

**Historic Building Appraisal**  
**School building of 1927, St Paul's Co-educational College**  
**No. 33 MacDonnell Road, Hong Kong**

The existing St. Paul's Co-educational College (聖保羅男女中學) at No.33 MacDonnell Road was the successor of the former St. Paul's Girls College (聖保羅女書院), an all-girls school at 2 Caine Road (堅道) established in 1915. The former St. Paul's Girls College was established by several members of the St. Paul's Church (聖保羅堂), and the most enthusiastic donor was Mr. Lam Woo (林護) (1870-1933), the usher (值理) of St. Paul's Church and a follower of Dr. Sun Yat-sen (孫逸仙). Later in **1927**, the College was relocated to its current location at No. 33 MacDonnell Road, which was granted by the Government in 1924. It became Hong Kong's first co-educational school (男女合校教育) in 1945. Its present name was adopted in 1950. A new wing of the school was constructed in 1959. A second stage expansion took place in 1968 and a new 7 storey building was completed in 1971.

*Historical  
Interest*

The original school building (currently known as Dr Catherine Woo Wing 胡素貞博士樓) erected in 1927 is built of red brickwork to a cruciform plan with north-south and east-west axes. There is an internal open garden cum courtyard with terraced flower beds or planters. The architectural style of the building has been described as **Neo-Georgian**, a stripped-down classical style of the late **Renaissance** period in England. Architectural features include numerous Roman arches and columns forming colonnades and galleries, whilst the windows and doors have imitation masonry (Shanghai plaster) architraves and surrounds. The main entrance is probably the building's most impressive feature. The entrance is situated in a recess formed by two projecting canted bays on either side. The entrance is enhanced by a classical portico of coupled columns in the Ionic Order supporting an entablature, balcony and pair of urns in ornamental stonework.

*Architectural  
Merit*

The school building of 1927 with its rather eclectic hybrid mix of neo-classical styles and unusual floor plan is quite rare in Hong Kong, and of obvious built heritage value. Alterations which have had an impact on it have been the conversion of the basement swimming pool into a gymnasium, the addition of new wings and annexes, and the changing of the pitched roof to a flat roof. Nevertheless the old block has managed to retain much of its authenticity.

*Rarity,  
Built Heritage  
Value &  
Authenticity*

The social value of the College lies in the historical role it has played in the field of education. It was the first co-educational school in Hong Kong, and

*Social Value  
& Local*

one of the schools chosen by the Government in the 1950s to become grant *Interest* aided because of its long tradition and religious background. The College is well known locally and is physically close to several other historic buildings.

Today, St. Paul's Co-educational College still operates as a school in its *Group Value* original building and extensions. The school is physically close to declared monuments, St. Joseph's College (聖若瑟書院), Main Building of the Helena May (梅夫人婦女會主樓) and St. John's Cathedral (聖約翰座堂), as well as historic buildings such as the building at No.28 Kennedy Road and Union Church (香港佑寧堂) at No.22A Kennedy Road.