

Historic Building Appraisal
Tin Hau Temple
Sha Tau, Ping Chau, Plover Cove

Ping Chau (平洲) island, also known as Tung Ping Chau (東平洲), is in the Mirs Bay (大鵬灣), north-east of Hong Kong. There were 5 old villages in Ping Chau, namely, Chau Tau (洲頭), Sha Tau (沙頭), Nai Tau (奶頭), Chau Mei (洲尾) and Tai Tong (大塘) which villagers were mainly fishermen and farmers. Tin Hau Temple (天后宮) in the east of Chau Tau is on the northern shore of the island, a short distance from the beach. The temple was constructed in the 30th year of the Qianlong (乾隆, 1765) of the Qing (清) dynasty as its bell has the dating inscribed on it. The temple was erected for the worship of Tin Hau. Two other deities are also worshipped at its side altars including Hung Shing (洪聖) and Tai Sui (太歲).

**Historical
Interest**

The temple is a Qing vernacular building of a two-hall plan of three bays. Immediate behind the entrance hall is a narrow open courtyard. On both side of the hall are two side rooms. The building was constructed of volcanic and sedimentary rocks with its walls to support its roofs of timber rafters, purlins and clay tiles. The walls are plastered. The altar occupies the entire end wall of the main hall with the Tin Hau statue in the middle and those of Hung Shing and Tai Sui respectively on the left and right. The wall of the recessed entrance is painted with blue and faux brick lines. Its wall friezes on the front façade are with flowers and sea fish. Its concrete main ridge is with a pearl, a pair of *aoyus* (鰲魚), vases, unidentified beasts with fish tail and geometric patterns.

**Architectural
Merit**

It is the only Tin Hau temple on the island to reflect the settlement of the villagers.

Rarity

The use of volcanic and sedimentary rocks on the island for the construction of the temple is rare having considerable built heritage value.

**Built Heritage
Value**

The temple was renovated in 1970. Its authenticity is kept.

Authenticity

It has group value with the Tam Tai Sin Temple (譚大仙廟) on the west side of the village.

Group Value

The temple was also served a venue to provide education for the village children in the 1940s. Classes up to primary four were provided and subsidized by the government. It ceased to function as a school until two primary schools,

**Social Value,
& Local
Interest**

namely, Kwan Ying School (群英學校) in Tai Tong and Wai Sun School (維新學校) in Chau Tau were built in the 1950s. As this is the only Tin Hau temple on the island, Tin Hau Festival (天后誕) will be celebrated on the 23rd day of the third lunar month by the villagers and those who have no longer inhabited on the island.