

**Historic Building Appraisal**  
**Nos. 5 and 7 Broom Road,**  
**Happy Valley, Wan Chai, Hong Kong**

Built in 1939 – 1941, Nos. 5 and 7 Broom Road (蟠龍道) are in fact two *Historical Interest* semi-detached houses which form one building. Prior to the advent of the British, a Chinese village named Wong Nai Chong Village (黃泥涌村) had been in existence at Happy Valley since the Qianlong era (乾隆年間, 1736-1795). In 1923, when the colonial government embarked on a programme of redevelopment in Happy Valley, the Village was subsequently demolished. The development of Happy Valley into an upper-class residential area continued after the Second World War. A series of three-storey houses began to line the streets as more well-to-do people who used to live in Caine Road and Mid-levels moved to Happy Valley.

The plot of land at Nos. 5 and 7 Broom Road was purchased in 1937 at a public auction by Eu Tong-sen (余東旋). Mr. Eu was the founder of Eu Yan Sang (余仁生), a leading producer and distributor of traditional Chinese medicine and healthcare products. He was not only a successful businessman in the pharmaceutical industry, but also a large landowner and estate developer in Hong Kong, Guangzhou and Singapore.

In 1956, the premises at Nos. 5 and 7 Broom Road, including six garages numbered from one to six, were sold to Mr Tang Siu-kin (later Sir Siu-kin Tang 鄧肇堅爵士), a renowned Hong Kong businessman and philanthropist with high social status. It is understood that Mr. Tang spent the latter part of his life with his family at Nos. 5 and 7 Broom Road.

The houses form a three-storey apartment block built in the International *Architectural Merit* Modern design of the 1930s. Facing the elevated road alongside Broom Road, the north elevation is characterized by streamlined curved facades, curved corners, porthole windows and horizontal bands of windows united by projecting horizontal hood mouldings. The walls are smoothly rendered and painted off-white. A T-shaped annex at the rear houses an open staircase and rooms and toilets which are probably servants' quarters. The roofs of the various parts of the houses are flat. The plan has a central axis but is asymmetrical for some reason maybe to give two types of floor plan for the apartments. The garages are situated underneath the elevated road in front of

the houses.

Nos. 5 and 7 Broom Road are a rare example of an apartment block with International influence still remaining in the neighbourhood. Most of the surrounding buildings have been rebuilt due to rapid urban development in the area. The houses are a good example of apartment blocks with built heritage value. The exterior is fairly well maintained and appears to have retained much of its original appearance.

Built for residential use, Nos. 5 & 7 Broom Road have limited social value, but their interesting architectural style gives them local interest. Being typical examples of buildings demonstrating pre-war development in the district they also have local interest.

Other historic buildings in proximity include the premises at Nos. 118 and 120 Blue Pool Road (藍塘道) (Grade 3) which were also owned by Eu Tong-sen, and Nos. 4, 6, 8 and 10 Green Lane (箕璉坊) (Grade 3).

## REFERENCES

### **Document Records at The Land Registry Office, Hong Kong**

Property Particulars of the Remaining Portion of Inland Lot No. 5042

### **Records at Building Information Centre, Hong Kong**

Building Authority's Office, *Domestic Permit* (283), 28 June 1949.

*I.L. 5042 No. 5 & 7 Broom Road Garden Plan, 1957.* (File Ref: 2/3022/57)

### **Archives at Public Records Office, Hong Kong**

HKRS 57-6-3299. "I.L. 5042 (Japanese Title Deeds)"

HKRS 57-6-3300. "I.L. 5042 (Japanese Title Deeds)"

HKRS 58-1-184(21). C.S.O. No. 3889/1937 "I.L. No. 5042: Application from Mr. Alfred J. Lane on behalf of his clients to purchase an area south of I.L. No. 4845, Blue Pool Road, Wong Nei Chung."

### **Printed Documents of the Hong Kong Government**

*Hongkong Government Gazette*, 1937, No. S. 285. Hong Kong: Public Works Department.

### **Books, Articles, and Other Sources**

香港商業彙報，《香港建造業百年史》(香港，香港工商業彙報，1958)。

夏歷，《香港東區街道故事》(香港，三聯書店(香港)有限公司，1995)。