

Historic Building Appraisal
Former The Salvation Army Kwai Chung Girls' Home
No. 1 Lei Muk Road, Kwai Chung, N.T.

The site history of the building formerly known as The Salvation Army Kwai Chung Girls' Home (the "Girls' Home") at No. 1 Lei Muk Road (梨木道), Kwai Chung, can be traced back the early 1930s. At present, the premises are situated on a plot of land registered as "The Remaining Portion of Lot No. 984 in D.D. 450" (or 984 R.P. in D.D. 450), which evolved from several old building lots numbered 637, 642, 643, 648 and 651 R.P., 682 and the Extension of 682 in D.D. 450. A merchant named Tang Chi-kin (鄧次乾) acquired Lot Nos. 648, 651 and 682 in 1932, and 637, 642, 643 and 682 Ext. in 1933. In April 1936, those lots were sold to Ngan Huen-chi (顏絢之) and Wong Kit-wan (黃杰雲) under the name of a trust acting for the Fook Hing Firm (福興號) on Connaught Road, Central. Ngan passed away at No. 99 Fuk Wa Street, Sham Shui Po, in November the same year. His family members, who shared the same registered address in Sham Shui Po, became the owners of those lots in the capacity of the executors of the late Ngan's will. The Ngans and Wong Kit-wan owned the lots until they were acquired by The Salvation Army in 1947. *Historical Interest*

According to the available historical photos and land records, the main building (excluding the rear annex added later) on the hilltop and the garage at the foot of the hill are the oldest surviving buildings on site. They are the only buildings identifiable in an aerial photo dated 1949, which is the earliest available one showing them.¹ The two buildings were situated on the old lots numbered 682 and 682 Ext. Tang Chi-kin acquired Lot No. 682 on 23 December 1932 and 682 Ext. on 18 February 1933, and both were subject to a sale condition stipulating that the purchaser shall "build and finish, fit for occupation, before the expiration of twenty-four calendar months from the day of sale, in a good, substantial and workmanlike manner, one or more good and permanent messuage or tenement upon some part of such lot". While no application to extend the building period of 24 calendar months or domestic permit issued by the Building Authority can be identified, it is believed that no houses were built there before September 1937. The records show that the second owner, Ngan Huen-chi, passed away on 6 November 1936. The probate of his will was registered in the District Office, South, on 20 September 1937. The will contained a list of properties, including many land lots, possessed by the late Ngan Huen-chi. There were remarks, where applicable, added to indicate that houses existed on the lots concerned. But there was no such

¹ A map published by the War Office in 1930, and then revised in 1938 and 1945 is the earliest available map on which a structure was indicated at the approximate location of the main building. However, it fails to show a clear configuration to ascertain that would confirm that it was the main building.

annotation for the building lots numbered Nos. 682 and 682 Ext.² However, back in 1941, this Kwai Chung site was reported to have been chosen by The Salvation Army as the new home for its girls' home and plans were drawn up, but the building operations were hindered by the war. The new Kwai Chung home was formally opened on 28 October 1948 after undergoing renovation. In light of the above evidence, it is believed that the main building (excluding the rear annex added later) and the garage were built between the late 1930s and the early 1940s.

While the precise details of the builder(s) and user(s) of the main building and the garage before 1947 cannot be ascertained, it is noteworthy that the first two owners of the land lots concerned were public figures in the Chinese community. Tang Chi-kin, alias Tang Shiu-kwan (鄧肇坤), was one of the four sons of Tang Chi-ngong (鄧志昂) and a brother of Sir Tang Shiu-kin (鄧肇堅). Apart from the Fook Hing Firm, he also ran a business called Luen Fook Hong Ltd. (聯福行有限公司). While serving the community, in the 1930s, for instance, he was the vice-patron of the St. John Ambulance Brigade, and later in 1945-1946 served on the Board of Directors of the Tung Wah Hospital.³ The second owner was Ngan Huen-chi, alias Ngan Tsat (顏七). He, together with his business partner, Wong Kit-wan, operated the Pei Ho Cinema (北河戲院, 1934 – 1977) in Sham Shui Po, and in 1935-1936 served on the Board of Directors of the Tung Wah Hospital.⁴ In August 1947, the lots were acquired by Lieutenant-Colonel William Darby and Major Percival Leonard Standley of The Salvation Army (救世軍).⁵ In 1964, they were formally registered in the name of The General of The Salvation Army under a New Grant No. 4275.

The Salvation Army originated in London in the 1860s.⁶ Its relief work in mainland China first started in Beijing during the early Republican period, when it provided food and shelter for refugees while the Mainland was caught up in the battles between warlords. In the following years, its work spread out across the

² Examples included “New Kowloon Inland Lot No. 610 (Houses Nos. 99 and 101, Fuk Wing Street, Shamshuipo)” and “Shaukiwan Lot 497 (Houses Nos. 118 & 120 Sai Wan Ho)”. But only “Lots Nos. 637, 642, 643, 648, 649, 651, 683, 682 Ext. in D.D. No. 450, Tsun Wan” can be identified for the old lots from which the current lot of 984 R.P. evolved.

³ He was Tang Chi-kin (or Tang Che-kin) of No. 171 Queen's Road Central.

⁴ He was Ngan Huen (or Hun)-chi (or chee) of No. 99 Fuk Wa Street, Shamshuipo. The cinema changed hands in 1946.

⁵ In 1930, William Darby was Officer Commanding The Salvation Army in Hong Kong and South China at that time, while P.L. Standley the second in command.

⁶ The Salvation Army originated from the work of William Booth (1829 – 1912), a Methodist pastor in London (倫敦循道會牧師), who gave up his pulpit in 1865. He established the East London Christian Mission (東倫敦基督教佈道團) for the poor, the homeless, the hungry and the destitute in the slums of East London. By 1874, he had enlisted the support of 1,000 volunteers and 42 evangelists. His followers called him “General” (大將). When reading the 1878 annual report of the Christian Mission, Booth noticed a statement referring to “The Christian Mission is a volunteer army”. He replaced the words “volunteer army” (志願軍) with “Salvation Army” (救世軍). The name “The Salvation Army” was then adopted. The converts were regarded as soldiers of Christ (救世軍兵) and also known as “Salvationists” (救世軍人). The “army” was furnished with uniforms, a flag, a brass band and martial music. By 1878, its work had already spread throughout England, and by 1881 extended to many other countries.

country. The Salvation Army's work in Hong Kong began in 1930. The first Salvation Army home in the city, named the "Salvation Army Women's Industrial Home" ("救世軍培德院" in Chinese) was founded in rented premises on Prince Edward Road in 1931. For the first two years, most of the girls admitted were destitute child domestic maids, locally known as *mui tsai* (妹子), who were sent to the home by the Secretary for Chinese Affairs (華民政務司). In 1933, the government asked The Salvation Army to also accept young offenders from the Juvenile Courts. Then in 1934, the home was relocated to larger rented premises at No. 2 Embankment Road. But soon this home was also found to be too small and inadequate to cope with not only the young offenders, but also short-term remand cases, as well as orphans or girls lacking adequate food and care at home.⁷ It was reported that 247 cases were dealt with in 1947, including 31 remand cases sent from the courts.

