

**Heritage Appraisal**  
**School House, St. Stephen's College**  
**No. 22 Tung Tau Wan Road, Stanley, Hong Kong**

The School House of St. Stephen's College (聖士提反書院的書院大樓) at No. 22 Tung Tau Wan Road, Stanley, was built in 1930. It is not only the oldest building of St Stephen's College, but also the oldest surviving school building still providing boarding services in Hong Kong. Besides, it is one of the very few remaining sites of the Stanley Internment Camp. Thus, it is an important reminder of the history of development of local education and the sufferings endured by the internees in the wartime period.

***Historical  
Interest***

The religious missions played an active role in the development of local education. For example, St. Joseph's College (聖約瑟書院) was founded in 1875 by six La Salle Brothers for the education of Portuguese; St. Paul's College (聖保羅書院) (founded in 1851 for the education of Chinese was revived in 1876 under the Church Missionary Society; and Diocesan Native Female Training School (founded in 1860) for Chinese girls which later became the Diocesan Home and Orphanage in 1869 to receive children for both sexes (eventually split into Diocesan Girls' School (拔萃女書院) and Diocesan Boys' School (拔萃男書院) in 1899 and 1913 respectively). These schools, with Queen's College (皇仁書院) (formerly known as Central School (中央書院), the first government secondary school established in 1862) and Belilios Public School (庇理羅士女子中學, established in 1890), were the chief English teaching schools in the late 19th century.

St. Stephen's College was established in 1903 by Rev. Bishop Banister of the Anglican Church and a number of prominent Chinese such as Sir Ho Kai (何啟) (1859–1914) and Dr Tso Seen-wan (曹善允) (1865–1953), who wished to save China by means of education. Indeed, with the rise of status of the Chinese community during the late 19th century, the relatively well-off Chinese desired to have a school providing English education solely for their children. In 1901, eight Chinese community leaders petitioned to the then Governor Sir Henry Blake for the establishment

of a private Anglo-Chinese school.

St. Stephen's College was opened on Western Street in 1903 as a Christian boys' school modelled on English public schools<sup>1</sup>. The Church Missionary Society of England took charge of the school. Soon it also attracted overseas students from Southeast Asia. Expansion of the school led to the move to Bonham Road in 1923 and then to the present site in Stanley in 1930.

Construction of the existing school premises started in 1928. The School House was the first building completed under this construction project in 1930. Martin Hostel and the Old Laboratory were completed in the following year.

The School House was built as the main school building of St. Stephen's College, comprising a school hall, a school house (dormitory) and classrooms. It was built by Mr. Lam Woo (林護) (1871 – 1933), with Mr. L.G. Bird as the architect. The foundation stone was laid by the then Governor Sir Cecil Clementi (金文泰) (1875–1947) (service from 1925–30) on 27 April 1928. It was completed and opened by Acting Governor Mr. W.T. Southorn on 25 March 1930.

The primary section of St. Stephen's College was set up in 1936-38 at Nos. 30-32 Wong Ma Kok Road, Stanley. Both the primary and secondary sections provided boarding service for students.

Around 15 December 1941, shortly before the Japanese attack on Hong Kong on 18 December, the School House of St. Stephen's College was taken over by the British Army, which converted the building into an emergency military hospital. Staff and students of St. Stephen's College helped out in the hospital. Early on Christmas Day in 1941, the Japanese captured St. Stephen's College and broke into the School House. The troops initiated the "St. Stephen's College Massacre" and bayoneted 56 British and

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<sup>1</sup> The term "English public schools" refers to private schools (usually boarding schools) independent of the state educational system. They were endowed for the use or benefit of the public and carried on under some kind of public management.

Canadian wounded who were still in their beds. Two doctors and seven nurses were also killed.

During the Japanese Occupation (1941-45), St. Stephen's College together with the nearby Stanley Prison Warders' Quarters were used as the Stanley Internment Camp. The Camp housed about 3 000 internees, including 1 000 in St. Stephen's College among whom some 370 internees were accommodated in the School House. Classes were organised for the interned children in the classrooms on the ground floor of the East and the West Wings. Church services and concerts were held at the main hall of the central block. The upper floor was used as students' dormitories.

The school building of St. Stephen's College was seriously damaged in the war years. All the school equipment was destroyed. All the desks were used for fuel. Therefore, after the surrender of the Japanese, the school building was temporarily handed over to the Government for use as a Police Training School and for repairs. St. Stephen's College was re-opened in 1947. It started to be co-educational in 1968 and became an aided school receiving Government subsidy in 1970. It joined the Direct Subsidy Scheme in 2008.

At present, there are still 8 pre-war buildings in the secondary section of St. Stephen's College, including the School House as the oldest one, Martin Hall, the Old Laboratory and five bungalows (staff quarters). St. Stephen's College, both its primary and secondary sections, still provides boarding service for its students.

