

Historic Building Appraisal

Chung Shing Temple

No. 136 Yuen Kong Tsuen, Pat Heung, Yuen Long, N.T.

A Chung Shing Temple (衆聖宮, Temple of All Saints) in Yuen Kong Tsuen (元崗村), of Pat Heung (八鄉), Yuen Long, was first constructed on a hill slope near Kam Tin (錦田) in the 15th year of the Qianlong (乾隆, 1750) reign of the Qing (清) dynasty. The present temple is a rebuilt one constructed in the 29th year of the Guangxu (光緒, 1903) reign of the same dynasty. It is said that the location of the temple would boost the number of male offspring and multiply the wealth of the villagers. The main deity of the temple is Pak Tai (北帝) with some others including Hau Wong (侯王) and the Earth God (土地). Pak Tai or the Supreme Emperor of Dark Heaven (玄天上帝), is reputed for his supreme power to combat demons in the Taoist stories. The temple has the worship of the villagers at different festivals especially during the Chinese New Year.

**Historical
Interest**

The temple is a Qing vernacular building of a two-hall-one-courtyard plan of three bays. An annex was later added to its right of the same depth. The open courtyard is between the entrance and main halls. The building was constructed of green bricks with its walls to support its pitched roofs of timber rafters, purlins and clay tiles. The Pak Tai deity is housed in the altar in the middle of the main hall on the central axis of the symmetrical designed building with the entrance at the opposite end. The Hau Wong and the Earth God are respectively housed in the left and right bays of the main hall. Its main ridge is with mouldings of a set of geometric pattern at its two ends and a red pearl and clouds in the middle. Its front façade is with wall friezes of landscape paintings. In a renovation in 1972 the roofs was turned into reinforced concrete ones. Its walls were heavily plastered. Reinforced columns, beams and trusses were also added.

**Architectural
Merit**

It is a temple to reflect the past history of the village.

Rarity

It has little built heritage value with the renovation made in 1972.

**Built Heritage
Value**

Its authenticity cannot be kept with the unsympathetically renovation made.

Authenticity

It has group value with the Leung Ancestral Hall (梁氏宗祠), a declared monument, in the village and the Yeung Ancestral Hall (楊氏宗祠) in neighbouring Yuen Kong San Tsuen (元崗新村).

Group Value

During the Da Chiu (打醮) held once every eight years in Yuen Kong village, the deities of the temple will be invited to ‘walk’ along Kam Sheung Road (錦上路) to Lin Fa Tei (蓮花地), Sheung Tsuen (上村), and finally to Pat Heung Temple (八鄉古廟) to drive away all the evil spirits. During the Dim Dang (點燈) ritual at the Leung Ancestral Hall of the village, lighted lanterns will be put on display at the temple as a process to recognize the identity of the new born baby boys as members of the indigenous village.

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