In August 1947, The Salvation Army acquired the Kwai Chung site for a sum of \$100,000, with the aim of relocating the girls' home there. The total cost for the approximately two acres of land, the acquisition and renovation of the three-storey main building and equipment was roughly \$210,000. A special grant of \$80,000 was secured from the government, \$88,000 from the central service funds of the Salvation Army International Headquarters in London, and \$10,000 was provided by Aw Boon-haw (胡文虎) and donations from other local subscribers. The opening ceremony on 28 October 1948 was officiated by the then Governor Sir Alexander Grantham (1947 – 1957). According to a historical photo and some newspapers of 1948, and the magazine *The War Cry* printed by The Salvation Army Canada in 1949, the main building (excluding the rear annex added later) and the garage were the only buildings on site when the Girls' Home moved in. The main building housed a sitting room, a dining room, a sewing room and a chapel on the ground floor, bedrooms for a maximum capacity of 50 girls on the first floor, and the Matron's quarters were on the second floor. The Salvation Army crest could still be identified on the front elevation during the site inspection in 2019. Regarding the garage building, since the ground floor housed a garage and the upper floor a schoolroom for

⁷ In March 1930, a meeting, presided by Lady Southorn (wife of Sir Wilfrid Thomas Southorn, the then Colonial Secretary), was held at Government House to consider the commencement of the Army's work in Hong Kong firstly in the form of a home for women and girls.

The name of the girls' home in Hong Kong, i.e. Salvation Army Women's Industrial Home, can be identified in the government records of 1930, 1931 and 1934. But it had other names. For instance, the "Salvation Army Home for Women and Girls" was a place of detention provided under the Juvenile Offenders Ordinance, 1932. This name can also be found in the government records of 1936, when the home was concurrently a place of refuge under the Protection of Women and Girls Ordinance, 1897.

According to a government report of 1931, industrial schools were intended broadly speaking for the reception from the Courts of destitute or neglected children under fourteen who were so neglected by their parents as to be placed in a situation of moral danger.

In 1931, registration of *mui tsai* was carried out by the Secretary for Chinese Affairs. By the end of 1946, according to the annual report of the Secretary for Chinese Affairs and Social Welfare Office, no *mui tsai* officially registered in 1931 was left on the register and an official recognition of the *mui tsai* system was thus reported to have ceased.

some 20 students, it was also referred to as a schoolroom.

However, in 1947, The Salvation Army's role of looking after the well-being of girls was about to change and it became more concentrated on coping with young offenders.⁸ During 1947-1948, the administration of the probation service for young offenders was still in the hands of the Commissioner of Prisons; but towards the end of the year, preparations were completed for its expansion and transfer to the Social Welfare Office. Plans were also in hand for opening a girls' approved school (or reformatory), which was expected to be managed by The Salvation Army on behalf of the Social Welfare Office.⁹ After long discussions between the government and The Salvation Army, it was decided that the latter would exclusively deal with female young offenders sent by the Juvenile Courts under the Juvenile Offenders Ordinance 1933, and the girls who were dangerously close to committing an offence and sent to the home by the Secretary for Chinese Affairs. Thus since 1948, the home was run on the lines of approved schools for female young offenders in England. Following its relocation, the home was then known as "Kwai Chung Girls' Home" (葵涌女童院).¹⁰ According to a report by the Social Welfare Office, the Kwai Chung Girls' Home was the first approved school for girls (女童院) in Hong Kong, and was probably the first school of its kind in East Asia, outside of Japan. This relocation thus marked an important milestone for The Salvation Army and the government's policy on juvenile delinquency.

In May 1952, the Girls' Home was declared a "place of refuge" under the Protection of Women and Juveniles Ordinance 1951, so that it could also receive women and girls in need of help and protection. For instance, some girls arrived at the Girls' Home in poor health and were returned to normal health there. The government arranged for a doctor to visit the home weekly. The girls shared domestic duties, and had time for study, for work (such as cooking, needlecraft, sewing and gardening), and for recreation. It was hoped that they would become self-reliant citizens when they left the home. The Girls' Home would also secure employment for the girls when they were ready to leave the home.¹¹

⁸ In fact, however, the home would still help poor girls, while spending more efforts on young offenders. For instance, according to the magazine *The War Cry* printed by The Salvation Army Canada (Issue of 16 September 1950), its inmates included a girl whose father died during the war, and a handicapped who lost both legs and her right hand during the war and was abandoned by all her relatives.

⁹ The Social Welfare Office was formally set up in September 1947. The Social Welfare Officer was concurrently gazetted as an Assistant Secretary for Chinese Affairs.

¹⁰ Pursuant to the Juvenile Offenders Ordinance 1933, juvenile courts handled charges against persons aged from seven to fifteen. Under the ordinance, any person attaining the age of 18 was not a child or young person. The youthful girl offenders, though committed there by the Juvenile Courts under the Juvenile Offenders Ordinance 1933, would not be kept under lock and key, but would receive vocational training. The atmosphere was to be that of a school, and if, after a period, a girl behaved well, she would be allowed to go home on weekends or even be released on licence before her respective term was up.

