

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only
received **OCT 4** 1982
date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

~~historic Chee Kung Tong, Ket Hing, and Wo Hing Society Houses~~

and/or common Chinese Tong Houses of Maui Island *Thematic Resource*

2. Location

street & number MULTIPLE ___ not for publication

city, town N/A ___ vicinity of ~~Congressional district~~ Second

state Hawaii code 015 county Maui code 09

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
<input type="checkbox"/> thematic group	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<u>NA</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: society hall

4. Owner of Property

name Multiple owners - see individual property descriptions

street & number

city, town ___ vicinity of state

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Bureau of Conveyances

street & number 1151 Punchbowl Street

city, town Honolulu state Hawaii

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Statewide Inventory for Hawaii Register of Historic Places has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1974 ___ federal state ___ county ___ local

depository for survey records State Historic Preservation Office

city, town Honolulu state Hawaii

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> moved
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		date <u>1912 Ket Hing</u>

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The three remaining Chinese Tong houses (out of six) on Maui were all constructed in the first decade of this century. They are all presently unoccupied although the Wo Hing Society continues to maintain their structure. The remaining two buildings are deteriorating with no maintenance. The largest, Chee Kung Tong, is in the worst state of repair and the only building in an urban area.

Although built in various parts of Maui and most probably by different craftsmen, the three Tong Houses are similar in construction. All are two-story wooden structures with gable roofs. All have verandahs, patterned balustrades and ornamental details.

The survey was conducted by the Maui County Planning Department with special assistance from the membership of the three individual societies and the Hawaii Chinese History Center.

The Inventory:

1) The Chee Kung Tong Society building is a two-story wood frame structure set in a small rectangular urban lot in downtown Wailuku. Surrounded by single-story stores, the clubhouse is distinguish by its cement entrance lintel and walls on the street frontage. Large ethnic fruit trees in the front and rear of the site include mango, pomelo, lungan as well as palm trees. The site is presently unmaintained and the mature trees obscure the view of the once impressive structure from the street.

The two story wooden building has covered verandahs on both floors. Shingled intersecting gable roofs crown the structure and gable ends are articulated with fish scale patterned shingles painted in various colors in stripes.

Gingerbread detailing includes a scalloped architrave partially intact, camferred posts and decorative wheel and quatrefoil designed brackets. The entrance gable is marked by a carved bargeboard which gives the structure an Oriental character with its curved ends.

Ornamental lintels with applied designs of diamonds and coffered rectangles are set below a band of dentils. Balustrades on the first floor is composed of diamond patterns.

There is an entrance gate composed of concrete posts and a lintel with Chinese characters set on simple concrete brackets. The characters which appear on both sides of the lintel and are delineated in red translate to "Chee Kung Fui Kon" (the name of the society) as you enter the gate from the street and "Everyone is equal" as you leave the society grounds.

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The building is a rectangular structure approximately 55 feet by 34 feet with a trapezoid addition of approximately 19 feet by 32 feet by 14 feet constructed out of cinderblock bricks. It is located on the east side of the main structure.

Located at 2151 Vineyard Street, Wailuku, Maui UTM: 04/759240/2312220
TMK 3-4-13:40, which is a parcel of 4,544 square feet.
Owners: Chee Kung Tong Society
Kam Yet Dang - President
P.O. Box 153
Kahului, Maui 96732

2) The Ket Hing Society building is set on a level rise with a panoramic view of Kaho'olawe and West Maui. High above the road in rural Keokea, the society buildings are approached from a wooden staircase.

There are three structures associated with the Kula Tong House. A one-story wooden store and dwelling are located on the southwest side of the parcel closest to the road. This structure was built c. 1920. A one-story wooden kitchen house is located northeast of the main structure and was built c. 1908. The main two-story clubhouse was built c. 1907.

The Ket Hing building is a rectangular structure with a one-story shed attached to the rear. Of single wall construction there are verandahs across the front elevations on both floors. A low main gable roof with corrugated iron has boxed cornices and sawn bargeboards. Gable ends are articulated with scalloped shingles and arched louvered vents.

Entrance to the building is through double five-panel wooden doors flanked by red and gold Chinese panel.

Located on the East side of Cross Road, Keokea, Maui at
TMK 2-2-03:36 a parcel of 1.034 acres. UTM: 04/775710/2292140
Owners: Ket Hing Society
c/o Harley Ching
Ching Store
Kula, Maui 96790

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3) The Wo Hing Society building on Front Street in Lahaina is part of the National Registered Lahaina Historic District. It was placed in the National Register on October 15, 1966. The two-story wooden structure was built c. 1909 and may have been the society's second structure. It has a 3 sided verandah on both floors similar to the larger Chee Kung Tong. The gable roof has recently been repaired and has a corrugated iron covering.

