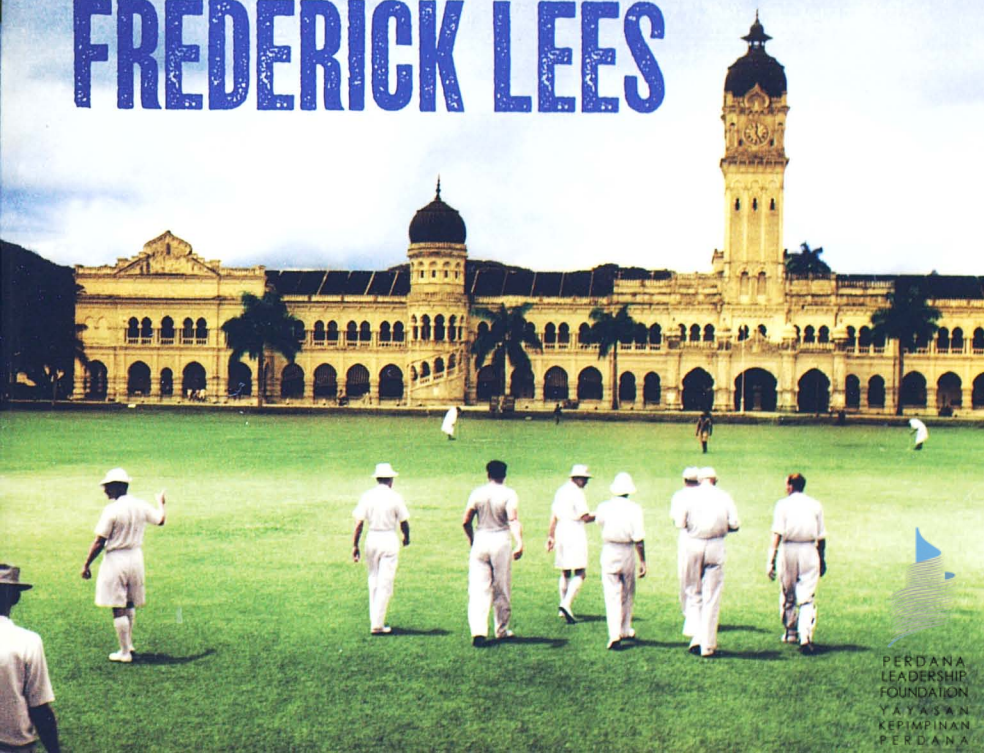


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Leon Comber, ex-Malayan Special Branch and author of *Malaya's Secret Police, 1945-60*

THE MALAYAN LIFE OF FERDACH O'HANEY FREDERICK LEES





THE MALAYAN LIFE OF FERDACH O'HANEY

Frederick Lees was born in 1924. He served in the RAF during the war and afterwards studied at Liverpool and London universities. He then joined the Malayan Civil Service and held posts ranging from District Officer through State Secretariat duties to Emergency work on the Director of Operations staff. His last position was Secretary of the Election Commission. Lees' most memorable moment in Malaya was his rousing call of 'Merdeka!' at the conclusion of Malaysia's Declaration of Independence ceremony on 31 August 1957 after Syed Jaafar Albar – who had been asked by Tunku Abdul Rahman to lead the crowd in cheers of 'Merdeka' as the dignitaries left the stage – lost his voice after the first two proclamations. Lees, who was sitting with Syed Jaafar in the control box of the newly erected Stadium Merdeka, stepped up to the microphone to save the day.

Lees returned to Southeast Asia in the British Diplomatic Service and worked in Singapore. In the 1970s he became involved in the work of British and European non-governmental organizations concerned with Third World development. This took him to Ethiopia and the Sudan. Later he returned to diplomatic work to train the foreign service of Papua New Guinea. The last part of his career was spent in the Asian Development Bank in Manila.

His first novel, *Annals of the Purple City*, inspired by a sojourn in Macau where he studied Chinese, was published in 1995. In the following year he published a widely praised historical novel, *The Arthuriad of Catumandus*. He is married, has two sons, and now lives in England in a little Sussex town about which he recently published a novel, *The Rape of Rye*.





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THE
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Frontcover photo: Cricket pitch at Government House (1950).

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Backcover photo: Police talk to an old Chinese man who may have

information about communist terrorists (1949). Image©Hulton

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