¹¹ The girls received education at the same level as primary schools outside. There was also recreation facilities for badminton, indoor tennis and basketball. It is worthy of a mention that in 1957, Envoy Chu Suet-king joined the Girls' Home. Back in 1946, she was awarded an MBE medal in recognition of her tremendous efforts in saving the lives of the children in the then

From 1960 onwards, there were at times changes to the services provided by the Girls' Home. For instance, in early 1960, it was reorganised and became more focused on the girls in need of care and protection, and had a maximum capacity of about 50 girls. The rooms on the main building's ground floor were used as classrooms, dining rooms and sitting rooms.¹²

Further changes to the use of the site in 1965 showed The Salvation Army's response to the changing needs of local communities, which mainly stemmed from the economic development of Kwai Chung and Tsuen Wan and the factories that opened in these areas. First of all, in January 1965, the Kwai Chung home was closed and the girls were transferred to the Ma Tau Wei Girls' Home, which had been newly opened by the government.¹³ To meet the needs of working mothers in the area, the ground floor of the main building was converted to a day nursery for children of two to six years old. To start with, one of the home's house-mothers and several roughly fifteen-year-old girls, after receiving training and gaining practical work experience, helped look after the children. In addition, the first floor was converted to a hostel for working women, mainly those working in the factories in Kwai Chung and Tsuen Wan. Some factory employees were even residents of Kowloon. A dedication ceremony for the new use of the home as a creche/ nursery and working women's hostel was held on 30 April 1965.¹⁴ Thereafter, it was referred to as a "social centre", instead of a "girls' home". Indeed, the name "The Salvation Army Kwai Chung Social Centre" could still be recognised on the front elevation of the main building during the site inspection in 2019.

In view of the need for a home for unmarried mothers, part of the main building also housed a maternity and unmarried mothers' home, which was officially opened in May 1970.

Nonetheless, in 1971, the girls' home at Ma Tau Wei was reported to be incapable of handling the increased number of cases and had become overcrowded. The Girls' Home was therefore reopened on 1 October 1971 at the request of the Social Welfare Department to accommodate girls in need of care and protection, and to rehabilitate others with behavioural problems. On the ground, there was a sitting

King's Park Boys' Home, which became a refugee camp during the Japanese Occupation, by finding food, clothing, etc. for them. In 1968, she began to carry out relief work with other Salvationists in Vietnam. In 1971, she returned to the Kwai Chung site when it was reopened as a social centre.

¹² The girls received training, generically termed "domestic science". Programmes included dressmaking and tailoring, cooking, sewing and training on doing domestic work.

¹³ According to government records, the home was named Ma Tau Wei Girls' Home. "馬頭圍" was known as "Ma Tau Wei" in English at that time.

¹⁴ The building could provide 80 places for working women, 150 places for kids and 60 places for babies. There were 30 babies on the register at the end of August 1965.

room, dining room, kitchen, cook's quarters, an office for staff and a store room. The first floor housed girls' bedrooms, classrooms, a laundry and a sick bay, while the second floor was the quarters of the superintendent and assistant superintendent. There were 50 places for girls aged between 12 and 18. It provided residential care, informal school classes and vocational training for a minimum period of one year and a maximum of two years.¹⁵ In 1994, The Salvation Army closed the Girls' Home.¹⁶ Under the Protection of Children and Juveniles (Places of Refuge) (Amendment) Order 1994, Kwai Chung Girls' Home ceased to be a place of refuge for the purposes of the Protection of Children and Juveniles Ordinance.

As The Salvation Army is a Christian organisation, they coped with the girls' care through Christian teaching and influence. As mentioned above, there was a chapel on the ground floor of the main building. Apart from taking care of the girls, The Salvation Army also spread the Gospel via the schoolroom on the upper floor of the garage building. Villagers in Kwai Chung were invited to attend meetings, which were called "villagers meetings", "corps meetings" or "salvation meetings", conducted by a small group of corps cadets at the schoolroom. The villagers could come in anytime between eight and nine on every Sunday night. By August 1949, for instance, twenty-seven villagers, mainly young people, were already on the register. The corps cadets and the home's girls would also organise open-air meetings on Sundays at the villages in Kwai Chung and Tsuen Wan, and on the seashore where they could reach the boat people as well.

Among the corps was a Canadian missionary officer, Captain Eva Cosby, who called for the construction of a hall for their evangelistic work. A two-storey corps hall, formerly known as "The Salvation Army Kwai Chung Corps", was thus built in 1955 with the foundation stone laid by Fu Ki-mun (傅其敏).¹⁷ A flight of steps provides direct access to it from Lei Muk Road. According to the *The War Cry* (the official news publication of the Salvation Army), the corps hall served multiple purposes. It was used as a school for learning the Gospel, it served as a living quarters and as a clinic. Classes were held for 250 students during the day, and corps meetings were held at night. A map of 1958 is the earliest available one on which the building is indicated as a "School". The building was also a free clinic for villagers. A doctor offered his services free of charge. In 1960, it became the

¹⁵ The home was for girls who were:

- (a) beyond the control of their parents or guardians or developing behaviour problems;
- (b) in need of temporary care and protection;
- (c) placed under supervision order by Court; or
- (d) victims of indecent assault.

¹⁶ The Salvation Army closed the Kwai Chung site due to the difficulties in maintenance, and the new trend of breaking down the large homes into small group living units. After closing the Girls' Home, the Army established three small group homes in Tai Wo Hau.

¹⁷ Fu Ki-mun was the vice-chairman of the Tsuen Wan Rural Committee (荃灣鄉事委員會) from 1960 to 1964, and headmaster of the then Kwai Chung Public School (葵涌公立學校).

premises of a primary school for the home's girls, and "Salvation Army School" was marked on a map of 1966, for instance.

The one-storey annex connected to bathrooms and toilets at the rear of the main building was built between 1949 and 1954. In 1955, the Girl's Home was reported to have its own chapel, schoolrooms, workroom, dining room, sick bay, dormitories, and new recreation room with facilities for badminton, indoor tennis and basketball. It is believed that the recreation room was housed in this annex. After the home was relocated to Ma Tau Wei in 1965, the annex was used by the nursery of The Salvation Army's social centre until the Girls' Home was reopened at the Kwai Chung site in 1971. The annex was then converted into an indoor recreation hall connected to bathrooms and toilets for the girls.

Another four auxiliary structures, each of one storey and very humble design, were identified in 2019. Two of them are adjacent to the corps hall. According to historical maps and aerial photos, the one to the north of the hall was built between 1956 and 1963, while the one to its east around 1973. The former was a storeroom and the latter a toilet. The other two are situated near the site's vehicular access (replacing the old one in the 1960s). The one closer to the entrance gate and indicated as a ruinous structure on the map was built in 1978, while the one to west of the latter was built in 1963-1964.

The main building is a reinforced concrete frame building with red brick-infill walls. Flooring comprises areas paved with mosaic tiles and cement tiles and others with timber floorboards. The outdoor terraces on the second floor is paved with Canton tiles. Most of the windows and fanlights are fitted with metal grilles with wavy patterns. Ventilation grilles with floral patterns can be found on the partition walls of the first floor. The emphasis on lines and geometry in the building embodies Art Deco influences. The most prominent feature is the central bay on the front facade, which consists of an entrance portico formed by a pair of Tuscan columns supporting a polygonal convex balcony at the first-floor level, which was subsequently enclosed. The second floor has a protruding bay with a convex angle emphasized at intervals by vertical stepped mouldings. There are bands of horizontal grooves along the parapets for decoration. Another similar polygonal protruding bay, which contains that stairwell at the interior, can be found on the rear elevation.

