

**Historic Building Appraisal**  
**On Ding Sai Kui**  
**Ho Pui Tsuen, Pat Heung, Yuen Long**

Same as Ma On Kong (馬鞍崗) village, Ho Pui Tsuen (河背村) is in the southern end of Pat Heung (八鄉), Yuen Long, and it is a multi-lineage village also inhabited by the Wus (胡), the Fans (范) and the Kans (簡). With the increase of population in Ma On Kong, the villagers of the three clans moved southwards to establish the village. They can be considered as brother villages. An organization called Nam Ching Tong (南正堂) was formed by the three clans to deal with their mutual benefits. Wu Sai-gon (胡世幹), the 15<sup>th</sup> generation ancestor of the clan, settled in the village after a short stay in Tai Lam Chung (大欖涌) moved from Huizhou(惠州) of Guangdong (廣東) province in the Qianlong (乾隆, 1736-1795) reign of the Qing (清) dynasty. Wu Yau-tung (胡有通) was the first ancestor moved from Fujian (福建) province to Jieyang (揭陽) of Chaozhou (潮州), Guangdong (廣東) province, and later to Huizhou. On Ding Sai Kui (安定世居) is a family ancestral hall of the Wus. It is not known when the hall was built. It was first erected in the 19<sup>th</sup> century in the form of a mud structure. The hall was rebuilt to become the present form in 1937.

*Historical  
Interest*

The ancestral hall is in the forefront of the village facing a spacious open ground in its front. It is a detached building of Qing vernacular design having a one-hall-one-courtyard plan. The building is probably constructed of green bricks, mud bricks and rammed earth with its walls to support its pitched roofs of timber rafters, purlins and clay tiles. The walls are plastered and painted. The floors are with cement screeding. A soul tablet is in the middle of the altar for worship. An image of Kwun Yam (觀音) is on the left of the tablet also for worship. A tie beam at the hall is carved with “百子千孫” (Hundreds of Sons and Thousands of Grandsons). A pair of geometric mouldings is at the two ends of the front ridge. The name of the hall is moulded on the wall above the lintel of the recessed entrance. Wall frieze paintings of flowers, birds and cocks are on either side of the name board. A fascia board of flowers and birds carving is under the eave of the front façade.

*Architectural  
Merit*

It is an ancestral hall of the Wus to remind their settlement in Ho Pui Tsuen.

*Rarity*

It has little built heritage value.

***Built Heritage  
Value***

Its authenticity is kept.

***Authenticity***

It has group value with the Fan Ancestral Hall (范氏宗祠) and some old village houses in the village.

***Group Value***

The Wus in Ho Pui village were from Ma On Kong village in its north. Some of the Wus in the latter village also branched out to Tai Lam Chung (大欖涌) in Tai Lam (大欖). The Wus would go to the Wu Ancestral Hall in Ma On Kong to worship to their ancestors. The Wus would not have formal Dim Dang (點燈) ritual at the hall at the Chinese New Year. They would light up oil lamps for new born baby boys of previous year. For wedding, both male and female Wus would worship their ancestors at the hall at their wedding. At funerals, *nammo* (喃嘸) priests will be hired to lead the soul of the deceased who passed away at the age of 60 or above to the soul tablet, a practice known as *sheung shan toi* (上神枱).

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

The On Ding Sai Kui was a place for clan meetings until the 1950s, after which the meeting place was switched to Yuk Ying School (育英學校) and Ho Pui Tsuen Rural Office building (河背村鄉公所) established in 1951 and 1996 respectively.