

Historic Building Appraisal

Po Kwong Yuen Monastery

Lo Wai Road, Tsuen Wan

Po Kwong Yuen Monastery (普光園) at Lo Wai Road (老圍路), Tsuen Wan, *Historical Interest* was built in 1929 by a Buddhist monk Han Wen (閒雲法師) who came from Guangxi (廣西) province and settled down in Tsuen Wan. He was a follower of Monk Miu Cham (妙參法師), a learned monk in Yanxiangsi (延祥寺) Monastery of Guangdong (廣東) province who established a branch called Yin Cheung Feng Yuen (延祥分院) in Wellington Street (威靈頓街), Hong Kong Island, in 1911. Monk Miu Cham helped to convert the Ling Wan Ching Shut (凌雲靜室) into Ling Wan Monastery (凌雲寺) and became its first abbot in 1920s. Monk Han Wen erected a monastery in Tsuen Wan simply because the land over there was less expensive. The fund for the construction was raised from worshippers in Hong Kong. It is a monastery not open to the public. It is a hostel for the nuns and those who make visit to the monastery. It had its own land at the back of the monastery for the growing of vegetables and fruits for their own consumption. Surplus of the vegetables and fruits were sold in Tsuen Wan. The growing activity however has been discontinued in the 1970s. Monks and nuns were residing in the monastery and from the 1960s, only nuns and female followers have been accepted. It is now managed by Nun Ching Kwan (淨群法師), the third abbess, Nun Yiu Kuen (耀權法師) and Nun Kai Chiu (啓超法師).

Located on a levelled podium against a slope at the back of Lo Wai (老圍) in *Architectural Merit* Tsuen Wan, the monastery is a Qing vernacular building having a two-hall-two-lane-two-side-hall plan. A kitchen was later added connecting to its left. The building is constructed of coarse granite blocks with its walls to support its pitched roofs. The roofs have been strengthened with reinforced concrete beams and covered with green ceramic glazed tiles in a recent renovation. The front façade is plastered and painted in cream colour. The symmetrical building has the worshipping halls in the middle flanked by two halls of residence on their left and right separated by two open longitudinal lanes. The end hall called Tai Hung Bo Din (大雄寶殿) houses the three statues of Sakyamuni (釋迦牟尼佛), Armitabha (阿彌陀佛) and Manjusri (藥師佛) at the altar for worship. The middle of the main ridges is each with a red ceramic pearl. All the ridges are with ceramic curling ends. Its recessed entrance has the name engraved on the lintel above the doorway topped with wall paintings of two gold colour dragons and geometric patterns.

It is a Buddhist monastery to remind the development of Buddhism in Tsuen Wan. *Rarity*

It has little built heritage value.

*Built Heritage
Value*

The building has been renovated with modern building materials very much diminished its authenticity. *Authenticity*

Celebration of Yuk Fat Festival (浴佛節) on the 8th of the fourth lunar month and other festivals are held in the monastery with scripture recitation, rituals and offerings held by the nuns. Monks from outside are sometimes invited. It has connections with other monasteries in Tsuen Wan including the Tung Po Tor Monastery (東普陀) and Chuk Lam Sim Yuen (竹林禪院). *Social Value,
& Local
Interest*