*Architectural
Merit*

The spiral staircase inside the building, which adopts a polygonal design, is an iconic feature of the interior, with a terrazzo finished balustrade and mosaic tiles at the dado area of the wall. The entrance hallway is also highlighted with decorative ceiling mouldings with heavily stepped profiles. The rest of the interior is also

decorated with coved ceiling mouldings and skirting with stepped profiles. A pair of elongated hexagonal windows found at the back of the ground floor add to the aesthetic value of the building. The long bench finished with terrazzo in the dining room is another highlight.

The two-storey garage, which was built at the same time as the main building, adopts a similar design with some Art Deco features. The canopy on the ground floor, which is believed to be at the former garage entrance is decorated with flutings. A moulding with rainbow motif can be found on the south-western facade of the garage. A common architectural language expressed by bands of horizontal grooves can be found along the parapet and eaves over the windows.

The annex behind the main building, the corps building, and another four later auxiliary buildings are much humbler in design. The modernist design of the corps building was common after the Second World War. It is a simple rectangular two-storey block, with the minimum of articulation being expressed by architraves around the windows.

The Girls' Home respectively provided residential rehabilitation and protection services for delinquent and destitute girls for decades. During this period, it was also able to establish close ties with local communities, especially in Kwai Chung and Tsuen Wan, by organising classes and meetings to spread the Gospel and by providing free medical services at its premises. When the site was temporarily operated as a social centre from 1965 to 1971, such ties were further enhanced through the provision of new services aimed at meeting the changing needs of the communities, including nursery services and accommodation for working women.

***Social Value
& Local
Interest***

The Girls' Home has group value with the Law Ancestral Hall (羅氏家祠) in Sheung Kwai Chung (Grade 3).

Group Value

This former Girls' Home at Kwai Chung was the first approved school (or reformatory) for young female offenders in Hong Kong. It marked a change in government policy concerning the provision of rehabilitation services for girls. The missionary activities carried out in the schoolroom on the upper floor of the garage and later in the corps hall, as well as the free clinic in the corps hall for villagers, demonstrate The Salvation Army's mission to spread the Gospel and serve the community, which are the typical roles played by Christian charitable organisations.

***Rarity,
Built Heritage
Value &
Authenticity***

The main building of the Girls' Home is a very good example of historic buildings with Art Deco influences in Hong Kong. The most obvious alteration to the exterior was the enclosure of the balcony, but this did not undermine the

authenticity of the exterior.¹⁸ The interior has undergone many alterations, which are mainly conversion works reflecting various changes in the use of the building. However, many architectural features, including the spiral staircase, floor tiles, terrazzo finishes, ceiling mouldings and metal grilles, which serve to display the typical craftsmanship and building materials of the 1930s, are retained. The Art Deco influences in the garage find echoes in the design of the main building.

¹⁸ A one-storey structure was added outside the rear northeastern corner of the main building around the early 1950s. Washing tanks can be identified. This structure is only adhered to the main building, without any door opening for a direct access to the latter.

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Historic Building Appraisal
Confucius Hall
No. 77 Caroline Hill Road, Causeway Bay, H.K

Standing on retaining walls built of dressed granite blocks, the main building and staff quarters of Confucius Hall Hong Kong (香港孔聖堂) at No. 77 Caroline Hill Road were completed in 1935. Two occupation permits were issued by the Building Authority on 3 October 1935 to certify the completion of the “Confucius Lecture Hall” and “quarters”. Its name in Chinese, 孔聖講堂, literally meaning Confucius lecture hall, was inscribed on the front elevation of the main building when it was built, although it is more commonly known as Confucius Hall in English.¹ Foundation works commenced in October 1932, whereas the construction of the lecture hall itself began in September 1934. Confucius Hall was formally opened on 10 December 1935, with the then Secretary for Chinese Affairs, the Hon. Mr. N. L. Smith as an officiating guest at the opening ceremony. *Historical Interest*

The construction of Confucius Hall as a public place and community hall for the reverence of Confucius (孔子, 550 – 478 B.C.) demonstrated the great enthusiasm and efforts of Confucian believers, including prominent businessmen and leading figures of the Chinese community, together with scholars and retired officials from mainland China, in their advocacy for the revival of Confucianism amid the strong tides of modern science on the Mainland and in Hong Kong during the early twentieth century. Confucianism was indeed only one of the schools of thought that the supporters of traditional Chinese culture endeavoured to advocate.² Apart from Confucius Hall Hong Kong (founded in 1928), there were another three major Confucian societies in the city, namely the Hong Kong Confucius Society (香港孔聖會, founded in 1909), Confucian Association of China (中華聖教總會, founded in 1921) and The Confucian Academy (孔教學院, founded in 1930).³ All these four societies are still operating today.

The construction of Confucius Hall was initiated by Tsang Foo (曾富)⁴ and Kan

¹ For instance, the main building was referred to as Confucius Hall in the English newspapers of the 1930s and 1950s. The current land records show that it is “孔聖講堂” in Chinese and Confucius Hall in English.

² The promotion of the respect for traditional Chinese culture was also shown by the establishment of the School of Chinese of The University of Hong Kong (香港大學中文學院) in 1927 and construction of Fung Ping Shan Library (馮平山圖書館, now known as Fung Ping Shan Building 馮平山樓) in 1931 (opened in 1932) for the Chinese book collection of the university, for instance.

³ The current addresses of the three Confucian societies are set out below:

- (i) Hong Kong Confucius Society (香港孔聖會) at Room 1201, Bonham Centre, Nos. 79 – 85 Bonham Strand East, Sheung Wan;
- (ii) Confucian Association of China (中華聖教總會) at Unit B, 3/F, Shun Fat Building, Nos. 72 – 76 Queen’s Road East, Hong Kong; and
- (iii) The Confucian Academy (孔教學院) at No. 10 Tai Shing Street, Wong Tai Sin, Kowloon, Hong Kong.

⁴ Tsang Foo, also known as Tsang Siu-wing (曾兆榮), a native of Xiangshan (香山) of Guangdong Province, was born in 1861.

