

Historic Building Appraisal

Hung Shing Temple

Po Toi O, Sai Kung

Hung Shing Temple (洪聖宮) in Po Toi O (布袋澳) of Sai Kung was built probably in the 2nd year of the Kangxi (康熙, 1663) reign of the Qing (清) dynasty by fishermen and villagers of the area. Po Toi O was a multi-clan village with surnames Cheung (張), Chan (陳), Chong (莊) and others. It was erected for the worship of Hung Shing, the second most popular deity of the fishermen and sea-farers after Tin Hau (天后). A Kung So (公所) building was built connected to its left of equal length in the 5th year of Qianlong (乾隆, 1740) reign of the Qing dynasty. It was used to deal with village affairs and for use as a school until the 1930s.

**Historical
Interest**

Constructed a short distance from the seashore facing the sea to the south-west, the temple is a Qing vernacular building of a two-hall plan. A courtyard should be between the entrance and main halls but has been covered. The building was constructed of green bricks with its walls to support its pitched roof of timber rafters, purlins and clay tiles. The external walls have been plastered and its roofs covered with green glazed tiles. Its internal walls have been with false brick lines. The gables of the courtyard are of *wok yee* (鑊耳) style. The name of the temple is engraved on the stone lintel of the recessed entrance flanked with a pair of couplets. The name of the Kung So is engraved at the lintel of the entrance. Its main ridge is with a pair of ceramic *aoyus* (鰲魚) and a pearl in the middle for decoration. The Kung So is now used as storage.

**Architectural
Merit**

It is a Hung Shing temple to remind the settlement of Po Toi O.

Rarity

It has some built heritage value.

**Built Heritage
Value**

The temple was renovated in 1817, 1883, 1911, 1972 and 1989. The recent one has not been sympathetic very much diminished its authenticity.

Authenticity

Since there was no ancestral hall in the village, the villagers made use of the temple and Kung So to deal with matters concerning their welfare and daily matters. When they had wedding, they would seek the deity's blessing. The school at the Kung So was called Nam Sun School (南燊學校) with some 30 students of six grades teaching Chinese classics. Two Da Chius (打醮) are organized in Po Toi O each year, one on the 23rd of the third lunar month for the Tin Hau and the other on the 13th of the fifth lunar month for the Hung Shing.

**Social Value,
& Local
Interest**

Cantonese opera performance (神功戲) and vegetarian meals are prepared for the festival. During the Tin Hau Festival (天后誕) the Hung Shing statue would be invited to join the celebration held at the Tin Hau Temple in Joss House Bay (大廟灣), Sai Kung.