Historic Building Appraisal

Old S.K.H. Kei Yan Primary School (alias, Kong Kit Building)
Glenealy Road, Central, H.K.

Historical Interest

Built in 1851, this building was originally the south wing of St. Paul's College (聖保羅書院) which provided English classes to the Chinese and nurtured many figures, including Wu Ting-fang (伍廷芳), a well known diplomat and the first unofficial member of the Hong Kong Legislative Council. The first building on the site appears to have been a boys' school built in 1845-1848. The building was ordered to be rebuilt in a more "Collegiate Style" by the newly appointed Bishop, the Rev. George Smith. The top floor was added in 1937 and the open verandahs of the old building enclosed giving it a modern appearance. In 1955 the building was taken over by Kei Yan Primary School (基恩小學).

With a new school campus available in the summer of 1996, Kei Yan Primary School was then evacuated from Glenealy and moved to the new site at Hollywood Road. After that, Sheung Kung Hui Ming Hua Theological College (聖公會明華神學院) occupied one of the two buildings of the school premises. Another former school building has been used as an office of *Echo* (教聲), journal of Sheung Kung Hui. This building is now named as Kong Kit Building.

Architectural Merit

The building was originally two storeys high and built in a restrained Tudor Revival style with a pitched roof of Chinese tiles, gables, and open colonnaded verandahs. The work carried out in 1937 drastically altered the appearance and height of the old building giving it a Modernist look. The southwest elevation has cantilevered balconies running the full length of the façade with a projecting wide eaves or typhoon canopy at roof level. Only one arched opening survives on this elevation. The southeast elevation also has a modern look, but Tudor style arches and buttresses still survive at ground floor level. Moulded string courses and cornices run along the full length of the façade. Windows to the upper two (first and second) floors are rectangular in shape. The roof of the building is flat with an indented or battlemented parapet. Ornamental brackets, hood mouldings, and period style joinery still exist internally and externally.

Rarity, Built Heritage Value & Authenticity

Because of the alterations to the building, it has lost its authenticity. However the original structure appears to be still there so that the building does have historical and built heritage value. Although the premises of Old S.K.H. Kei Yan Primary School experienced several refurbishment works, its old appearance can still be traced from its stone foundation, remaining buttress at ground level and arched doorway. Tudor Revival architecture is rare in Hong Kong and it is fortunate

that some features still survive.

The social value of the school lies in the role it has played in the fields of education and religion. ***Social Value & Local Interest***

The building is very important as an integral component forming up both the Anglican heartland in Glenealy and the Heritage Trail–Central Route. It has historical and local interest and also group value being situated among the Bishop's House (會督府, Grade 1), St. Paul's Church (聖保羅堂, Grade 1) and Church Guest House (教堂禮賓樓, Grade 1) within the Sheng Kung Hui complex. Other historic buildings around the area include the Old Dairy Farm Depot (舊牛奶公司倉庫, Grade 1) and the Old Victoria Barracks (舊域多利軍營, Grade 1). ***Group Value***