Hung-chiu (簡孔昭),⁵ who thought it important to erect a prominent building embodying Confucianism. The proposal was endorsed at the first formal meeting held in April 1928. In the same meeting, Kan Hung-chiu initiated the project by donating a plot of land, of around 120,000 square feet, on Caroline Hill Road for the building of Confucius Hall. Moreover, a preparatory committee composed of notable businessmen and community leaders was formed. Members included Sir Robert Ho Tung (何東, 1862 – 1956), Tso Seen-wan (曹善允, 1868 – 1953), Tsang Foo (曾富, 1861 – ?), Yau Lit (尤列), Li Yik-mui (李亦梅, c.1877 – 1957), etc. Revolutionist Yau Lit wrote a manifesto (宣言) on the construction of Confucius Hall.⁶

In February 1929, the second general meeting was held. A committee was set up to organize subscriptions to implement the proposal. The committee was composed of other well-known businessmen and community leaders, including Sir Shouson Chow (周壽臣, 1861 – 1959), Sir Robert Kotewall (羅旭龢, 1880 – 1949), Tso Seen-wan and Chau Tsun-nin (周掞年, 1893 – 1971) were elected to form a presidium (主席團), while Ip Lan-chuen (葉蘭泉, 1865 – 1946) was elected the Secretary; Li Yau-chuen (李右泉, 1861 – 1940), Chau Tsun-nin, Tsang Foo, Lui Yum-suen (雷蔭蓀, 1876 – 1953), Kan Hung-chiu etc. the Money Collectors (勸捐員); Tang Shiu-kin (鄧肇堅, 1901 – 1986), Chau Tsun-nin, Leung But-yu (梁弼予, ? – 1954), Au Lim-chuen (區廉泉, c.1868 – 1958) etc., the Money Keeper (接收捐款員), and Li Yau-chuen, Tang Shiu-kin (鄧肇堅, 1901 – 1986), Au Lim-chuen, etc. the Treasurers (司庫員).⁷ By around October 1929, \$80,000 was subscribed.

A committee for general affairs (總務值理) of some 100 members was also

He went to Yokohama (橫濱) in Japan to earn his living as a merchant. Later he returned to Hong Kong and opened “曾富洋煤公司” selling imported coal and a 成昌雜貨鋪 providing ship’s supplies. He had a beautiful garden in his villa Nam Fung Terrace (南豐臺), also known as Tsang Foo Villa (曾富別墅), near Kowloon City, and made use of this garden for charitable affairs. For example, a bazaar was established in the garden. The receipts from the bazaar were contributed to the relief for the famine in Tianjian (天津). He also established a school in the garden for provincial students and free schools for the children of the poor in Kowloon. Confucius classics were taught there. The existing statue of Pak Tai at Yuk Hui Temple (玉虛宮) in Lung On Street (隆安街), Wan Chai (declared monument) was bought from Guangdong by Tsang Foo in the early twentieth century, and was enshrined in his villa until it was demolished in the mid-20th century. Tsang was also a founder a charitable organisation named Chung Sing Benevolent Society (鐘聲慈善社). As a president of the society, he made generous donation for the famine reliefs during the floods in Tianjian, the typhoon at Swatow (汕頭) and the floods in Guangdong Province (東西北三江水災). Tsang was also a member of the Boards of Directors of the Tung Wah Hospital (東華醫院, 1922-1923) and Po Leung Kuk (保良局, 1921 - 1922).

⁵ Kan Hung-chiu assisted in the family business of the Nanyang Brothers Tobacco Company (南洋兄弟煙草公司).

⁶ Yau Lit, Yeung Hok-ling (楊鶴齡), Chan Siu-pak (陳少白) and Dr Sun Yat-sen (孫逸仙) often got together to discuss overthrowing the Qing dynasty, and were therefore called the “Four Desperados” (四大寇).

⁷ These founding members of Confucius Hall, though only to name some, were past members or chairmen of the Boards of Directors of the Tung Wah Hospital (東華醫院, renamed Tung Wah Group of Hospitals (東華三院) in 1931) and/ or Po Leung Kuk (保良局), etc. Sir Shouson Chow, Sir Robert Kotewall and Tso Seen-wan were Unofficial Members of the Legislative Council (定例局) and Chau Tsun-nin a member of the Sanitary Board (潔淨局).

Lui Yum-suen was one of the founders of The Chinese General Chamber of Commerce (香港中華總商會). He also served on the Board of Directors of the Tung Wah Hospital in 1917/1918 and 1926/1927, and that of Po Leung Kuk in 1918/1919, and was the chairman of Chung Sing Benevolent Society (鐘聲慈善社), etc.

formed. Members included businessmen and philanthropists like Tsang Foo, Sir Robert Ho Tung (何東, 1862 – 1956), Li Yik-mui (李亦梅), Ngan Shing-kwan (顏成坤, 1903 – 2001), Au Lim-chuen, etc., as well as notable scholars of the then Qing dynasty, namely Chen Huanzhang (陳煥章, 1880 – 1933),⁸ Lo Sheung-fu (盧湘父, 1868 – 1970),⁹ Lai Tsi-hsi (賴際熙, 1865 – 1937),¹⁰ Ou Dadian (區大典, 1877 – 1937),¹¹ Zhu Ruzhen (朱汝珍, 1870 – 1942), etc.¹² However, almost all the money was spent on site formation and foundation works. Eventually, Kan Hung-chiu donated some \$57,000 in the name of his father, Kan Long-shan (簡朗山), who supported the promotion of Confucianism, to cover the cost of constructing Confucius Hall. The front elevation of the main building, at the ground floor level near the main entrance, is embedded with a plaque engraved with “簡朗山公贈建孔聖講堂全座 民國廿四年 吉日立”,¹³ while at the roof floor level, it bears the inscriptions of “孔聖講堂” and “謝家寶” (Tse Ka-po, the calligrapher).¹⁴ In-between the characters “孔聖” and “講堂” is a plaque engraved with “玉振金聲”.¹⁵ Confucius Hall was formally opened on 10 December 1935. Tso Seen-wan was the first president of the society.

Confucius Hall is situated on a plot of land registered as “Inland Lot No. 3357” (or I.L. 3357). According to the Government Lease of I.L. 3357, the lessee “will

⁸ Chen Huanzhang was a student of Kang Youwei (康有為). In 1911, he was conferred a Doctor’s Degree by the University of Columbia. In 1912, Chen established the National Confucius Association (孔教總會) in Shanghai and was its first president (會長). Later, the association was moved to Beijing, with Kang as the president and Chen as the secretary (總幹事). Branches were established on the Mainland. In 1930, Chen came to Hong Kong and established the Confucian Academy (孔教學院) at No. 13 Bonham Road. He was the first president of the academy from 1930 to 1933.

