

Historic Building Appraisal

Fuk Tak Temple

Siu Hang Tsuen, Fanling

Fuk Tak Temple (福德祠) in Siu Hang Tsuen (小坑村) of Fanling (粉嶺) was built by the Tang (鄧) clan of the village when it was established some 100 years ago. The village is the youngest village of the Five Wais (walled villages) and Six Tsuens (villages) (五圍六村) of the Tang clan in Lung Yeuk Tau (龍躍頭) who first settled in the area in the 14th century. The Tangs in the village were originated from Lo Wai (老圍) whose 14th generation ancestors moved to Longtang (龍堂) of Shenzhen (深圳) due to inadequate living space. Harassed by bandits frequently, the 20th generation ancestors moved back to Lung Yeuk Tau. They purchased land and built two rows of 12 houses in the village among some other non-Tang families. The temple is for the worship of the Earth God (土地), also known as To Tei Kung (土地公), Dai Pak Kung (大伯公) or Fuk Tak Kung (福德公), the deity which would give protection to the villagers.

**Historical
Interest**

The temple is a Qing (清) vernacular building of a one-hall plan. It is at the far right corner of the village for *fung shui* reasons. It is constructed of green bricks with its walls to support its pitched roofs of timber rafters, purlins and clay tiles. Its walls have been internally and externally plastered. Its altar is in the middle of the back wall facing the entrance. The wall is painted with a unicorn surrounded by auspicious treasures. Its floor is with cement screeding. Above the doorway of the recessed entrance is the name board of the temple.

**Architectural
Merit**

It is the only temple of the village.

Rarity

It has some built heritage value.

**Built Heritage
Value**

The building was renovated in 1983 due to the collapse of its wall and roof. The authenticity of the temple is barely kept.

Authenticity

The birthday of the Earth God on the 12th day of the first lunar month was celebrated by the villagers with roast pork and other offerings. Basin meals would be served at the village committee office. Such celebration however has been discontinued. The Earth God deity would be invited to attend the activities of the Tai Ping Ching Chiu (太平清醮) held once every ten years at the Tang Chung Ling Ancestral Hall (松嶺鄧公祠), the main ancestral hall of the Tang clan in Lung Yeuk Tau. At the Dim Dang (點燈) ritual for the new born baby boys of previous year on the 12-15th days of the first lunar month, lanterns will

**Social Value,
& Local
Interest**

be hanged at the main ancestral hall, the parents' homes and also the Fuk Tak Temple. Seven deities including Tin Hau (天后), Kwun Yam (觀音) Hung Shing (洪聖) and others will be invited to receive offerings at the temple.