Historic Building Appraisal

Kwong Yuet Tong Public Office

Nos. 16-17 Ching Lin Terrace, Kennedy Town

Historical Interest

Kwong Yuet Tong Public Office (廣悅堂公所) was built in **1949** on the right of Lo Pan Temple (魯班先師廟) in Ching Lin Terrace (青蓮臺), Kennedy Town. The Public Office (Kung So 公所) was a respected body and some famous figures like Sir Ping-fan Fung (馮秉芬) and Mr Fok Ying-tung (霍英東) had served as its honorary president and advisor. The Public Office was built by Kwong Yuet Tong (廣悅堂) which was an organization formed in 1883 for the construction and management of the above-said Lo Pan Temple. The Temple was completed in 1884 for the worship of Lo Pan (魯班) who was respected for being a genius builder and carpenter in the Spring and Autumn Period (春秋, 770-476 B.C.). Lo Pan has been worshipped by local Chinese constructors, builders and craftsmen who in Chinese are called workers of Sam Hong (三行, literally, three trades, i.e., carpentry, masonry and bricklaying).

Architectural Merit

The building is a two–storey building in a spade-shaped plan. It is constructed of concrete and steel bars with its walls and columns to support its flat roofs. It has a near Art Deco style with its rectangular block on the ground floor and a recessed rectangular block on the upper floor. The building is having mainly a three-bay symmetrical design with its entrance in the middle of the ground floor. Rooms are on either side of the middle bay. The rear portion of the middle bay is the service wing with a kitchen. Its front façade of the two storeys is plastered with horizontal grooves. The granite doorframe is with the names of the temple and the Tong engraved on the lintel. A big window is on either side of the entrance and on the first floor front façade. The floors are with ceramic floor tiles. The building was built by a contractor “勞炳記” (Lo Bing Kee).

Rarity

It is a building of the Tong to witness its history and that of the temple.

Built Heritage Value, Authenticity

It has some built heritage value. It has its authenticity kept.

Social Value, & Local Interest

The Tong has the celebration of the Si Fu Festival (師父誕, Master Festival), the birthday of Lo Pan, each year on the 13th day of the sixth lunar month by organizing worshipping and offering rituals at the temple and banquets for its members. Before the Second World War, the Tong also distributed meals to nearby children. The Tong also has educational service for the community. The

building has been rented to Hon Wah Middle School (Primary Section) (漢華中學小學部) since 1965 and is now used as the classrooms of its Six and Seven Forms. A free school was set up in Wan Chai in 1949 for its member children and the poor. A Kwong Yuet Tong Lo Pan Primary School (廣悅堂魯班學校, renamed as Excel Foundation Primary School 基悅小學 since 2002) was established in Wah Fu Estate (華富邨) of Aberdeen in 1968. The Tong's directors still act as the supervisors and chairpersons of the school management committee.

It has group value with the Lo Pan Temple next door. ***Group Value***

It is used by Hon Wah Middle School (Primary Section) (漢華中學小學部). ***Adaptive re-use***