⁹ In 1889, Lo Sheung-fu went to Japan and taught at the Da Tong School (大同學校) at Yokohama (橫濱). He returned to the Mainland in 1900 and later moved to Macau and then Hong Kong. He operated a secondary school named “湘父男女中學” in Hong Kong for 30 years. Lu was the third president of the Confucian Academy from 1942 to 1970, and also served on the Boards of Directors of the Confucius Society (香港孔聖會) and the Confucian Association of China (中華聖教總會).

¹⁰ The School of Chinese Studies (中文學院, renamed Department of Chinese Department (中文系) in 1933) of The University of Hong Kong was established in 1927. Lai Tsi-hsi was appointed Reader in Chinese History and Head of the department. He was also one of the founders who established a Hakka association named Tsung Tsin Association (崇正總會) in 1921.

¹¹ Ou Dadian was appointed Reader in Chinese Literature of the Chinese Department of The University of Hong Kong in 1927.

¹² In the 32nd year of the Guangxu reign (光緒三十二年, 1906), Zhu Ruzhen was sent by the Qing government to study law at the Hosei University (法政大學) in Tokyo. He then taught at the imperial school of law in Beijing (京師法律學堂), and in the early 1920s he taught at the Confucian University (孔教大學) established by Chen Huanzhang in Beijing. Chu was the second president of the Confucian Academy from 1934 to 1942.

¹³ The plaque literally means “Confucius Hall was built by the donation from Kan Long-shan. Plaque erected in the 24th Republican year”.

¹⁴ In the early twentieth century, Tse Ka-po was a comprador of the a Japanese navigation company named Nippon Yusen Kaisha Line (日本郵船公司). This facilitated him to transport rice to Hong Kong from Guangdong Province in 1918 in order to alleviate the shortage of the supply of rice due to the famine in the northern part of the Mainland (華北). He served on the Boards of Directors of the Tung Wah Hospital and Po Leung Kuk in 1920/ 1921, and one of the subscribers for the construction of the Aberdeen Technical School (香港仔工業學校) (Grade 3) in 1935. Besides, Tse was dubbed “contemporary calligrapher of Lingnan” (當代嶺南書法家).

¹⁵ “玉振金聲” is a phrase developed from a saying of another sage, Mengzi (孟子). It expresses the appreciation of Mengzi to Confucius for the latter’s great achievement in academy and ethics. The saying originated from Mengzi’s work, namely 《萬章下》:「孔子之謂集大成;集大成也者,金聲而玉振之也。金聲也者,始條理也;玉振之者,終條理也。」 For instance, “金聲玉振” is engraved on an entrance *pai-fong* (牌坊) at the Temple of Confucius (孔廟) at Qufu (曲阜), Shandong (山東).

not except with the consent of the Governor erect or allow or suffer the erection on the said piece or parcel of ground or any part thereof any building other than a Confucius Hall and ancillary buildings thereto ... and for any purposes whatever other than for the purposes of the propagation of Confucius morals and principles (including charities, education, celebrative functions and ceremonies and revolution)".¹⁶ The use of the site is restricted to the activities mentioned in the said lease. The Birthday of Confucius is still annually celebrated and lectures are organized there. An orphanage named “孔聖堂兒童保康院” was opened at Confucius Hall on 25 March 1939, but it ceased operation in 1941 due to the outbreak of the war.¹⁷ The building was slightly damaged during the Japanese invasion (mainly the glass panes of doors and windows broken by the nearby bomb attacks). During the Japanese Occupation (1941 – 1945), the main building was occupied by the Japanese as an office and a sanatorium.

There are a number of artefacts in the lecture hall that show the patronage of Confucius Hall by the leading figures of the Chinese community and its social network in Hong Kong. They include the wooden couplets presented to Confucius Hall in celebration of its completion in 1935. The gilded couplet which flank the main entrance door of the hall were presented by the founders. It is flanked by the couplet presented by the Hong Kong Confucius Society (香港孔聖會). In the middle above the main entrance door is a plaque from The Confucian Academy (孔教學院), written by Zhu Ruzhen. The couplets inside the hall were presented by the Confucian Association of China (中華聖教總會), The Chinese General Chamber of Commerce (香港中華總商會), a children’s hospital in Guangzhou named “廣州志德嬰孩醫院”, as well as some community leaders of the New Territories, including Tsoi Po-tin (蔡寶田, 1872 – 1944), Ng Kei-cheung (伍其昌, 1859 – 1938) and Tang Fan-sun (鄧勳臣, 1874 – 1953).¹⁸

¹⁶ The Land Registry Office, Government Lease of L.L. 3357.

¹⁷ Zhu Ruzhen (朱汝珍) was the headmaster of the orphanage. It aimed at providing the destitute children with a home, making them healthy through nutrition and physical exercise, and giving them education on contemporary general knowledge (應世常識) and moral values.

¹⁸ Tsoi Po-tin was a prominent figure in Hong Kong and a leader of the Tsoi clan in Wang Chau (橫洲), Yuen Long. He engaged in construction company named Wing Yick & Co. (榮益公司) at No. 25 Gage Street (潔志街), Central. The company was a building contractor of Oi Kwan Mansion (愛群大廈), a 15-storied building completed in 1937 and measured 65.27 meters in height, which was the tallest building in Guangzhou before the Second World War. Tsoi was also one of the founders of Hop Yick Co. (合益公司) in order to set up Yuen Long New Market. Besides, he was a member of the Board of Directors of Po Leung Kuk in 1934/1935. The mansion named Yu Yuen (娛苑, Grade 2) was built by Tsoi Po-tin in 1927 as a summer villa at his birthplace, Tung Tau Wai (東頭圍), Wang Chau.

Ng Kei-cheung, alias Ng Shing-chi (伍醒遲), was one of the important leaders of the “six-day war” (from 14 to 19 April 1899) against the British takeover of the New Territories. He was influential in Shap Pat Heung, Yuen Long, and enlisted the Shap Pat Heung people to join the war. In the early twentieth century, Ng was one of the community leaders who helped found Hop Yick Co. to set up Yuen Long New Market, and organize subscriptions to establish Pok Oi Hospital (博愛醫院). He also contributed to education, for instance, by establishing a school named Wing On She (永安社, renamed Wing On School (永安學校) in 1938) in the Tin Hau Temple (天后古廟) at Ngau Yiu (瓦窑), Shap Pat Heung, also known as Tai Shue Ha Tin Hau Temple (大樹下天后古廟, Grade 2).

