

## Historic Building Appraisal

### Lam Ancestral Hall (west)

#### Ngau Kwu Long, Lantau

Ngau Kwu Long (牛牯壆) is a single-surnamed village occupied by the Lams (林). The village is on the northern shore of Lantau Island facing Tai Ho Wan (大蠔灣). The Lams were natives of Putian (莆田) of Fujian (福建) province who moved to Chayuan (茶園) of Dongguan (東莞), Guangdong (廣東) province. A branch of the Lams moved to Ngau Kwu Long in the Qianlong (乾隆, 1736-1795) reign of the Qing (清) dynasty. The present inhabitants are the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> generation members of the Lams. Some of the Lams moved to Ping Shan (屏山) of Yuen Long and they still have kept in touch with those in the village. The village was pillaged by a gang of bandits before the Japanese Occupation (1941-45) and 13 houses including the two ancestral halls in the village were burnt down or seriously damaged by the Japanese as they were attacked by guerrillas. Some of the villagers were also tortured to death by the Japanese soldiers at the camp in Mui Wo (梅窩).

**Historical  
Interest**

The ancestral halls of the Lams are built in two separated blocks standing in the same row in the village. Each ancestral hall is connected to an annex building for residential use. The hall is a Qing vernacular building having a one-hall-one-courtyard plan. The open courtyard is in front of the hall. It is constructed of concrete and bricks with its walls to support its pitched roofs. The walls are plastered and painted. The hall and the annex building share the same common roof which is covered with brown ceramic tiles. A grilled parapet is above the recessed entrance. The altar is at the end wall of the hall housing a soul tablet of the Lam ancestors for worship. The name board of the ancestral hall is engraved on a piece of brown marble above the doorway. Wall paintings under the entrance eave are of flowers and birds motif with calligraphy.

**Architectural  
Merit**

It is an ancestral hall of the Lams to remind their settlement in Ngau Kwu Long.

**Rarity**

It has some heritage value.

**Built Heritage  
Value**

The hall was repaired in the 1986. Its authenticity was diminished at the damage made during the Japanese Occupation. The end hall has been rebuilt with modern building materials.

**Authenticity**

Dim Dang (點燈) rituals for the new born baby boys were held at the ancestral halls before the Japanese Occupation. They have been discontinued after the war. Due to the remoteness of the village, many of the villagers have moved out to the urban areas. Only half, amounted to about 30 households, remain to stay in the village.

*Social Value,  
& Local  
Interest*