

Historic Building Appraisal
Lau Ancestral Hall
Tuk Mei Chung, Lung Kwu Tan, Tuen Mun

The Lau Ancestral Hall (劉氏宗祠) in Tuk Mei Chung (篤尾涌) village of Lung Kwu Tan (龍鼓灘), Tuen Mun, is one of the two ancestral halls of the Hakka (客家) Laus (劉) whose founding ancestor, Lau Mong-for (劉夢科), moved from Datang Village (大塘村) of Huizhou (惠州), Guangdong (廣東) province, probably in Qianlong (乾隆, 1736-1795) reign of the Qing (清) dynasty. Mong-for had four sons, three of whom stayed in Lung Kwu Tan. This ancestral hall was built to commemorate his grandson Kit-yiu (傑堯). The other ancestral hall in Lung Kwu Sheung Tan (龍鼓上灘) was built to commemorate his two other grandsons Tung -yiu (統堯) and Yik-yiu (奕堯). It is not known when this ancestral hall was built. It was built around 1900.

*Historical
Interest*

The ancestral hall is a Qing vernacular building having a two-hall-one-courtyard plan. The open courtyard is between the entrance and main halls. It is constructed of green bricks with its walls to support its pitched roofs of reinforced concrete. The walls are plastered and painted with imitation brick lines. The floors of the two halls are screeded whilst that of the courtyard is with granite slabs. Granite is used for its doorframe, wall corners and front steps. The finely carved altar is in the middle of the end wall of the main hall housing a soul tablet of Kit-yiu for worship. A shrine of Kwun Yam (觀音) is on its left also for worship. Red *ruilong* (夔龍) mouldings are at two ends of the two ridges. A fascia board under the front eave is with bird and leaf pattern carving.

*Architectural
Merit*

It is an ancestral hall of the Lau clan to witness their settlement in Lung Kwu Tan of Tuen Mun.

Rarity

It has some built heritage value.

*Built Heritage
Value*

The building was renovated in 1994. Its authenticity is kept.

Authenticity

The ancestral hall is still maintained for ancestral worship use though many of its clan members have moved out of the area. Special offerings are made to the altar at festivals including the Chinese New Year, Chung Yeung Festival (重陽節), Mid Autumn Festival (中秋節) and others. The Dim Dang (點燈) ritual for new born baby boys of previous year is still maintained at the Chinese New Year. Basin meals to celebrate the wedding of male members were served in front of the hall in the past. This however has been discontinued.

*Social Value,
& Local
Interest*