Tang Fan-sun was a local gentry of Tai Po Tau (大埔頭), Tai Po. The Tangs at Tai Po Tau branched out from Kam Tin. In 1947,

The lecture hall and the adjacent staff quarters are accessible from the entrance gateway, which takes the form of a *pai-fong* (牌坊) erected along the pavement on Caroline Hill Road and then the granite stairways leading from the gateway to the elevated platform upon which the buildings stand. The concrete *pai-fong* is surfaced with washed granolithic render, and inscribed with the society's name “孔聖堂” (Confucius Hall) and that of the calligrapher “雷蔭蓀” (Lui Yum-suen), who was one of the founders of the society. The delicately carved Chinese-style granite balustrades bordering the northern and eastern edges of the platform remain intact.¹⁹

Confucius Hall was designed by Tam Shiu-hong (譚肇康, 1875 – 1961), who was a well-known architect at the time. The building applications were submitted to the Building Authority by Messrs. Leigh and Orange, while the contractors were Messrs. Kin Cheong (建昌建築公司).²⁰ It is a reinforced concrete structure with Chinese-style features. The building consists of a main hall overlooked by an internal balcony, and a second floor constructed over the front part of the building. Externally, the two concrete roofs are covered with green glazed pan and roll tiles. At the front there is a hipped roof (四坡頂), while the rear one is a hip-and-gable roof (歇山頂). The main ridge of the front roof is decorated with a pair of dragon fish (鰲魚) with a pearl in the middle. The side ridges are decorated with wave-like ornaments. Beneath the eaves are concrete brackets, which imitate the *dougong* (斗拱) of Chinese architecture, and bands of painted decoration with Chinese patterns. On the ground floor, the entrance bay is composed of three red wooden doors and fanlights decorated with patterned metal grilles, while the cantilevered balcony above has a Chinese-style granite balustrade. The bay is embellished with a pair of red terrazzo colossal columns, a band of *ruyi* (如意) motifs, and decorative panels with *ruyi* motifs.

he was one of the founders of Luen Wo Land Investment Company Limited (聯和置業有限公司) and served on the Board of Directors from 1947 to 1953. The company established Luen Wo Market (聯和墟), which was formally opened on 20 January 1951.

¹⁹ The northern edge is in front of the main building and the eastern edge on its right.

²⁰ It was Kan Hung-chiu who asked Tam Shiu-hong to design Confucius Hall and monitor the construction works. Tam was born in Xinhui (新會) of Guangdong Province (廣東省) in 1875 and graduated from St. Paul's College in Hong Kong. He then graduated in architecture in Dalian (大連) of Liaoning Province (遼寧省), and worked with the works bureaus of the Qing government in Dalian and Tianjian (天津). In 1908, Tam moved to Hong Kong. He firstly worked with the Public Works Department and then a construction company. Later, he established his own companies named Wing Lee & Co. (永利建築公司) and Yee Lee Co. (裕利公司). Tam further founded Lam Woo & Co. (聯益建築公司) in partnership with Lam Woo (林護, 1870 – 1933), a well-known figure in the construction field. His companies had been the building contractor of many government projects, such as the Aberdeen reclamation, and the construction of the Tai Tam Tuk and Shing Mun Reservoirs and staff quarters in the early twentieth century. He was one of the founders who established The Building Contractors Association Limited Hong Kong (香港建造商會, now Hong Kong Construction Association) in 1920, and was elected the president of the association in 1922. In the 1920s, there were serious labour problems. Workers in the construction industry occasionally went on strikes. Tam, as a representative from the association, acted as the arbitrator and settled the strikes. He had become a Life Advisor (永遠維持顧問) of the association by the early 1950s. As a philanthropist, he was one of the Principal Directors (首總理) of the Tung Wah Hospital in 1932 and served on the Board of Directors of Po Leung Kuk in 1934, for instance. Tam and Lam Woo had also provided much financial support for the revolutionary activities of Dr. Sun Yat-sen.

In 1985, a statue of Confucius (孔子像), a pavilion named “觀鳳亭” near the statue and a one-storey building named “書劍軒” near the lecture hall were erected to mark the 50th anniversary of Confucius Hall.²¹ The design of these structures, which reflect the influences of Chinese architecture, makes them compatible with the external appearance of the lecture hall.

Internally, the main building consists of two parts. The rear part is a double volume space comprising the main hall with its internal balcony. Regarding the front part, this comprises a ground floor entrance hall, above which is a mezzanine floor with the main hall’s internal balcony and a room adjacent to it. This room has a cantilevered balcony with a Chinese-style decorative granite balustrade, and was formerly a conference room and a classroom, and is now a reading room. It is said that the officiating guests at the opening ceremony stood on this balcony to greet the guests, and they could enjoy a panoramic view of Victoria Harbour. During the Japanese Occupation, the room was used by the Japanese as a conference room. A library is housed on the top floor above it.

The main hall is an auditorium built with a great deal of consideration. The design is practical but elegant. It is a column-free hall, and the usage of the space is therefore very flexible. To achieve such a column-free space, a concrete arched-beam roof structure with vertical hangers was designed and installed above the ceiling (in the ceiling void next to the library) in order to suspend the huge roof over the main hall. The ground floor has a gentle slope to enhance audience experience through better visibility. It is an open plan design without fixed seating to suit the needs of different events. The internal balcony is stepped for better visibility, and has a U-shaped form to provide more space to accommodate rows of historic timber seats. For acoustic reasons, it was reported that the hall’s ceiling was lined with Celotex panels.

The building’s decoration mostly adopted traditional Chinese elements or motifs. *Ruyi* motifs in different forms are widely used, for instance, on the brackets at the ground floor and upper levels of the main hall, on the parapet surrounding the balcony and the ventilation grilles on the ceiling of the main hall. Chinese meander patterns and four-petal motifs are also identifiable on the balcony’s parapet. The decorative elements are elaborate and eye-catching with their use of bright and contrasting colours and with a high level of craftsmanship.

There are other features that are worthy of mention, as they serve to illustrate the

²¹The building “書劍軒” was built to house the archives of the Confucius Secondary School (校史室). It is now used as an activity room of the primary section of the Chinese Academy (晉德學校).

contemporary building materials and techniques used in the 1930s. They include the terrazzo finishes of the colossal columns, the entrance surround and the flooring of the entrance hall, and the coloured cement tiles at the entrance hall, in the reading room and on the cantilevered balcony. Besides, the library is made of long hard wood floorboards, some of which are around 4.2 metres in length.

