

**Historic Building Appraisal**  
**Chung Ancestral Hall**  
**Chung Uk Tsuen, Tuen Mun, New Territories**

Chung Uk Tsuen (鍾屋村), alias Kwong Tin Wai (廣田圍), is a small village in Tuen Mun established by the Chungs (鍾氏) around the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Chung Ancestral Hall (鍾氏宗祠) of Chung Uk Tsuen was built by the Chungs in the 19<sup>th</sup> century to commemorate **Chung Kiu-saw** (鍾僑所), the son of **Chung Yi-tat** (鍾義達) who is respected as the founding ancestor of the Chungs in Chung Uk Tsuen. Originally from Yingchuan (潁川) of Henan (河南) province, the Chung ancestors moved southward and settled in Changping (常平) of Donggguan (東莞), Guangdong (廣東) province. Chung Yi-tat, the 8<sup>th</sup> generation ancestor, moved to Tuen Mun in Ming (明, 1368-1644) Dynasty. Chung Yi-tat had two brothers whose descendents settled respectively in Lam Tsuen (林村) of Tai Po (大埔) and in Shek Pik (石壁) of Lantau Island (大嶼山).

*Historical  
Interest*

Located in the third row of village houses of the six-row village on the right of its central axis, the ancestral hall is a medium sized one facing north-west as the other houses. The village was called Kwong Tin Wai (廣田圍). A wall was probably constructed around the houses to protect them from attacks but later demolished. It is a Qing (清) vernacular building having a two-hall-one-courtyard plan of three bays. The open courtyard is between the entrance and main halls. Side chambers and rooms are the left and right of the halls now used as storerooms and as a kitchen. It is constructed of green bricks with its walls to support its flush gable roofs of timber rafters, purlins and clay tiles. The walls are heavily plastered and painted. Its floors are screeded. The altar is at the end wall of the main hall in the middle with a huge stone having the ancestors' names engraved on it for worship. A set of red geometric mouldings is at the end of the front ridge. A wooden fascia board under the front eave of the recessed entrance is with flowers and birds carving.

*Architectural  
Merit*

It is an ancestral hall of the Chungs to witness their settlement in Chung Uk Tsuen of Tuen Mun.

*Rarity*

It has some built heritage value.

*Built Heritage  
Value*

The building is not properly maintained though its authenticity is basically kept.

*Authenticity*

The hall was used to accommodate the clansmen in poverty in the 1930 and 1940s. It was used as a study place for *bobozhai* (卜卜齋, alluding to the sound of the teacher's beating of a wooden block in accompaniment to the recitation of verse) and modern education for the village children. A teacher was employed from Nantou (南頭) of Shenzhen (深圳) to teach a class of 10 to 20 students in the 1940s. A teacher called Leung Hing-sum (梁慶森) held a class of 20 to 30 children at the hall teaching Chinese and Mathematics in 1949-1957. With the establishment of Hing Tak Public School (興德學校) in the mid 1950s, the hall was no longer used as a primary school. A kindergarten called Kiu Saw Kindergarten (僑所幼稚園), accommodating 40 to 50 children, was operated at the hall by Rev. Tam (譚牧師) from the 1960s to the 1980s.

***Social Value,  
& Local  
Interest***

The shrine (神廳) at the back of the village and an entrance gate (圍門) at the front are directly linked by a public access that is a common setting of local villages. Most of the village houses have been rebuilt as low-rise reinforced concrete houses.

***Group Value***

It is considered that the question of adaptive re-use does not arise at the present time.

***Adaptive  
Re-use***