

## Historic Building Appraisal

### Sam Shing Temple

#### Fanling Wai, Fanling

Sam Shing Temple (三聖宮) in Fanling Wai (粉嶺圍) of Fanling was erected by the Pang (彭) clan. The founding ancestor of the clan, Pang Kwei (彭桂) moved from Lung Yeuk Tau (龍躍頭) in Fanling and settled in Fan Ling Lau (粉嶺樓) in 1220 of the Southern Song (南宋, 1127-1279) dynasty. Due to the increase of clan members, they moved south to establish the Wai Noi Tsuen (圍內村), south of Ling Hill (靈山). The temple in the west of Ling Hill was built when the village was set up. It is for the worship of three deities, namely, Pak Tai (北帝), Kwan Tai (關帝) and Man Cheong (文昌). Pak Tai, also known as the Supreme Emperor of Dark Heaven (玄天上帝) or the Emperor of the North (北帝), would protect the villagers from drought and flooding. Since he is the main deity of the temple, it is also called Pak Tai Temple (北帝廟). Kwan Tai and Man Cheong are respectively deities of martial arts and literature who were patrons for those who expected to gain success in the Imperial Civil Service Examination. The temple was moved to So Kwun Po (掃管埔) in the late Ming (明, 1368-1644) dynasty and moved back to the present site in 1948.

**Historical  
Interest**

It is a Qing vernacular building of a two-hall-one-courtyard plan of three bays. 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. Its roofs however are covered with green ceramic tiles and its walls painted with false brick lines. A side chamber of equal length was added to its right for storage and toilet use in the 1974 renovation. The altar in the middle of the main hall houses the statue of Pak Tai in the middle and Kwan Tai to his right and Man Cheong to his left. The main ridge is decorated with a pair of ceramic dragons and a pearl. Its wall friezes are with paintings of flowers, birds, and landscape. The gable are with friezes of bats and *ruilong* (夔龍) pattern paintings.

**Architectural  
Merit**

It is a Sam Shing temple of the Pangs in Fanling to witness their settlement.

**Rarity**

It has some built heritage value.

**Built Heritage  
Value**

The temple was renovated in 1974 and 2000. The recent renovations are not sympathetic with much unauthentic additions.

**Authenticity**

The temple is managed by a keeper employed by the Pangs. Pak Tai Festival (北帝誕) on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of the third lunar month will be celebrated with porks and other offerings at the temple. Dim Dang (點燈) ritual would be held between the 8<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> of the first lunar month for newly born baby boys of previous year at the temple. During the Tai Ping Ching Chiu (太平清醮) of the Fanling Wai the deities would be invited to the activities held.

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