

Historic Building Appraisal
Precious Blood Hospital (Caritas)
No. 113 Castle Peak Road, Sham Shui Po, Kowloon

The Precious Blood Hospital (寶血醫院) is divided into three wings, with the two Old Wings built in 1937 and 1939 respectively. The third and the newest known as the George Washington Wing was built in 1975. *Historical Interest*

The idea of a proper children's hospital was raised on 25 July 1934 with the encouragement of Governor Sir William Peel who had previously visited the Precious Blood Convent (寶血女修院) which was built in 1929 and part of it was converted into an orphanage accommodating babies of destitute parents under the supervision of the Precious Blood Sisters. The idea finally materialized in 1937 when the Precious Blood Hospital (寶血醫院) was opened through donations and the efforts of the Reverend Valtorta (Reverend Valtorta was installed as the first Bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Hong Kong in 1948) (恩理覺主教) and others.

The Hospital has been under the administration of the Sisters of the Precious Blood (寶血女修會) until 1992 when it was technically "sub-leased" to the Caritas, the official social service agency of the Roman Catholic Church in Hong Kong. The latter began to bear the financial costs and take charge of the management and administration of the hospital. The name of the hospital also changed into the Precious Blood Hospital (Caritas).

Since 1937, it has been a symbol of charity, for it has been providing good medical care for the people of Hong Kong at reasonably low costs in spite of its being a private hospital.

The Precious Blood Hospital is situated at the corner of Un Chau Street (元州街), Kiu Kiang Street (九江街) and Castle Peak Road (青山道) next to the Precious Blood Convent. It is composed of the three wings mentioned above which are interconnected. The two Old Wings are four and five storeys high built to a similar design presenting certain Art Deco features. The walls are finished with brown tiles with horizontal and vertical bands of white tiles to create a polychromatic effect. Windows are regularly spaced and arranged in bands. The northeast elevation of the 1937 wing features vertical projections and setbacks (step-like recesses), a covered porch and a projecting balcony at *Architectural Merit*

third floor level. The roofs of both wings are flat.

The New Wing is a seven stories high building painted in pink and white tones featuring box-like projecting windows, vertical fins and horizontal bands at each storey level.

The Art Deco style of the two Old Wings with their constructional polychromy is quite rare in Hong Kong. They have built heritage value representing *avant garde* architecture of the 1930s. Although still fairly authentic in appearance externally, much of the interior has been renovated and refurbished over the years. A covered roof garden has been provided on the roof of the 1939 wing.

**Rarity,
Built Heritage
Value &
Authenticity**

The social value of the Precious Blood Hospital lies in the role it has played in providing medical care to the community. Due to its unusual architectural style and prominent position it is well known in the area.

**Social Value
& Local
Interest**

The Hospital is situated in a compound comprising the Precious Blood Convent and the then Tack Ching Girls' Middle School (德貞女子中學) and therefore has considerable group value. The other old sites in Sham Shui Po graded by the Antiquities Advisory Board include Mei Ho House (美荷樓) (Grade 2), Sam Tai Tsz Temple (三太子宮) (Grade 2) and Pak Tai Temple (北帝宮) (Grade 3), Sham Shui Po Police Station (深水埗警署) (Grade 2), Sham Shui Po Public Dispensary (深水埔公立醫局) (Grade 2), as well as a cluster of shophouses in Nam Cheong Street (南昌街) and Yu Chau Street (汝州街).

Group Value

References

Document Records at the Land Registry Office, Hong Kong

Property Particulars of N.K.I.L. 1114.

Records at Building Information Centre, Hong Kong

Building Authority's Office, Occupation Permit (File Ref: NK15/77), 15 February 1977.

Proposed Extension and Redevelopment of Precious Blood Hospital N.K.I.L. 1114, Un Chau St., Kiu Kiang St. & Castle Peak Rd, Kowloon, 1971-76 (File Ref: 4182/70)

Proposed Quarters of Precious Blood Convent at N.K.I.L. 1114 Castle Peak Road, 1952-53. (File Ref: 2/4504/52)

Proposed W.C.s & Drainage Plan on K.I.L. Nos. 579 & 1114 at Un Chau Street Kowloon, 1960. (File Ref: 4/4749/59)

Proposed Covered Walk-way & Fence Wall for Precious Blood Hospital at N.K.I.L. 1114 Un Chau St. Kiu Kiang St. & Castle Peak Rd. Kowloon, 1985-86. (File Ref: 2-3/4157/79)

Addition & Alteration Works (Addition of Lift Tower) of Precious Blood Hospital N.K.I.L. 1114, 113 Castle Peak Road, Kowloon, 2010. (File Ref: 2-3/4749/59)

Proposed New Transformer Room for Precious Blood Hospital (Caritas) at 113 Castle Peak Road, Sham Shui Po, Kowloon N.K.I.L. 1114, 2014. (File Ref: 2-3/4749/59/2)

N.K.I.L. 1114 Proposed Iron Water Tanks Precious Blood Hospital Castle Peak Road, 1951. (File Ref: 4220/51)

Proposed Additional W.C. to School at No. 86 Un Chau Street on N.K.I.L. No. 1114, 1951. (File Ref: 4597/51)

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Catholic Diocese of Hong Kong. "Prefects Apostolic, Vicars Apostolic and Diocesan Bishops of Hong Kong", *Archive of Catholic Diocese of Hong Kong*, <http://catholic.org.hk/en/%E9%A6%99%E6%B8%AF%E6%AD%B7%E4%BB%BB%E5%AE>

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