The School House is an H-shaped building consisting of an East Wing and a West Wing connected by a central block (originally the main hall). On the ground floor of the two wings are classrooms and on the second floor are students' dormitories.

***Architectural  
Merit***

The School House is in late transitional Arts and Crafts style bearing Modernist influence, with external walls of granite on the ground floor and plain rendered and painted finish on the upper

storey. Rough-cast rendering, wide overhanging eaves, arched windows and doorways and arcaded verandahs are typical features of the Arts and Crafts style. The pitched roofs reflect an adaptation to the sub-tropical climatic conditions in Hong Kong.

Internally, the main entrance hall of the East Wing is decorated with several architectural features including an arched doorway to the Vestibule and glazed panelled double doors to the library entrance. One of the notable features of the entrance hall is the double-entry grand staircase leading up to the first floor. The staircase features ornamental ironwork balustrading and newels, a moulded hardwood handrail and *terrazzo* (水磨石 polished granolithic) treads and risers.

The first floor landing and the upper part of the staircase are supported by four fluted neo-classical columns with octagonal bases. At the first floor level, the staircase changes to a double-return staircase with a quarter-turn staircase leading up to the second floor female dormitory. There is a recessed ceiling panel over the staircase area from which ornamental light fittings are suspended.

Architectural features are minimal on the upper floors, but there is an ornamental balcony at the second floor level featuring an ornamental parapet, a stepped *terrazzo* plinth, cross-braced pierced panels, concave corners and shaped brackets. There is one small corner fireplace in one of the upper floor rooms. Floor finishes are a mixture of timber boarding in the library and the upper floor and *terrazzo* at verandahs, the balcony on the upper floor and the ground floor of the West Wing dormitories.

The library, which was originally the school assembly hall, is very impressive featuring rows of octagonal columns forming aisles on either side, and balustraded galleries at the first floor level connecting the East and the West Wings. The main feature of the library is the roof which is exposed to view. It is a pitched roof supported by reinforced concrete horizontal purlins and arched portal frames which bear Modernist influence. The floor finishes comprise timber boarding.

In 1980, in order to convert the assembly hall into a library, a new floor slab was constructed at the first floor level over the study area for bookcases accessed by a new reinforced concrete staircase. The original roofs, which were built of tiles, have been replaced with reinforced concrete in the renovations over the years. Four original chimney stacks (although now redundant) have survived. ***Authenticity***

In the East and the West Wings, most of the windows in the dormitory on the first floor have been replaced with modern aluminium windows and the terrazzo treads and risers of the old staircases are also carpeted. Although internal refurbishment and alterations have been made over the years, they generally have retained much of their original authentic appearance and do not affect the overall architectural significance of the School House.

The School House is the oldest surviving school building still providing boarding service in Hong Kong. It is also one of the very few remaining sites of Stanley Internment Camp. The Japanese set up a total of six internment camps in Hong Kong. Stanley Internment Camp is the only surviving internment camp with the School House as the oldest reminder of the sufferings endured by the internees during the Japanese Occupation. ***Rarity***

St. Stephen's College is a prestigious school in Hong Kong. Prominent public figures, including the late Sir Chau Tsun-nin (周焯年) (1893-1971), Mr. Ip Man (葉問) (1893-1972), Sir Tang Shiu-kin (鄧肇堅) (1901-1986), Sir Chau Sik-nin (周錫年) (1903-1985), and contemporarily the Honourable Timothy Fok Tsun-ting (霍震霆) and Mr. Raymond Chien Kuo-fung (錢果豐), are alumni of the College. ***Social Value & Local Interest***

In 2008, St. Stephen's College established the "St. Stephen's College Heritage Trail" to promote public appreciation of the history of the site by providing free guided tours for educational and non-profit-making organizations. Free guided tours to the heritage trail are also arranged for the public on the College's Open Day every year. The last open day on 8 May 2011 attracted about 700 visitors.

The School House has high group value with other buildings on campus, such as Martin Hostel (1931) (馬田宿舍, Grade 2), the Old Laboratory (1931) (舊實驗室, Grade 2), Bungalows Nos. 1 – 5 (1931) (平房, Grade 2) and St. Stephen's Chapel (1950) (聖士提反堂, Grade 3). St. Stephen's College as a whole also has group value with other historic buildings in Stanley, such as the Old Stanley Police Station (1859) (舊赤柱警署, declared monument), Stanley Mosque (c. 1936 – 37) (赤柱回教廟, Grade 1), Stanley Post Office (c. 1937) (赤柱郵政局, Grade 2) and St. Stephen's Preparatory School (1938) (聖士提反書院附屬小學, Grade 3).

***Group Value***

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