

Historic Building Appraisal

No. 4 Heung Yuen Wai

Sha Tau Kok

Heung Yuen Tsuen (香園村) or Heung Yuen Wai (香園圍) is in the closed frontier area in Ta Kwu Ling (打鼓嶺). It is a Hakka (客家) village occupied by the Mans (萬氏) who came from Liantang (蓮塘) of Shenzhen (深圳) due to an increase of clan members some 300 years ago. Other than Heung Yuen Tsuen, they also moved to Tong Fong (塘坊), both in the closed frontier area. In the late 19th century, many of the Mans worked in Panama and Jamaica where they engaged in the catering business. With the remittance sent from overseas, the Mans built new houses in the village. The two rows of houses at Nos.1A, 1, 1B, 2 and 3 of the front row and Nos.4 and 5 of the rear row were constructed in 1928 respectively by S.C. Man's father (who had grocery business in Panama) and K.F. Man. Houses in the two rows were built connected together and a four-storey watchtower was built at the corner of No.4.

**Historical
Interest**

The two rows of buildings are in Qing (清) vernacular design each house is a one-hall layout of two storeys high. The buildings are constructed of green bricks with its rammed earth walls to support its pitched roofs of timber rafters, purlins and ceramic tiles. Granite is used for its door frames, lintels and wall corners. The walls are mostly plastered. Wall friezes, plastered mouldings and fascia boards are at the front façade with flowers-and-rocks, birds, and plants motifs. The house has a living room right behind the entrance flanked by two side rooms. A rear room is at the end of the living room separated by a timber screen wall. A kitchen with sanitary facilities is on the left side room. Staircases provide access to the upper floor. An iron *tanlung* (趟籠), sliding fence, painted green is at the doorway. The watchtower is on the right front corner of the living room. Gun holes were constructed on its walls for firing at outside enemies.

**Architectural
Merit**

The Hakka village houses are to witness the settlement of the Mans in the area.

Rarity

The buildings are of considerable built heritage value.

**Built Heritage
Value**

The buildings have their authenticity kept though with some minor features added or altered.

Authenticity

The ancestral halls, the Pak Kung (伯公) shrine and the rows of houses have

Group Value

co-related group value.

The Mans had their ancestral worship at Liantang though they had their ancestral halls worshipping their younger ancestors at their own village. They have their Pak Kung shrine in the village which serves as the protector of the village. Tin Hau Temple (天后廟) in Ping Che (坪輦) is the temple the Mans worship most. The temple was originally in Ping Yeung (坪洋) which they relocated to the present site. In the old days, the Mans were rice and vegetables growers selling their produce in Sheung Shui Market (上水墟) and Shenzhen Market (深圳墟) in earlier days.

*Social Value
& Local
Interest*