

Historic Building Appraisal

Yau Ancestral Hall

No. 73 Kam Shan, Tai Po

Kam Shan (錦山) village was occupied by the Yaus (邱), the Chengs (鄭) and the Chungs (鍾). The Yaus were the earliest settlers of the village who came to the village in the early 20th century. The Yaus are Hakkas (客家) who moved from Guangdong (廣東) province to Ng Tung Tsai (梧桐寨) of Lam Tusen Valley (林村谷) in the early 18th century. Some of the Yaus later moved to Shek Kwu Lung (石古壟) village in Siu Lek Yuen (小瀝源) of Shatin. They stayed there for a few years and three families of the Yaus settled in Kam Shan village. The Yau Ancestral Hall (邱氏宗祠) was built in 1910 as a wall painting of the hall has the dating inscribed on it. The hall was built to replace the old one constructed in Shek Kwu Lung.

**Historical
Interest**

The ancestral hall is in the middle of a block of *dou lang* (斗廊) building having five units. The block is a Hakka style of building. The hall is in the middle recessed unit flanked by two projected ones. The ones of the left and right ends are also recessed ones. The two projected units are with granite-faced front façade whilst the recessed ones are of fair-faced green bricks. The hall is a Qing (清) vernacular building having a two-hall-one-courtyard plan. It is constructed of green bricks with its walls to support its pitched roofs of timber rafters, purlins and clay tiles. Part of the floors is with ceramic tiles. The altar is in the middle of the end wall housing a soul tablet of the Yau ancestors for worship. A tie beam at the hall is carved with four Chinese characters “百子千孫” (Hundreds of Sons and Thousands of Grandsons). The name of the hall is moulded above the lintel of the recessed entrance. Wall frieze paintings at the front façade and at the open courtyard under the eaves are of flowers and birds. A pair of red *ruilong* (夔龍) mouldings is at the two ends of the front ridge.

**Architectural
Merit**

It is an ancestral hall of the Yaus to witness their settlement in Kam Shan village.

Rarity

It has some built heritage value.

**Built Heritage
Value**

It has its authenticity kept.

Authenticity

The Yaus had the traditional rituals of wedding, funeral and Dim Dang (點燈) held at the hall. The hall was also used to house a school in the 1960s. The teachers were from the mainland. The school only lasted for about six years and was closed.

**Social Value,
& Local Interest**