

Historic Building Appraisal

Choi Ancestral Hall

No. 142 Tin Sam, Sha Tin

Tin Sam (田心) village in Tai Wai (大圍) of Sha Tin was founded in the late Ming (明, 1368-1644) dynasty and inhabited by the Chois (蔡), the Wais (韋) and some others. The Wais are said to be the earliest settlers. The Chois came from Tangxia (堂廈) village of Dongguan county (東莞縣堂廈村) during the late Ming period. Choi King-chung (蔡景松), the 12th generation ancestor, first settled in Yuen Fung Heung (元豐鄉), the present-day Siu Lik Yuen (小瀝源). The Chois stayed there for four generations and some of them branched out to Tin Sam. Choi Chap-hing (蔡集卿) with his brother Jik-hing (積卿) and his son Shung-chow (崇周), the 15th and 16th generation ancestors, were the founding ancestors of the Chois in Tin Sam. The **Choi Ancestral Hall** at Tin Sam (田心), also known as **Chung Kwong Family Hall** (宗光家祠), was probably built around the **1920s** by Choi Siu-wing (蔡兆榮), alias Choi Fu-lung (蔡富隆), the second generation of the clan, who settled in this multi-surname village during the late Qing Dynasty (1644-1911).

*Historical
Interest*

The ancestral hall is a Qing (清) vernacular building having a two-hall plan. The building is connected to a village house on its right. It was constructed of green bricks with its walls to support its pitched roofs of timber rafters, purlins and clay tiles. The entire building is strengthened with concrete. Its roofs are with green glazed ceramic tiles and its walls are plastered and painted. Only its front wall of its the front façade is with fare-faced green bricks. Other external walls are with cream glazed ceramic tiles. The altar is moved from the end wall to the front portion of the main hall. The rear portion of it is used as a storeroom. The altar is with colourful carvings housing a soul tablet of the Choi ancestors for worship. Photographs of the ancestors are displayed on the side walls. The doorframes, the lower courses of the front wall and the threshold are of granite. The name of the ancestral hall is engraved on a piece of stone above the lintel.

*Architectural
Merit*

It is an ancestral hall to remind the settlement of the Chois in Tin Sam of Tai Wai.

Rarity

It has some built heritage value.

*Built Heritage
Value*

The building appears to have undergone a large scale renovation as most of the building materials are modern and the roof of the building has been

Authenticity

converted into a concrete construction.

As Shatin has long been developed, Tin Sum Tsuen is surrounded by groups of high rise residential buildings. From a heritage point of view, the Entrance Gate is nearby the building of Che Kung Miu (車公廟). In Tin Sam village, there is a historic Entrance Gate and other ancestral halls including Leung Ancestral Hall (梁氏祠堂) and Liu Ancestral Hall (廖氏祠堂). **Group Value**

The ancestral hall has various functions for the worship of the Choi ancestors including funeral ceremonies of their dead members in the old days. The Che Kung Temple (車公廟) in Tai Wai was originally built and managed by Tin Sam village, but the village lost its managerial rights in the late 19th century in a lawsuit against the Kau Yeuk (九約, a regional organization of various groups in Shatin Valley) since the latter had provided evidence that it made significant contributions to the renovation of the temple. Thereafter, the temple was jointly managed by all villages under the supervision of the Chinese Temple Committee, but Tin Sam village continued to enjoy some privileges in the worship of Che Kung. **Social Value, & Local Interest**