

**Historic Building Appraisal**  
**Nos. 30 and 31 Sun Chun Street**  
**Tai Hang, Causeway Bay, H.K.**

Tai Hang (大坑) was one of the old villages of Hong Kong Island settled by the Hakka families of Wong (黃), Cheung (張), Li (李), Chu (朱) and Ip (葉). The first three are said to be the oldest families. Besides some farming and fishing, the inhabitants kept some of the first dairy farms on the Island, and also in laundry work. The name of the main street of Tai Hang, Wun Sha Street (滙紗街, which means “washing clothes”), refers to this early line of business. ***Historical Interest***

The premises at Nos. 30 & 31 Sun Chun Street (新村街) were built after 1894 by the Wong family. Sun Chun Street literally means “New Village Street.” A map dated 1901 shows that the houses were situated in an old village named Tai Hang Village which was on the southwestern bank of a stream.<sup>1</sup> According to land records, the earliest recorded owner of the site was Wong Li Shi (黃李氏, administratrix of Wong Lam Shau deceased) who purchased the house lot on 1 January 1894.

Nos. 30 & 31 Sun Chun Street are typical examples of the smaller type of Chinese village house. They are built side-by-side with a common party wall and were probably part of a row of houses or terrace along the street. The one-storey houses comprise walls of plastered and painted granite blocks, and both houses have pitched roofs of Chinese tiles. The party walls are built up above roof level. The front walls facing the street are slightly set back to form recessed bays with overhanging eaves. The front doors are placed in the centre of the bays and the floors are raised up one step above street level. A granite doorstep, platform and doorframe can be identified at No. 31. There are no windows on the front elevations. A surface water channel with metal cover plates runs along the front of the houses. The rear walls of the houses are also plastered and painted, each houses having two windows, one at low level and one at high level. The eaves project out from the walls on corbelling or oversailing courses. ***Architectural Merit***

Due to urban development, this type of traditional small village house of a Hakka family is slowing disappearing so that they have some rarity value. Nos. 30 – 31 Sun Chun Street is the only remaining example of this kind in the ***Rarity, Built Heritage Value***

<sup>1</sup> According to an oral history interview conducted in 1969, the older generations at that time might recall that the village was named Tai Hang Lo Wai (大坑老圍).

area. The houses have been converted into shops. No significant change to the building fabric of the exteriors, mainly the walls and roofs, can be identified after the conversion. ***Authenticity***

As the only surviving example of old village houses in Tai Hang, Nos. 30 – 31 Sun Chun Street are of some local interest. Tai Hang is famous for the well-known Fire Dragon Festival held each year. ***Social Value, & Local Interest***

The houses are within walking distance of other historic buildings, such as the Tin Hau Temple of Causeway Bay (銅鑼灣天后古廟) and Lin Fa Temple (蓮花宮) (both Declared Monuments), and No. 12 School Street (書館街, Grade 3). ***Group Value***

## REFERENCES

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

Property Particulars of Tai Hang Lot No. 8.

Property Particulars of Tai Hang Lot No. 167.

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

HKMS162-1-43. “Plan of Victoria (Hong Kong), Sheet No. 29 (Map No. 602\*)”, 1901.

### **Maps of the Hong Kong Government**

Crown Lands and Survey Office, P.W.D. Historical maps of 1936 (Map Ref: HG34-5).

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

Hayes, James. “Coach Tour of Eastern Hong Kong Island – 18<sup>th</sup> October 1969”, *Journal of the Hong Kong Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, Vol. 10, 1970 (Hong Kong: The Hong Kong Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, 1971), pp. 190 – 193 and Plates 23 and 24.

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