

Historic Building Appraisal
Tin Hau Temple
Fan Lau Miu Wan, Fan Lau, Lantau

It was believed that the Tin Hau Temple (天后古廟) in Fan Lau Miu Wan (分流廟灣) of Fan Lau (分流，亦稱汾流),¹ Lantau, was erected before the twenty-fifth year of the Jiaqing (嘉慶二十五年, 1820) reign of the Qing (清) dynasty mainly by the local residents of Tai O. The bay where it is located is named as Miu Bay (literally meaning temple bay). To its east and north are Fan Lau Tung Wan (分流東灣) and Fan Lau Sai Wan (分流西灣) respectively. Two stone inscriptions, dated the twenty-fifth year of the Jiaqing reign and the eighth year of the Xianfeng reign (咸豐八年, 1858) respectively, could not be identified on site in about the mid-1980s, but had been recorded beforehand.² Despite that, a number of artefacts are retained in the temple, including a wooden plaque dated twenty-fourth year of the Guangxu reign (光緒貳拾四年, 1898) and a stone inscription dated the seventh year of the Republican period (民國十七年, 1928), both on the renovations of the temple, and a gong locally known as cloud gong (雲板) which looks historic albeit without its dating engraved.

*Historical
Interest*

Located on an elevated platform, the temple is built on the seashore facing the sea in the north-west direction. It is a Qing vernacular building having a two-hall plan of three bays. It is constructed of grey brickwork with its walls to support its timber rafters, purlins and ceramic tiles. One side chamber is on the left and right of the central halls. The symmetrical building has the altar at the end wall of the main hall housing a statue of the deity for worship. Tin Hau's "bedroom" is on the left chamber whilst the right chamber is used as a storeroom. The front wall has been laid with mosaic tiles, whereas the remaining walls have been plastered and painted. The wall friezes on the front facade are with colourful mouldings of landscape, figures, birds, etc. The main ridge is with mouldings of a rolling dragon, a pair of dragon fish locally known as *aoyus* (鰲魚) and a pearl. The gable ridges are with red mouldings of geometric dragon (夔龍).

*Architectural
Merit*

¹ According to the current land records, Fan Lau is known as “分流” in Chinese. However, “汾流” is engraved on the inscriptions recording the renovations carried out in the seventeenth year of the Republican period (民國十七年, 1928), 1976 and 2015.

² 科大衛、陸鴻基、吳倫霓霞合編，《香港碑銘彙編》(香港：香港市政局，1986)，頁 70 及 113。

It is a Tin Hau temple to remind the history and settlements of Fan Lau, and has some built heritage value. It is one of the few Tin Hau Temples with its sea-oriented setting retained. Over the years a number of renovations have been carried out, with the more recent ones in 1993, 2006 and 2015. The interior walls of the main hall and the front facade have been finished with mosaic tiles.

***Rarity, Built
Heritage
Value &
Authenticity***

Due to the remote location of the temple and the number of worshippers in Sai Wan is very limited, no big scale celebration would be held for the Tin Hau Festival (天后誕). At the Festival, the statue of the temple would be invited to the Tin Hau Temple in Tai O to attend the celebration including the Cantonese opera performances (神功戲) and others. Festivals of other deities in Tai O, the deity would also be invited to participate in the events organised.

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

It does not have group value with any other graded historic buildings.

Group Value