Located at 848 Front Street, Lahaina at TMK 4-5-01:45 a parcel of 7,257 square feet.

Owners: Wo Hing Society
c/o Robert Len
1307 Kapunakea Village
Lahaina, Maui 96761

UTM: 04/741030/2310580

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		ethnic history
Specific dates	1905, 1907, 1910	Builder/Architect	Unknown	

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Period 1900 -
Architecture, Philosophy, Politics/Government, Religion,
Social/Humanitarian, Other - ethnic history

The three remaining Chinese Tong Houses are significant for the following reasons:

Architecture:

The buildings are all good examples of period architecture combined with the vernacular. The Chee Kung Tong is the most elaborate and largest of the three structures and is a good prototype of ornamental detail combined with ethnic features. All the buildings exemplify the simple lines and architectural medium of their period and are among the few remaining structures from this era.

Social/Humanitarian:

The Society was an important aspect of cultural and social life for it's immigrant Chinese members. Since many of the early Chinese immigrants were single men the society provided a fraternal structure which was a substitute for the absent family.

Religion:

The Society's dependence on Taoist beliefs were interrelated to the above mentioned cultural concerns. The continuation of the traditional religious practices reinforced the cultural and community ties.

The Chinese Tong Society is a fraternal club that has its roots in seventeenth century China and the secret Hoong Moon Society. The original Hoong Moon (Hung Men) or Triad Society was formed as a reaction to the foreign invasion and later rule of the Manchus and

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the establishment of the Ching dynasty in 1644. These secret societies were formed to politically re-establish the deposed Ming dynasty.

Between 1869 and 1910 over thirty secret societies were established in the Islands, six on Maui. These societies had various names, Chee Kung Tong being one of the more common. There were other names for these Tongs or halls. Some of the more commonly used characters were "Hing" for restoration, "Kung" for public good, "Wo" for harmony, "On" for peace.

The societies in Hawaii were not significantly interested in the political aspects of the parent societies. These local clubs were mutual aid societies which met social and recreational needs of its members providing funeral services and burial, protective services and made contributions to their members. These societies did, however, make financial contributions to the 1911 revolution conducted by Sun Yat-Sen.

The Chinese Tong Society was a club opened to men sixteen to sixty. An initiation fee was paid and members participated in rigorous initiation rites and took an oath based on thirty-six codes of morality, brotherhood, patriotism and chivalry. Members could be identified by special gestures, secret chopstick maneuvers and passwords.

When the Chinese workers came to Hawaii, mainly for the purpose of working on the sugar plantations, the secret societies such as Hung Men and other fraternal organizations, were founded by the workers. The societies in Hawaii all had common goals of supporting their culture by building a clubhouse, providing recreational outlets, financial assistance and fellowship to their members, all of whom joined for life. Members of the Hung Men Society were considered to be members of all Hung Men societies throughout the world. Thus, if a member of a California Hung Men Society was travelling through Hawaii, his room and board would be provided by a local Hung Men Society. If he became ill, he would be taken care of by that Society. If he died, he would be buried by the Society.

The activities of the Society included companionship and celebration of festivals. The members grew fruits and vegetables, and some of the trees were imported from China. Other activities

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probably included gambling and opium smoking. The members would meet to exchange news of China with people from other island, and read, or have read to them Chinese newspapers. The festivals and celebrations have included the Kuan Ti festival, to celebrate the god, the New Year festival to celebrate the Chinese New Year, the Ching Ming in April, when offerings were made to ancestral graves.

The economic structure of the societies was such that an initiation fee was paid. Any money coming from a member to the society after that time was purely on a donation basis. The donations to the society covered maintenance of the building and ceremonial supplies, and money for the support of travelling Hung Men members, and those members who were ill and dying and had come to the Society to be provided for. In some ways the Society was self-sufficient, growing many of its own vegetables to feed members.

The Wailuku Chee Kung Tong Society was incorporated on May 24, 1904. A document bearing the names of its founding fathers is one of the few original artifacts in the possession of the society. Those signing the incorporation papers included Hoo Sam, Young Yuen, Ah Ton, Lamb Sung and Akana.

The structure was begun in 1904 and dedicated on January 14, 1905. The building was described in the Maui News as unique. "Along the combs of the roof a Chinese dragon with two tails stretches its length, glaring from a fierce head down on the passers by and along the eaves like designs being worked out."¹ The Maui News also commented on the dedication ceremonies saying, "last Saturday and Sunday the Chinese dedicated their Joss House to earsplitting accompaniment of firecrackers, drums and Chinese gongs."²

A large kitchen was added to the East side of the structure to be used by the members prior to 1928. It most likely replaced an earlier detached cook house common in rural clubhouses.

