

Historic Building Appraisal
Shrine
Lam Hau Tsuen, Ping Shan, Yuen Long

Lam Hau Tsuen (欖口村) in Ping Shan (屏山) of Yuen Long was first settled by the Wongs (黃) and later developed into a multi-clan village inhabited by the Cheungs (張), Moks (莫), Mans (文) and others, the Cheungs being the latest. Cheung Kwan-heng (張君亨), the 14th generation ancestor of the Cheungs, settled in the village after the Evacuation Edict (遷界令) was lifted in 1669 of the Kangxi (康熙, 1662-1722) reign, Qing (清) dynasty. He branched out from Shan Ha Tsuen (山下村), south of Lam Hau Tsuen, whose ancestor was one of the descendents of Cheung Chuk-ping (張祝平) who moved there from Huangcun (篁村) of Dongguan (東莞), Guangdong (廣東) province, in the Shunzhi (順治, 1644-1661) reign of the dynasty. The shrine (神廳) was probably constructed in the 18th century in the earlier stage of the village's development. The shrine is dedicated for the worship of a number of deities including Kwun Yam (觀音), the Earth God (土地) and others. It is also for the worship of the Wong ancestor, the first settler of the village. The ancestral hall attached to the left of the shrine is dedicated to the ancestors of all the five surnames of the village.

**Historical
Interest**

The shrine is at the last row of the village houses of the initial boundary of the village connected to a Chung Shing Tong (忠勝堂). It faces the entrance gate on the same axis in the far end of the village. It is a single-hall Qing vernacular building. The simple building is constructed of green bricks with its walls to support its pitched roof of timber rafters, purlins and clay tiles. Its brickwork is in a random header-and-stretcher (丁順) bonding of no specific course ratio. The ridge is with curling ends. The altar is in the middle of the end wall facing the entrance at the opposite end of the building.

**Architectural
Merit**

It is a village shrine to remind the history of the village.

Rarity

It has some built heritage value.

**Built Heritage
Value**

A renovation was carried out in the 1940s. The entirety of the shrine is kept.

Authenticity

It has group value with the entrance gate and Yan Shau Tong (仁壽堂) of the village.

Group Value

The shrine serves as the temple of the village where villagers seek the blessings of different deities. Dim Dang (點燈) ritual has been held at the shrine for baby boys born in previous year. The ritual will start on a day between the 9th and 11th days of the first lunar month and end on the 18th of the month. On the first day of the ritual, the parents of the newborn boys would invite all the deities of the village, such as the Well God and the God of Entrance Gate, to the shrine. Then lanterns would be put up at the shrine, the entrance gate and Yan Shau Tong. Basin meal was held in the open space abutting the entrance gate of the village to mark the beginning and end of the ritual. The lanterns will be removed to the parents' homes after the ceremony.

***Social Value,
& Local
Interest***