

Historic Building Appraisal
Sun Ancestral Hall
San Tsuen, Tsuen Wan, N.T.

San Tsuen (literally “new village”) at the foot of Fu Yung Shan (芙蓉山) of Tsuen Wan (荃灣) is a dual-surnamed village occupied by the Suns (孫氏) and the Dus (刁氏). They are both Hakkas (客家). The Sun founding ancestors are believed to have come to Tsuen Wan (荃灣) from Dongguan (東莞) of Guangdong (廣東) province several hundred years ago. They first settled in the area now occupied by Nam Fung Centre (南豐中心) next to the MTR Tsuen Wan Station, and an ancestral hall was built in the area. In 1659, they settled in San Tsuen together with the ancestral hall. *Historical Interest*

Sun Ancestral Hall (孫氏家祠) in San Tsuen (新村) of Tsuen Wan is the only ancestral hall of the Suns in the area. It is also known as Ying Suet Tong (映雪堂). The ancestral hall has a north-south orientation (座北向南), which is believed to be a good *fungshui* site. The original ancestral hall was rebuilt in the late 1940s after it collapsed. The rebuilt ancestral hall of the 1940s was reconstructed in **2004-2005**. It is a reinforced concrete building of a two-hall plan. The altar is occupying the entire end wall housing a soul tablet of the Suns for worship.

The previous ancestral hall, constructed of green bricks with its walls to support its flush gable pitched roof of timber rafters, purlins and clay tiles, was a one-hall building with a tiny open ground in its front. *Architectural Merit*

It is an ancestral hall of the Suns to remind their settlement in Sheung Kwai Chung of Tsuen Wan. *Rarity*

The ancestral hall has intangible heritage value. The original ancestral hall was rebuilt in the late 1940s after it collapsed. The rebuilt ancestral hall of the 1940s was reconstructed in 2004-2005. *Built Heritage Value & Authenticity*

The Suns still maintain ancestral worship at the hall with special offerings at the Chinese New Year and the Chung Yeung Festival (重陽節) with Hakka tea-cakes (茶粿) and other offerings. Wedding ceremonies were held at the hall for the male members. Dim Dang (點燈) ritual for new born baby boys at the hall have been discontinued after the Second World War. A *shangtoi* (上柁) ritual performed by a Taoist priest for the dead members is still held at the hall in which the soul tablets of the dead are placed at the altar for worship. *Social Value, & Local Interest*

It has group value with the Sun Old House (孫氏古屋, Nos. 38, 39, 40 San Tsuen) and the façade of Du Ancestral Hall (刁氏家祠) in the village. *Group Value*

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