

Historic Building Appraisal
Tin Hau Temple
Fung Chi Tsuen, Ping Shan, Yuen Long, N.T.

Tin Hau Temple (天后宮) in Fung Chi Tsuen (鳳池村) of Ping Shan (屏山), Yuen Long was built in 1684, the 23rd year of the Kangxi reign (康熙, A.D. 1662-1722) of the Qing (清) dynasty, and the temple bell has the dating inscribed on it. The temple was built by fishermen of the areas which was close to the Deep Bay (后海灣) to the west of Yuen Long. Tin Hau had long been their patron deity for worship. Other than fishermen, villagers in nearby Wang Chau (橫洲) and Ping Shan were frequent worshippers. Two roads in the vicinity, Ma Miu Road (媽廟路) and Ma Wang Road (媽橫路) (Ma refers to Tin Hau) are named after the temple.

Historical Interest

The temple is a Qing vernacular building having three halls in the middle and flanked by two side chambers to the left and right. Each of the chamber has an open courtyard in the middle. The building is a pitched roof structure constructed of green bricks having a timber bracket system, gables and columns supporting the roofs. Decoration is simple on the ridges with sets of geometric patterns. Scroll decorations of flowers-and-birds motifs are on the façade friezes and curling grass motifs on the gables.

Architectural Merit

A Tin Hau temple having survived for more than 320 years is rare.

Rarity

Though not an elaborate Tin Hau temple in itself, its lengthy association with Yuen Long villagers deserves a high built heritage value.

Built Heritage Value

A major repair was held in 1908. Others are not recorded. The later added fixtures do not on the whole affect its authenticity.

Authenticity

Tin Hau Festival (天后誕) on the 23rd day of the third lunar month would be celebrated at the temple but not as popular as before. Villagers of Shap Pat Heung (十八鄉), Ping Shan and Wang Chau are still the keen supporters holding Fa Pow (花炮) activities. Wang Chau villagers even bring home a small statue of Tin Hau from the temple on the 1st or 2nd day of the first lunar month for blessing and return on the 8th day of the month. They would also have traditional Dim Dang (點燈) ceremony for their new born baby boys in the first month of the lunar year at the temple.

Social Value, & Local Interest