

## Historic Building Appraisal

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### King George V School

#### No. 2 Tin Kwong Road, Ho Man Tin, Kowloon

King George V School originated from a government school, the former Kowloon British School (九龍英童學校), which was opened on 19 April 1902 at No. 136 Nathan Road. In the year 1900, Sir Robert Ho Tung (何東) donated \$15,000 for establishing the school, and he hoped it would be multi-racial; however, the British community prevailed upon him to permit the school to be for the children of British residents only. The school was renamed the Central British School (中央英童書院) in 1923.

*Historical  
Interest*

The school was relocated to the present site in Ho Man Tin in 1936. The foundation stone of the new building was laid by Governor, Sir William Peel (貝路爵士) on 15 May 1935. Sixteen months later, the school was completed and opened officially by the Governor, Sir Andrew Caldecott (赫德傑爵士) on 14 September 1936. The Japanese invasion of China in July 1937 resulted in a flood of refugees into Hong Kong. Some of the refugees were European evacuees from the International Settlement in Shanghai. The school building was transformed into a refugee camp; classrooms became dormitories and community centres. During the Japanese Occupation (1941 – 1945), the school was used as a military hospital for the Japanese troops. But from April 1945, it also housed the British Military Hospital relocated from Bowen Road. The Japanese surrendered in mid-August 1945. After the British administration was restored, the school premises became a Royal Air Force (RAF) hospital for several months. The school reopened on 19 September 1946. It was renamed King George V School in 1948 and joined the English Schools Foundation (ESF) in 1979. It was the only school in Hong Kong that provided secondary education for British residents in the early twentieth century.

The architect of the new school building was W.A. Cornell of the well known firm of Palmer and Turner. The building contractors were Cheon Hing and Co.. The design bears the influences of modern architecture. The main architectural features are symmetry, long linear facades, a central porch and clock tower and two internal courtyards. Shanghai plaster is used as the external finish marked into courses to resemble stonework. Some streamlining features can be seen at the parapet level but otherwise decorations are minimalist. Internally, stylised columns and polished green and white terrazzo staircases are the main features. The school building is an

*Architectural  
Merit*

*Rarity, Built  
Heritage  
Value &*

excellent and well-kept example of its style having both rarity and built *Authenticity* heritage value. Although it has had various alterations and additions over the years to cope with changing requirements, the school building retains much of its authenticity.

The school, which has also been used as a hospital and refugee centre in the past has social value, and its connection with some well-known figures *Social Value, Local Interest* gives it colour and local interest.<sup>1</sup>

King George V School is within walking distance of other historic *Group Value* buildings, such as Main Building and Chapel of St. Clare of Assisi of Heep Yunn School (協恩中學, Grade 3), Tang King Po School (鄧鏡波學校, Grade 3), Maryknoll Convent School (瑪利諾修院學校, Declared Monument), St. Teresa's Church (聖德肋撒堂, Grade 1), Main Building of Diocesan Boys' School (男拔萃書院主樓, Grade 2), and the Kowloon Hospital (九龍醫院, Grade 2 or 3).

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<sup>1</sup> For instance, Walter Shute (KGV 1934 – 1936) had served in the Fleet Air Arm during the Second World War. After the war, he was an international player of badminton and tennis, and later became a national coach of the UK. Another example is Jalu Shroff (KGV 1949 – 1956), who was a successful businessman and appointed the Chairman of the English Schools Foundation in 1995. Lolletta Chu (KGV 1971 – 1977), the winner of the 1977 Miss Hong Kong, was also a graduate of KGV.