

Historic Building Appraisal

Hau Kok Tin Hau Temple

Tin Hau Road, Tuen Mun

Hau Kok Tin Hau Temple (口角天后廟) in Tuen Mun Kau Hui (屯門舊墟, *Historical Interest* Tuen Mun Old Market) was built in the 36th year of the Kangxi (康熙, 1697) reign of the Qing (清) Dynasty by the villagers and members of the To (陶) clan of the area – the largest lineage in Tuen Mun where they had settled since the Ming (明, 1368-1644) dynasty. A bell in the temple has the year inscribed on it.

Tuen Mun (屯門), its name in English means Garrison Gate, because a garrison was stationed there in Tang Dynasty (唐朝 618-907). During the Qing Dynasty (清朝 1644-1911), Tuen Mun had already become a fishing port and a farming village. Salt fields used to be found in the Tuen Mun Valley. The inhabitants of Tuen Mun were not only engaged in farming, but also in fishing. It is not surprising to note that half of the temples in the area are dedicated to Tin Hau (天后).

The temple was **rebuilt in 1989**. It is located at a hillock of the Castle Peak like a horn stretched out to the mouth of the sea that it was called ‘Mouth Horn Tin Hau Temple’. The temple was at the seashore facing the sea. It was pushed inland and surrounded by factories since the 1970 and 1980s due to reclamation for development.

The temple rebuilt in 1989 is in Qing vernacular design having two halls in the middle and side chambers on the left and right separated by two lanes. Each of the two chambers has an open courtyard but the design of the two side chambers is not identical. The main entrance is in the middle of the main block with the statue of the Tin Hau in the middle of the main altar at the end wall. Lady Kam Fa (金花娘娘), Kam Fa Tai Sui (金花太歲) and God of Wealth (財帛星君) are on the right and left of Tin Hau. Standing statues of Shunfenger (順風耳) and Qianliyan (千里眼) are in front of the deity. The temple was constructed of concrete with its walls and columns to support its pitched roofs. The external walls are with imitation brick lines and granite blocks for its lower courses. Its front ridge is decorated with a set of two *aoyus* (鰲魚) and a pearl ceramics. Its wall friezes at its front façade are mouldings of unicorns, landscape, figures and lotus. Under the eave is a fascia board of flowers and auspicious treasures carving. The left chamber houses a Hall of the Heroes (英雄殿) to commemorate those who were killed in the battle with the British in the occupation of the New Territories in 1899. *Architectural Merit*

It is a Tin Hau temple to witness the settlement of Tuen Mun especially the Tos. *Rarity*

It has heritage value.

*Built Heritage
Value*

The temple is a rebuilt structure. Its authenticity cannot be considered.

Authenticity

The Tin Hau Festival (天后誕) on the 23rd of the third lunar month would be celebrated with Fa Pow (花炮) activities and Cantonese opera performances in the foreground in front of the temple. Da Chiu (打醮) would be held once every ten years at the same place with the deity attending the ceremonies. The last one was held in 1996. All the activities of the temple have been organized by the Tuen Mun Chung Yi Tong (屯門忠義堂) of the To clan for decades.

*Social Value,
& Local
Interest*

It is considered that the question of adaptive re-use does not arise at the present time.

*Adaptive
Re-use*