

Historic Building Appraisal
Tin Hau Temple
No. 62 Shui Mei Tsuen, Kam Tin, Yuen Long

Tin Hau Temple (天后廟) was built in the 10th year of the Qianlong (乾隆, 1745) reign of the Qing (清) dynasty by the Tang (鄧) clan in Shui Mei Tsuen (水尾村) of Kam Tin (錦田), Yuen Long. It is for the worship of Tin Hau deity who is reputed for her protection given to fishermen. The Tangs settled in Kam Tin as far back as in the Song (宋, 960-1279) dynasty. It was renovated in 1936 and 1968. In 1968, it was renovated with the help of a monk Fan-bo (芬博) and the villagers.

*Historical
Interest*

The temple is a Qing vernacular building having a two-hall-one-courtyard plan of three bays. It is in symmetrical design with the altar in the middle of the main hall facing the entrance at the opposite end of the building. The narrow courtyard is between the entrance and main halls. The main hall is with two side rooms and so is the entrance hall. The temple was constructed of green bricks with its walls to support its pitched roofs of timber rafter, purlins and clay tiles. Its walls and roofs however have been plastered with concrete. Its granite curbs and steps have been retained. Its main ridges are with geometric mouldings. Wall friezes on its front façade are with mouldings of floral pattern.

*Architectural
Merit*

It is the only Tin Hau temple erected by the Tang clan in Kam Tin to witness their settlement in the area.

Rarity

It has little built heritage value as it has been unsympathetically renovated.

*Built Heritage
Value*

Its authenticity has been diminished.

Authenticity

It has group value with other historic buildings including Tang Ching Lok Ancestral Hall (清樂鄧公祠), Cheung Chun Yuen (長春園) and others nearby.

Group Value

The villagers would make regular offerings at the temple on the 1st and 15th days of every lunar month. They would not have any celebration on Tin Hau Festival (天后誕) on the 23rd day of the third month. Villagers over 40 would go to the temple on the 15th day of each first lunar month to have the Dang Wine (燈酒) of the Dim Dang (點燈) ritual held at the ancestral hall of the village for new born baby boys of previous year. Tin Hau deity would be invited to the Tai Ping Ching Chiu (太平清醮) of Kam Tin held once every ten years by taking her statue on a sedan chair and carried it to an outdoor altar to attend the activities.

*Social Value,
& Local Interest*

Historic Building Appraisal

Yan Wah Lo

Kwu Tung, Sheung Shui, N.T.

Yan Wah Lo (仁華廬) is a Hakka (客家) dwelling constructed in the 1920s by Yeung Ngan-yau (楊雁友) who was an overseas Chinese working in Bandung (萬隆) of Indonesia. The building is in Kwu Tung (古洞) between Sheung Shui and San Tin (新田). It is in the east of Shek Tsai Leng (石仔嶺) of Kwu Tung near the Kwu Tung Rural Committee's office building (古洞村公所). Ngan-yau was born in Meixian (梅縣), the home county of Hakkas, of Guangdong (廣東) province. He had a grocery in Bandung and when he accumulated a sum, he wanted to build a house in Meixian. The site he wanted to build a house in Meixian had already been occupied. Then he chose to settle in Hong Kong due to its geographical advantage and social stability (moreover, the Dutch colonial government in Indonesia restricted Chinese from purchasing any farmland and real estates. With the help of a Hakka native in Yuen Long, bought land in Kwu Tung and built the house. Hakka artisans for the construction of the house and building materials were from Meixian. The Hakka house was not completed due to the outbreak of the war in the mainland. The house he wanted to build was like the Pun Uk (潘屋) in Au Tau (凹頭) of Yuen Long. The residence is still owned by the descendents of Ngan-yau in the corporate ownership of Yeung Ngan Yau Tso (楊雁友祖). It has been rented to relatives of the Yeungs from the mainland since the 1970s.

**Historical
Interest**

The southeast facing residence was intended to be built in a Hakka two-hall-two-row (兩堂兩橫) style. The right row and the adjoining open courtyard were not built. It now is Qing (清) vernacular Hakka dwelling having a two-hall-one-row (兩堂一橫) plan. The core centre of the building is a two-hall-one-courtyard middle bay with a side chamber or side room on either side of the entrance and main halls and the open courtyard. A row of five bedrooms with a kitchen is on the left separated by a long lane of open courtyard. An entrance is at the entrance hall and the open lane. The gable wall of the side row of houses is of the same direction of the two entrances. The building is constructed of green bricks with its walls to support its pitched roofs of timber rafters, purlins and clay tiles. The name of the house “仁華廬” (Yan Wah Lo) is moulded above the entrance doorway flanked by a couplet “仁端統四, 華祝多三”. The walls are plastered and painted. The open courtyard is covered with corrugated sheets. A semi-circular mound of earth called *huatouying* (花頭塋) or *huatai* (化胎) was at the back of the building, a *fung shui* provision of the Hakkas. The apex of the gable wall of the side row is of the wood (木) style of the Five Elements (五行).

**Architectural
Merit**