

Historic Building Appraisal
Cheung Ancestral Hall
No. 74 Shui Tsan Tin, Pat Heung, Yuen Long

The Cheung Ancestral Hall (張氏宗祠) at No.74 Shui Tsan Tin (水盞田) village of Pat Heung (八鄉), Yuen Long, is one of the two ancestral halls of the Cheungs (張) in the village. The village was established more than one hundred years ago inhabited by the Cheungs, the Lees (李), the Laws (羅), the Chans (陳) and others. Cheung Wai-kwong (張懷光) is considered as the founding ancestor of the village who moved to the village after getting rich. The Cheungs were believed to have settled in Sha Tau Kok (沙頭角) before they moved to Shui Tsan Tin. The ancestral hall was built to commemorate Wai-kwong and his three brothers, Wai-tak (懷德), Wai-king (懷敬) and Wai-him (懷謙). It is also called Sze Mai Tong (四美堂), literally the Hall of Four Merits. It was probably built in the 1850-80s. *Historical Interest*

The ancestral hall is located in the central part of the village facing an open ground in its front. It is a two-hall-two-courtyard Qing (清) vernacular building of two bays. It is connected to village houses on its right. The two open courtyards are in-between the middle and main halls. Four side chambers and rooms are on the left of the main bay. The side bay had a kitchen in its front but has not been used. The building is constructed of green bricks with its walls to support its pitched roofs of timber rafters, purlins and clay tiles. The walls are plastered and painted. The floors are cement-screeded. The roof of the middle hall was destroyed by typhoon in 2000 and has not been repaired. The altar is in the middle of the end wall of the main hall housing a big soul tablet for the Cheung ancestors and five smaller ones for the branch ancestors for worship. The name of the hall is engraved on a piece of stone on the wall above the lintel at the recessed entrance. A pair of red geometric mouldings is at the entrance and main hall ridges. *Architectural Merit*

It is an ancestral hall to witness the settlement of the Cheungs in Shui Tsan Tin village. *Rarity*

It has little built heritage value.

Built Heritage Value

The building was renovated in the 1960s and 1970s. The collapsed middle hall has its authenticity diminished. *Authenticity*

It has group value with another ancestral hall of the Cheungs in the village. *Group Value*

The ancestral hall is for the worship of Chun-fui (振魁), the father of Wai-kwong, and his four sons. Another ancestral hall at No. 70 in the village is for all the ancestors of the Cheungs. Dim Dang (點燈) rituals were held at both halls for new born baby boys of previous year. Banquets for wedding and other celebrations were held at the hall. The hall was also used as a study hall for teaching the village children. After the Second World War, a Fa Tei School (花地分校) was set up in the village which replaced the work of the study hall at the ancestral hall.

*Social Value,
& Local Interest*