

Historic Building Appraisal

Tam Kung Temple

No. 9 Blue Pool Road, Happy Valley, Wan Chai, Hong Kong

Tam Kung Temple (譚公廟) on Blue Pool Road (藍塘道) of Happy Valley was constructed on a small hill accessible through a flight of staircases. It was built in the 27th year of the Guangxu (光緒, 1901) reign of the Qing (清) dynasty by the Hakkas (客家人) of the Wong Nai Chung Village (黃泥涌村) as a bell in the temple has the dating inscribed on it. The temple was originally at the hill slope of the present Hong Kong Sanatorium and Hospital (養和醫院) site. Wong Nai Chung Village was settled by the Ngs (吳) and Yips (葉), both Hakkas from the mainland. The deity Tam Kung was a native of Huizhou (惠州) of Guangdong (廣東) province who is legendarily to have super power to prophesy and to heal people from sickness. Other than Tam Kung, other deities including Pak Tai (北帝), Kwun Yam (觀音), Nui Wo (女媧) and others are worshipped at the temple.

**Historical
Interest**

Connected to the front of the Tam Kung Temple is a flat-roofed pavilion of almost the same size. The temple is a Qing vernacular building of a one-hall plan with a side hall to its left. The building is constructed of green bricks with its walls to support its pitched roofs of timber rafters, purlins and clay tiles. The altar is at the end wall of the building housing the statue of the Tam Kung deity in the middle. The side hall is for the keeper's quarters, toilet and kitchen and for storage. The roofs are covered with black ceramic tiles with a set of ceramic 'Two Dragons Competing for a Pearl' (二龍爭珠) on its main ridge. Its descending ridges are with geometric mouldings.

**Architectural
Merit**

It is one of the three Tam Kung temples (the other two are respectively in To Kwa Wan (土瓜灣) and in Ah Kung Ngam (亞公岩)) in Hong Kong.

Rarity

It has considerable built heritage value.

**Built Heritage
Value**

The temple was renovated in 1928 with many unknown ones. The last one has modernized the temple with its authenticity diminished.

Authenticity

It has group value with the Tin Hau Temple to its right.

Group Value

Due to urban development the Wong Nai Chung Village was replaced with residential buildings in the 1920s. The temple has been managed by the Chinese Temple Committee (華人廟宇委員會) since 1929 which is taken care of by a

**Social Value,
& Local
Interest**

keeper. The Tam Kung Festival on the 8th of the fourth lunar month would be celebrated with special offerings. The Tam Kung Festival would be celebrated in every even year and the Pak Tai Festival on the 3rd of the third lunar month in the odd year. Lion dance would be organized during the celebration with the statues of the two deities carried on a sedan chair to tour round Happy Valley.