

Historic Building Appraisal
Cheung Chun Yuen
No. 82 Shui Tau Tsuen, Kam Tin, Yuen Long

Cheung Chun Yuen (長春園) in Shui Tau Tsuen (水頭村), Kam Tin (錦田), **Historical Interest** was built by Tang Ming-hok (鄧鳴鶴), 30th generation ancestor of the Tang clan in around the Daoguang (道光, A.D. 1821-1850) reign of the Qing (清) dynasty. It was a school providing martial arts training for village children aiming to gain success in the military stream of the Imperial Civil Service Examination. The examination required the accomplishment of candidates in riding, archery, halberd twirling and stone-weight lifting. Tang Ming-hok himself was an official of sixth grade and his son Tsz-ban (子賓) graduated from Cheung Chun Yuen and achieved the title of military *juren* (武舉人). Three Kwan Daos (關刀, iron halberds) for the training of candidates in martial arts are still kept in the building. The hall has a dual purpose for use as an ancestral hall. Four rows of soul tablets are on display at the altar for worship.

It is a Qing vernacular building having a two-hall-one-courtyard plan. The courtyard is between the halls. The front hall has two storeys. The front hall is basically for reception and its upper floor was used as a lookout. The main hall has the altar in the middle which houses soul tablets for worship. Through side door of the courtyard is an open parade ground for martial arts training and further left is a courtyard garden. At the back of the building is an extension in L shape for residential use. The building is constructed of green bricks with its walls supporting its pitched roofs of timber beams, purlins and clay tiles. The slightly recessed entrance has granite bases, door frame and lintel. Above the lintel is the name board of Cheung Chun Yuen. The main ridge is with geometric and treasures mouldings. Wall friezes and fascia boards are with cloud, landscape, flowers-and-rocks paintings and carvings. **Architectural Merit**

A historic building for the training of candidates in martial arts to gain success in the Examination is rare in the territory. **Rarity**

It is a building of considerable built heritage value.

Built Heritage Value &

Walls with plastering, painting and imitation brick lines and parts of the roofs turned concrete are not sympathetic. **Authenticity**

Historic buildings nearby include Tang Ching Lok Ancestral Hall (清樂鄧公祠), Chow Wong Yi Kung Study Hall (周王二公書院) and other historic items **Group Value**

in Shui Tau Tsuen and Shui Mei Tsuen.

In the old days, when the area had the problem of pirates, the Tangs would assemble at Cheung Chun Yuen in the event of pirate attacks. Two round openings at the top of the façade were for defense and surveillance purposes.

*Social Value,
& Local
Interest*