

**Historic Building Appraisal**  
**Tam Kung Sin Shing Temple**  
**Tam Kung Temple Road, Shau Kei Wan, H.K.**

Tam Kung Sin Shing Temple, literally temple of holy Tam the elder, (譚公仙聖廟) was originally in a cottage form erected in 1905 by the fishermen of Shau Kei Wan, a fishing village, for the worship of the deity Tam Chiu (譚峭). He was a Huizhou (惠州) native, in south Guangdong (廣東), who had the power to cure patients and make accurate weather forecast in the Yuan dynasty (1206-1370). He was then very much worshipped by the people and fishermen in southern part of the province. Fishermen in Shau Kei Wan, many of those came from Huizhou, met the cost for the building of the temple. It has been managed by the Chinese Temples Committee since 1928. Tam Kung is reputed to give good blessings to the fishermen and local as well in a cholera outbreak in early 1960s.

**Historical  
Interest**

It was built to face north-west towards the sea in good *fung shui* (風水) setting. The temple in Guangdong style is a two-hall building with a covered courtyard in between. The statue of Tam Kung with other deities' including Kwan Tai (關帝), Wong Tai Sin (黃大仙), etc. are at the altars of the main hall. Its entrance is fronted by two raised platforms, one on each side. To the left is a side chamber, probably a later addition, for the worship of Kwun Yam (觀音) with light-well and toilet facilities. The green-brick building is modernized with green ceramic roof tiles and colourful decorations in an expensive 'rebuilt' project in 2002.

**Architectural  
Merit**

It is one of the very few Tam Kung temples in Hong Kong especially it is still facing the sea without much obstruction. It was built by the fishermen depicting the early development of Hong Kong as a fishing port. The building was a typical sample temple for the worship of the deity Tam Kung. However the built heritage value has been very much minimized due to the unauthentic repair in 2002 using modern materials like green tiles and additions such as the pair of dragons on the ridge.

**Rarity &  
Built  
Heritage  
Value**

The temple has undergone many renovations in 1908, 1944, 1954, 1992 and 2002. The last one wholly refurbished the building using the green bricks and the original granite base only. The iron bell dated the 29<sup>th</sup> year of Guangxu reign (光緒), 1905, and the altar dated the first year of Xuantong reign (宣統) of the Qing (清) dynasty (1901) and four pieces of plaques recording its renovations are the only original relics of the temple.

**Authenticity**

The temple is still worshipped by fishermen in Shau Kei Wan though less enthusiastic as before. On the birthday of Tam Kung, the 8<sup>th</sup> of the fourth lunar month, dragon dance and special offerings are made to celebrate the festival with meals at the nearby restaurants.

*Social Value*

*& Local*

*Interest*