

Historic Building Appraisal
Bethel Bible Seminary
Nos. 45 & 47 Grampian Road, Kowloon

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The building now known as Bethel Bible Seminary (伯特利神學院), *Historical Interest* situated at No. 47 Grampian Road (嘉林邊道), is currently used as a seminary with dormitories. It is believed to have been built in the mid-1930s. It was purchased by the Bethel Mission of China (伯特利總會) in 1939 for use as an orphanage. The adjacent building (No. 45) was rented in 1939 (later purchased in 1948) for use as the Mission's seminary.

The Bethel Mission of China was founded in Shanghai in 1920 and moved to Hong Kong in January 1938. The Mission vacated the building and left Hong Kong for Western China during the Japanese Occupation (1941-1945). After the War, the mission went back to Hong Kong, retrieved back the property from the Government, resumed the worship service and the seminary was back to normal schedule. The complex expanded from 1949 to 1965 as several new buildings were acquired and constructed.

The building now known as Bethel Bible Seminary was built as a *Architectural Merit* symmetrical pair of handed semi-detached houses for residential purposes. The design combines various Neo-classical elements with colonial influences. The main facade facing Grampian Road is a three-storey high composition comprising a central projecting bay, two canted bays at the ends, and two recessed bays in-between. There is a very wide distinctive projecting cornice at parapet level. The walls are finished with white painted stucco and the centre bay is rusticated with grooved lines to represent masonry joints. The ground floor storey is built of coursed granite rubble. The roof is flat and chimney stacks have been removed. The original fireplaces still remain inside together with other interesting features such as panelled doors and ornamental fanlights.

Bethel Bible Seminary has been well preserved and although some alterations have been made over the years, no significant alterations which might have diminished the authenticity of the exterior can be identified. *Rarity, Built Heritage Value & Authenticity*

The Bethel Mission has contributed to religion and education in China and Hong Kong and Bethel Bible Seminary has played an important role in these activities. The Mission started an English high school section in 1970. In 1982, Bethel Kindergarten (伯特利幼稚園) also commenced. *Social Value & Local Interest*

In 1993, Bethel High School (伯特利中學) was moved to the new campus in Fairview Park of Yuen Long. Bethel Bible Seminary is a well known building in the area and of local interest to the residents.

There are no other graded historic buildings near the Bethel Bible Seminary. *Group Value*