

Historic Building Appraisal
Kwan Tai Temple
No. 146 Lin Ma Hang, Sha Tau Kok

Kwan Tai Temple (關帝宮) in Lin Ma Hang (蓮麻坑) village of Sha Tau Kok (沙頭角) is in the closed area built by the villagers when the village was established some one hundred years ago. The village was mainly occupied by the Ips (葉) which villagers were mainly engaged in agricultural farming. The temple is for the worship of Kwan Tai (關帝) deity who was a renowned warrior and hero in the Three Kingdoms (三國, 220-265) period. He is a symbol of bravery, loyalty and righteousness very much patronized by the forces, police, those of martial arts and others. He is a deity for the worshippers to expect him to give protection and solving problems such as disputes, justice, crimes and others.

***Historical
Interest***

The temple is a Qing (清) vernacular building of a two-hall-one-courtyard plan. It is a narrow building which left wall is connected to a village house of almost the same length. The open courtyard is between the entrance and main halls. The temple is constructed of green bricks with its walls to support its pitched roofs of timber rafters, round fir purlins and clay tiles. The roof of the main hall has been turned into reinforced concrete one covered with green ceramic tiles. Its floors are with concrete screedings. The altar occupies the entire wall of the main hall with the statue of the Kwan Tai in the middle and Kwan Ping (關平), his son, and Chow Chong (周倉), his faithful subordinate, respectively on his left and right. The door frame and wall base at its recessed entrance are with granite blocks. A name board is above the lintel. Its external walls are plastered and its internal walls are partly plastered and partly with false brick lines.

***Architectural
Merit***

The Kwan Tai Temple is the only temple of the village to reflect the settlement of the villagers.

Rarity

The temple has some built heritage value.

***Built Heritage
Value***

Its authenticity is in generally kept.

Authenticity

It has group value with the ancestral halls of the village.

Group Value

Kwan Tai Festival (關帝誕) on the 13th of the fifth lunar month would not be celebrated and so is any Da Chiu (打醮) activity. Puppet shows however were performed in the middle of the first lunar month for the celebration of the Chinese New Year. Whenever there is any wedding or newborn baby boy, the villagers would go to the temple seeking the deity's blessing with offerings. The temple does have regular worship of the villagers on the first and fifteen days of each lunar month and at festivals.

***Social Value,
& Local
Interest***