

Historic Building Appraisal

Shrine

Tin Sam Tsuen, Hung Shui Kiu, Yuen Long, New Territories

Tin Sam Tsuen (田心村) in Hung Shui Kiu (洪水橋) of Yuen Long was called Tin San Wai (田心圍, meaning “walled village of Tin Sam”) as a wall was constructed enclosing the village against the attack of bandits and pirates. The wall has been demolished. Tin Sam Tsuen is one of the villages of Ha Tsuen (廈村), an area dominated by the Tangs (鄧氏). The villagers of Tin Sam Tsuen were tenants of the Ha Tsuen Tangs. *Historical Interest*

A shrine was built on the central axis of the village at the rear wall facing its entrance gate tower on the opposite front wall. This shrine, which is known as Tung Fuk Tong (同福堂), was built to house the deities which are believed to give protection to the villagers. Deities include Kwun Yam (觀音), Tin Hau (天后), Yeung Hau (楊侯), Chau Wong Yi Kung (周王二公), Kwan Tai (關帝) and others. Tin Sam Tsuen is a multi-lineage village inhabited by the Chans (陳) and the Los (盧). The Chan ancestors, who had moved to Ha Tsuen from Dongguan (東莞) of Guangdong (廣東) province in the 17th century, were the tenants of the Tangs (鄧) in Ha Tsuen (廈村). It is said that the shrine was built at the same time when the walls were established probably in the 19th century.

The shrine is a Qing (清) vernacular building having a one-hall plan. It was part of the wall constructed to protect the villagers. There might be four watch towers at its corners. The entrance gate house has been reconstructed with concrete. The shrine is the only surviving structure of the Tin Sam Wai. It was constructed with green bricks with its walls to support its pitched roofs of timber rafters, purlins and clay tiles. The bricks are in a nine stretcher courses to one header course (九順一丁) bonding. The altar is in the middle of the end wall housing the deities and a square soul tablet. A parapet is constructed probably in the 1930s on the front façade of the building having three bays divided by four short columns. The pediment in the middle is a stilted arch flanked by two rectangles with relief of floral pattern. Wall friezes under the parapet are paintings of landscape and plants. Geometric plastered mouldings are on the ridge. *Architectural Merit*

The shrine is a building to remind the history of Tin Sam Wai. *Rarity*

The shrine has considerable built heritage value. *Built Heritage Value*

The last renovation was made in 1955. The authenticity is kept. *Authenticity*

There are many historical building in the Ha Tsuen area, including the Tang Ancestral Hall (鄧氏宗祠) in Ha Tsuen and Ling To Monastery (靈渡寺) and Tin Hau Temple at Sha Kong (沙江天后廟). ***Group Value***

The shrine, called Tung Fuk Tong (同福堂), is also a communal hall of the village. Dim Dang (點燈) ritual would be held at the shrine for new born baby boys of previous year on the 10th day of the first lunar month. They would also have offerings at the full moon of a baby boy and at weddings. At the Ghost Festival (盂蘭節) on the 13th day of the seventh lunar month, rituals would be held at the shrine. The deities would be invited to have the ceremonies and celebrations of the Da Chiu (打醮) of Ha Tsuen held once every ten years. ***Social Value, & Local Interest***

It is considered that the question of adaptive re-use does not arise at the present time. ***Adaptive Re-use***