

**Historic Building Appraisal**  
**Ling Wan Monastery**  
**Kwun Yam Shan, Pat Heung, Yuen Long**

Ling Wan Monastery (凌雲寺) in Kwun Yam Shan (觀音山) of Sheung Tsuen (上村), Yuen Long, was built by Tang Yam (鄧欽), son of Tang Hung-yi (鄧洪儀) in the Xuande (宣德, 1426-1435) reign of the Ming (明) dynasty for her mother as a place for her devotion to Buddha. In 1393 Hung-yi replaced his brother Hung-chi (洪贄) for exile to Liaodong (遼東) in north-east China voluntarily. He died a few years later. His wife, one he married outside his original home in Yuen Long, came back with his ashes and his son. Unfortunately his son died next year. Tang Yam then built a secluded lodge for her mother, the former structure of the monastery which was then called Ling Wan Ching Sat (凌雲靜室). No record had been with the building until it was renovated by a monk Dik-chan (滌塵) in the 1<sup>st</sup> year of Daoguang (道光, 1821) of the Qing (清) dynasty. It was then left dilapidated until in 1913 it became a resort of Tang Pak-kau (鄧伯裘), a wealthy merchant and a noted member of Yuen Long Tang clan who owned the monastery and rebuilt it into a nunnery under the direction of a monk Miu-charm (妙參) in 1919. Since then it became one of the Chonglins (叢林), a kind of monasteries which can have the status for the transmission of Buddhist Commandments (傳戒法會). In 1932, monks Sik Kwun-sau (釋觀修) and Sik Chi-sau (釋智修) built a Jietang (戒堂) beside the monastery and started a study group of Buddhism. The monastery is dedicated to a number of deities including Skanda (韋馱菩薩, Wei-to), Kshitigarbha Buddha (地藏王), Sakyamuni (如來佛祖), Man Cheong (文昌), Kwan Tai (關帝) and others.

*Historical  
Interest*

As parts of the monastery are quarters, private study rooms and other facilities of the nuns, they are not open to other people. Only the main building is accessible for study. It was not known how many renovations have been carried out since 1919. The building is structurally reinforced with steel and concrete columns. It is basically a Qing vernacular building of a two-hall-one-courtyard plan of three bays. The courtyard is between the front and main hall. The monastery was constructed of green bricks with its walls and columns to support its pitched roofs of timber rafters, purlins and clay tiles. However the walls have been plastered with its external ones marked with false brick lines. The roofs have been turned into concrete ones. Its main hall, Tai Hung Bo Din (大雄寶殿), is supported with H-shaped steel bars. The hall houses in its altars statues of Buddha for worship. The long and narrow front hall is for reception with two side rooms on either side housing soul tablets and for reception and for storage

*Architectural  
Merit*

use. Above its recessed entrance is wall friezes of Eight Immortals (八仙) and landscape mouldings.

It is an old age monastery to reflect the lengthy settlement of the Tang clan in Kam Tin (錦田). **Rarity**

The monastery has considerable built heritage value though it has been much modified. **Built Heritage Value**

The structural strengthening work of the building has diminished its authenticity. **Authenticity**

Though it is a nunnery, it has connections with other nunneries in Hong Kong and organized their religious activities. The monastery is open to the public on restricted bases. In the Tai Ping Ching Chiu (太平清醮) held once every 10 years, the deities of the monastery would be invited to the activities. Even the soul tablets of Hung-yi and his wife would also be invited. **Social Value, & Local Interest**