

Historic Building Appraisal

Pak Tai Temple

Nos. 196 & 198 Yu Chau Street, Sham Shui Po

Pak Tai Temple (北帝宮) in Yu Chau Street (汝州街) of Sham Shui Po (深水埗) was built in 1920 by the side of the Sam Tai Tsz Temple to its right. The latter was erected in 1898 for the worship of Na Cha (哪吒) who is believed to have subsided a plague occurred in Hong Kong in 1894. The Pak Tai Temple sharing the common wall of the latter is around one half of the width of and a bite longer than the neighbouring temple. The Pak Tai Temple was erected by the fishing folks of Sham Shui Po who believed the deity was a protector of sea-faring people who would ward off all dangers and evils on the sea. The temple has been being managed by the Chinese Temples Committee (華人廟宇委員會) since 1931.

**Historical
Interest**

The temple is a Qing (清) vernacular building of a one-hall plan. The building is taller than the Sam Tai Tsz Temple next door. Other than the main entrance in its front, a side entrance is connected from its main hall to the courtyard of the neighbouring temple. The temple is constructed of grey brickwork with its walls to support its pitched roofs of timber rafters, purlins and clay tiles. At the back of the hall is the keeper's quarters, kitchen and toilets. The altar at the end hall houses the statue of Pak Tai in the middle with Man Cheong (文昌) and Tong Sam Chong (唐三藏) deities on his right and left. The roofs have been covered with green glazed ceramic tiles and a pair of *aoyus* (鰲魚, dragon fish) with a pearl in the middle are at the main ridge. The external walls are plastered. The name of the temple is engraved in its lintel.

**Architectural
Merit**

It is a Pak Tai temple to witness the historical and social development of Sham Shui Po, and has some built heritage value. The temple was renovated in 1985 with some others. The temple though modernised in recent renovation has its authenticity barely kept.

**Rarity, Built
Heritage
Value &
Authenticity**

Apart from the adjoining Sam Tai Tsz Temple (三太子宮), the Pak Tai Temple is within walking distance of other historic buildings, including Nos. 269 & 271 Yu Chau Street (汝州街), Nos. 117, 119, 121, 123 & 125 Nam Cheong Street (南昌街) (both Grade 3) and Sham Shui Po Police Station (深水埗警署, Grade 2).

Group Value

Due to the development of Sham Shui Po, it is no longer inhabited by the fishermen. Very few fishermen nowadays would go to worship the deity. Soul tablets of the inhabitants' ancestors are placed at the temple for worship which has attracted more visitors to the temple. The birthday of the Pak Tai is on the third day of the third lunar month which would have some special offerings for the deity.

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