

Historic Building Appraisal
Cheng Hon Pang Ancestral Hall
Kam Tsin Wai, Pat Heung, Yuen Long

Kam Tsin Wai (金錢圍) village is in the south of Shek Kong Airfield (石崗機場) in Pat Heung (八鄉) of Yuen Long. It was built for the settlement of the Chengs (鄭) moved from six villages in the Shing Mun Valley (城門谷) for the construction of the Shing Mun Reservoir (城門水塘) in 1928. A total of eight villages were in the valley including Shing Mun Lo Wai (城門老圍), Pak Shek Wo (白石窩), Pei Tau To (坡頭肚) and others. Most of the villagers were Hakkas (客家). Most of the Chengs including 540 villagers from 84 families moved to the new village Shing Mun San Tsuen (城門新村) in Kam Tin (錦田) and some dispersed to Wo Hop Shek (和合石), Pan Chung (泮涌) in Tai Po and other areas. A small sum of the Chengs moved to Kam Tsin Wai in Pat Heung. The Hakka Chengs moved from Dongguan (東莞) of Guangdong (廣東) province to Shing Mun Valley in the 19th year of the Kangxi (康熙, 1680) reign of the Qing (清, 1644-1911) dynasty. The Chengs had moved from Fujian (福建) province southwards and settled in Dongguan in the early Qing dynasty. Other than the three rows of village houses built in the village, an ancestral hall was built in the middle at the same time in 1929.

**Historical
Interest**

Cheng Hon Pang Ancestral Hall (翰鵬鄭家祠) was named after Cheng Hon-pang (鄭翰鵬, 1714-1749), one of the 19th generation ancestors of the Chengs who settled in the Valley. Due to financial difficulty, some of the houses and the ancestral hall were mortgaged to the Catholic Church for \$300 each with the help of Rev. D'Ayala, Valva PIME (區鴻慈神父, 1900-1989) in 1935. Many of the Chengs became Catholics and the ancestral hall was converted into a church called Our Lady of Sorrows Chapel (聖母七苦小堂) served from S.S. Peter & Paul Church (聖伯多祿聖保祿堂) in Shui Pin Tsuen (水邊村), Yuen Long. Since then, the hall was no longer used for ancestral worship. The Chengs redeemed the ancestral hall from the Catholic Church in the mid-1960s and the church at the hall was closed.

The ancestral hall was originally a one-hall-one-courtyard building. It was converted into a two-hall one after it became a Catholic church. It is a Qing vernacular building constructed of green bricks with its walls to support its pitched roof of timber rafters, purlins and clay tiles. The internal walls and the front façade are plastered and the floors covered with ceramic tiles. A back door is at the end wall of the building. The name of the ancestral hall in black is moulded on red background above the lintel of the recessed entrance. A cross is in the middle of the front ridge. A pair of red geometric mouldings is at

**Architectural
Merit**

the two ends of the front and rear ridges. Calligraphy and wall frieze paintings of landscape and flowers are at the front façade and end wall under the eave for decoration. Two tie beams are carved with “百子千孫” (Hundreds of Sons and Thousands of Grandsons) and “長命富貴” (Longevity and Wealth) at the hall.

It was an ancestral hall and a Catholic church to witness the settlements (in Shing Mun Valley and the present site) and religious belief of the Chongs in Kam Tsin Wai. It is a very rare sample. **Rarity**

It has some built heritage value.

**Built Heritage
Value**

The authenticity is kept.

Authenticity

It has group value with the village houses in the village both built in 1929.

Group Value

The ancestral hall had a short time for ancestral worship in 1929-35. Dim Dang (點燈) ritual and celebrations of festivals, wedding and birthdays were held at the hall. A Mass was offered every Sunday with Sunday School with priests and nuns appointed by the Church. A Kam Chuen School (錦全學校) making use of a village house was established by Rev. D’Ayala in 1934. The School was replaced by others and closed in 1988. After the ancestral hall ceased to be a church, a temporary mass centre was set up near Kam Sheung Road (錦上路). A St. Jude’s Church (聖猶達彌撒中心) was established in Kat Hing Wai (吉慶圍) in Kam Tin in 1966 for the villagers. A Kam Tsin Wai Kindergarten (金錢圍幼稚園) was housed in the ancestral hall in the mid-1960s until 1971. The hall has been used as a meeting venue for the villagers to deal with their affairs.

**Social Value,
& Local Interest**