

Historic Building Appraisal
Hung Shing Temple
Nos. 129-131 Queen's Road, Wan Chai, H.K.

This Hung Shing Temple (洪聖古廟) was probably built in 1847 with boulders from the hillside and its right portion and back are sitting on rocks. It is one of the earliest temples on Hong Kong Island, and may have existed as a shrine long before the British came to the Island. It was close to the sea off the present Queen's Road East. The sea facing temple is dedicated to the deity Hung Shing is revered as the god of the seas who protects Chinese fishermen. Hung Shing (洪聖), literally holy Hung, refers to a Tang (唐 A.D. 618-907) official who was an expert in astronomy, geography, mathematics and most importantly in weather forecast which was of great importance to the fishermen and sea-faring traders. Hung Shing temples have been widely built in southern China especially Guangdong province. Well patronised by local residents, this Hung Shing Temple has lain at the heart of the religious life of the area.

***Historical
Interest***

The temple is a simple one-hall building with a granite platform right in front of its façade. The roof of the platform is supported by elaborate granite columns and accessing staircases are built on either ends rather than in the middle facing the temple entrance. The ceramic decorations of Shiwan kiln is made by the renowned ceramicist Lee Man-yuk (李萬玉) with a dating on the first year of Xuantong reign (宣統 1909). An annex Kwun Yum temple is constructed to its left in 1867 which design is not complementary to the main temple. It is topped with a square block supported with two columns.

***Architectural
Merit***

The temple is known as 'the temple on the rock' retaining a development evidence of temple changes, from a somewhat shrine to a proper temple. What is most valuable is the backing rocks have not been removed. Its age is not the oldest amongst the Hung Shing temples in Hong Kong. The simple one-hall building however is a typical example.

***Rarity & Built
Heritage Value***

Renovations were recorded to have been carried out in 1857, 1860, 1867, 1949 and 1992. Many good features such as the ceramic ridge decorations were added in subsequent repairs which are still kept in good condition. The only unauthentic addition is the storey-block above the Kwun Yum annex.

Authenticity

The temple is managed by the Chinese Temples Committee delegated by the Tung Wah Group of Hospitals. Together with the Hung Shing, other deities including Madame Kam Fa (金花娘娘), Pau Kung (包公), Shing Wong (城隍) and others are having frequent patronage by the worshippers.

***Social Value &
Local Interest***