The three-storey ancillary building was built for use as staff quarters. As an annex building, it adopts a humbler design with practical use in mind. Simple moulded cornice can be identified between the second and third floor levels, while the balcony on the third floor is surrounded by a balustrade with bamboo-shaped balusters, which enhance the aesthetics of the building. Toilet facilities and storerooms are housed in the building now.

It was said that before the opening of Hong Kong City Hall in 1962, Confucius Hall was the major venue for large-scale activities and lectures, and the only community hall open to the public before the Second World War. For instance, in August 1940, a remembrance service for the 60th birthday of the late Lu Hsun (魯迅, 1881 – 1936), with an attendance of some 300 members of the public, was held at Confucius Hall. Hsu Ti-shan (許地山, 1893 – 1941) delivered an opening speech and Xiao Hong (蕭紅, 1911 – 1942) introduced the biography of Lu Hsun. In September 1941, a memorial service for Hsu Ti-shan was also organised there, which was attended by some 700 people from around 40 cultural and educational groups and tertiary institutions, etc., After the war, during an event in 1948 commemorating the May Fourth Movement, public lectures delivered by Guo Moruo (郭沫若) on “Science and Democracy” (科學與民主) and Mao Dun (茅盾) on “The Mission of Contemporary Artists” (當前文藝工作者的任務) attracted an audience of about 1,000 people. These examples also show the inclusivity of Confucius Hall, in that it welcomed people holding different ideas, including those who advocated science and new expressions of culture rather than traditional Chinese culture and beliefs.²²

*Social Value
& Local
Interest*

Various other kinds of events were also held at Confucius Hall. For instance, it was a venue for rallying supports and arousing national spirit and patriotic feeling against the Japanese invasion of China. On 12 May 1938, for example, the Hongkong Committee for Student Relief (香港學生賑濟會 or 學賑會 in abbreviation), comprising students of secondary schools and The University of Hong Kong, organised a mobilisation ceremony at Confucius Hall. It was attended by

²² The topics of the lectures were indeed not restricted to Confucianism. For instance, in 1952, Jao Tsung-I (饒宗頤, 1917 – 2018) gave a lecture on Chinese classics and palaeography (經義與古文字學), and in 2013, Joseph Ting (丁新豹) on the history of Hong Kong during the early colonial period at Confucius Hall.

representatives of student organisations, including those from the UK, France, Guangzhou and Macau. On 31 March 1939, the committee organised a mass oath-taking ceremony named “國民公約宣誓典” at Confucius Hall. Some 1200 students from about 100 schools pledged their loyalty to the country and their determination to mobilise patriotic feeling against the Japanese invasion in accordance with the anti-Japanese convention of national citizens (國民抗敵公約 or 國民公約 in abbreviation), which became effective across the Mainland from 27 April the same year. Activities such as singing and drama performances and exhibitions were also held there in order to gather subscriptions and raise funds to provide necessities for the destitute and soldiers on the Mainland.

At present, Confucius Hall is still a venue used for the celebration of the Birthdays of Confucius and Mengzi. Memorial services for well-known public figures, such as Ip Lan-chuen (葉蘭泉, 1865 – 1946) and Shum Choi-sang (岑才生, 1922 – 2016),²³ were also held there. It is also the assembly hall of the Confucius Hall Secondary School (孔聖堂中學, first built as Tai Shing Secondary School (大成中學) in 1950, and renamed its current name in 1953).

Confucius Hall has group value with other historic buildings, including the Race Course Fire Memorial (馬場先難友紀念碑, Declared Monument), Tung Wah Eastern Hospital (東華東院, Grade 2), Shing Kwong Church (聖光堂, Grade 2), St. Paul’s Convent Church (聖保祿修院, Grade 1), S.K.H. St. Mary’s Church (聖馬利亞堂, Grade 1) and Main Building of Po Leung Kuk (保良局主樓, Grade 2). **Group Value**

When completed in 1935, Confucius Hall was described as a “novel building” and a “notable structure”.²⁴ Its design is a fusion of Chinese and Western architectural features. The movement that was rejuvenating Chinese architecture by incorporating the use of modern building materials and methods was in its heyday on the Mainland at that time. Confucian Hall displays the influence of the movement on Hong Kong’s architectural community. The replacement of original timber windows with aluminium ones is the only obvious alteration that can be identified. Without any major alterations that might have diminished its authenticity, Confucius Hall is one of the rare and outstanding surviving examples of design and construction combining both Chinese and Western architecture in Hong Kong. It is also the only surviving building built for the promotion of Confucianism that has this kind of **Rarity, Built Heritage Value & Authenticity**

²³ Shum Choi-sang was an acclaimed journalist and publisher of *Wah Kiu Yat Po* (華僑日報, 1925 – 1995), a well-known Chinese newspaper founded by his father, Shum Wai-yau (岑維休), in 1925. From 1997 to 2008, Shum Choi-sang was School Supervisor of Confucius Hall Secondary School (孔聖堂中學校監). He had also served on the Board of Directors of Confucius Hall for many years, including being President, until passing way in 2016. He also made generous donations to education, from kindergarten to tertiary levels.

²⁴ “Confucius Hall: Novel Building Near Completion at Caroline Hill,” *South China Morning Post*, 13 August, 1935, and “Colony’s Progress: Building Activity in the Past Year – Notable Structures,” *South Ching Morning Post*, 8 October, 1935.

design.²⁵

Moreover, Confucius Hall is also the oldest surviving historic building constructed for the reverence and advocacy of Confucianism in Hong Kong. It is still an important venue for the annual celebration of the Birthdays of Confucius and Mengzi. As a cultural venue, its commitment to inclusivity, as demonstrated by lectures held there on Confucianism and other classical and modern cultures has made it a place of great cultural diversity and dynamism. The hall was the only pre-war community venue open to the public for large-scale gatherings and it hosted important historical events, both shortly before and during the war years, which have enriched the historical value of the building.

²⁵ Other surviving examples include King Yin Lei (景賢里), Tung Wah Museum (東華三院文物館), Tung Lin Kok Yuen (東蓮覺苑), Race Course Fire Memorial (馬場先難友紀念碑) (Declared Monuments), Haw Par Mansion (虎豹別墅), S.K.H. St. Mary's Church (聖公會聖馬利亞堂)(Grade 1), Old Block of Holy Spirit Seminary (聖神修院舊座), Maryknoll House (瑪利諾神父宿舍) (all Grade 1), and the S.K.H. Holy Trinity Cathedral (聖公會聖三一座堂, Grade 2).

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