No funds were donated for disinterring remains and sending them back to ancestral villages. Donations were recorded on the walls, showing an item, a list of donors, and amount given. Although

1 Maui News, 12/31/04, 3:1

2 Ibid., 1/21/05, 3:1

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vandals have destroyed these written records of membership, a 1978 photograph of the building's interior has preserved some of these names for the record. Translations still need to be conducted.

The two-story Tong buildings were separated into public and membership areas. The first floor hall was open to the public and often housed shrines to female dieties such as Kwan Yin, goddess of Mercy. This large hall was used primarily for social and recreational functions and opened for celebrations to women, children and non-members. Often these halls were used as Chinese language classrooms when not in use for club events.

The upper floor was restricted to members and here the main altar to Kwan Dai (Ti), patron of the fraternal society, was located. Rooms off this upper sanctuary were used for gambling, fan tan games and often opium smoking.

As a 1928 article in The Maui News states, these rooms in the Wailuku Chee Kung Tong were later used for the elderly and infirmed who had no other place to live. Traditionally these men would spend the remainder of their lives in the society house and after their death the society would arrange funeral and burial services.

The Ket Hing Society in Kula was formed in 1900 with seventy-one (71) members, although the clubhouse structure was not constructed until 1907. Unlike the other remaining societies, the Kula Tong operated a store (located to the southeast of the main structure) to provide added funds for the society's coffers. The store was in operation from 1910 until a new store was built on the Kula Highway around 1935.

Chinese had lived in Kula since the 1840s; however, the major influx came in the 1890s when many immigrants came after their contracts with the sugar plantations had been met. Historically, the area is known for its farming and during the California gold rush Kula's produce contributed to California's bread basket. Chinese farmers were known to have been the major suppliers to this new market.

In 1912 the Society building was moved to its present site from a location approximately 200 feet to the north. It is said to have been the first two-story structure in Kula.

The Society was one of the more political of all the Tongs in Hawaii. In 1903 Sun Yat-Sen joined the membership of Ket Hing. His brother Sun Mi lived in Kula and Sun Yat-Sen was a frequent visitor.

The Wo Hing Society in Lahaina was incorporated in 1905 and the original structure repaired in 1906. It is believed that the present building replaced the older structure about 1910.

The Maui News reported that the Wo Hing Society had filed for an application for a mutual relief society with a capitol stock of \$10,000 in August 1905.

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The present building was renovated in 19 , and recently a new roof was added. Of the three structures the Wo Hing is the best preserved.

With the increasing independence from the plantations and the strengthening of the family structure many Chinese no longer found a need for the fraternal life offered by the Society. Membership dwindled and the clubhouses fell into disrepair. Migration away from the rural areas also contributed to the decline in interest in Tongs in Kula and other small communities. Today membership is limited to a handful of older Chinese who hope that the restoration of their buildings will preserve their rich cultural history.

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Mark, Diane, The Chinese in Kula: Reflections of a Farming Community in Old Hawaii,
Hawaii Chinese History Center, Honolulu, 1975

The Maui News, Maui Publishing Company, Wailuku, Maui,

12/10/1904 3:1 8/26/1905 5:1

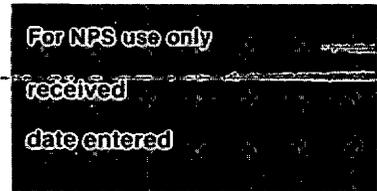
8/25/1916 6:5 9/2/1905 5:2

3/31/1928 1:5 1/20/1906 6:2

1/21/1900 3:1

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Multiple Resource Area
Thematic Group

dnr-11

Name Chinese Tong Houses of Maui Island Thematic Resources
State Hawaii

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

1. Wo Hing Society Building
(Already listed)
in a district **Substantive Review**

Keeper Linda McClelland 11-15-82

Attest _____

2. Chee Kung Tong Society Building
Substantive Review

Keeper Linda McClelland 11-15-82

Attest _____

3. Ket Hing Society Building
Substantive Review

Keeper Linda McClelland 11-15-82

Attest _____

4. _____
Keeper _____

Attest _____

5. _____
Keeper _____

Attest _____

6. _____
Keeper _____

Attest _____

7. _____
Keeper _____

Attest _____

8. _____
Keeper _____

Attest _____

9. _____
Keeper _____

Attest _____

10. _____
Keeper _____

Attest _____

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