

## Historic Building Appraisal

### Kwok Ancestral Hall

#### Lin Fa Tei, Pat Heung, Yuen Long

Lin Fa Tei (蓮花地) village is in the south of Kam Sheung Road (錦上路) in Pat Heung (八鄉), Yuen Long. It is a multi-clan village occupied by the Kwoks (郭), the Lees (李), the Fungs (馮), the Chengs (鄭) and others. The Kwoks were the first settlers and are still the majority. The Kwok clan moved from Dongguan (東莞) of Guangdong (廣東) province to Nantou (南頭), west of Shenzhen (深圳), in the Ming (明, 1368-1644) dynasty. Kwok Kui-tin (郭巨田, 1507-1567), the 6<sup>th</sup> generation ancestor, moved from Nantou to Yuen Long. He was a teacher in a private school in Yuen Kong (元崗) village in Pat Heung. Hei-lung (禧隆, 1630-1696) and Shuen-pik (旋壁) of the 11<sup>th</sup> generation settled in Lin Fa Tei in the end of the Ming or early Qing (清, 1644-1911) dynasty. Two branches were developed from the founding ancestors Hei-lung and Shuen-pik respectively called Hei Lung Tong (禧隆堂) and Shuen Pik Tong (旋壁堂). The Kwok Ancestral Hall (郭氏宗祠) was built by the Kwoks for the worship of their ancestors. It was probably first built in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and was badly damaged by a typhoon in 1999. It was rebuilt in the same format in 2000.

**Historical  
Interest**

The ancestral hall is a detached building in the first front row of six rows of village houses in the village facing northwest. It is a Qing (清) vernacular design building having a one-hall-one-courtyard plan of three bays. A small open forecourt surrounded by a high wall is in its front. A pitched roof entrance gate is on its right. The open courtyard is in front of the main hall. A side room and a side chamber are on either side of the courtyard and the main hall. It is constructed of concrete with its walls to support its pitched roofs. The entire building is covered with new ceramic tiles of cream, light green, light brown and green colours. Rows of soul tablets of the Kwok ancestors are on display at the altar at the end wall of the main hall for worship. In front of it is the offering table with incense burners. A marble board engraved with “郭氏宗祠” (Kwok Ancestral Hall) is on the wall above the doorway at the entrance. A couplet engraved on marble is on either side of the doorway. The main ridge is covered with green glazed ceramic tiles and a pair of *aoyu* (鰲魚) is at its two ends. The front ridge of the recessed entrance hall is with a pair of *longren* (龍吻) at its two ends.

**Architectural  
Merit**

It is an ancestral hall of the Kwoks to witness their settlement in the village. **Rarity**

It has little built heritage value.

**Built Heritage  
Value**

It was rebuilt in 2000. The authenticity of the old ancestral hall has been removed. **Authenticity**

It has group value with the Fung Ancestral Hall (馮氏家祠) and other old structures in the village. **Group Value**

The ancestral hall has been used for ancestral worship of the Kwoks. Dim Dang (點燈) ritual for new born baby boys would be held at the hall at the Chinese New Year. The Kwoks would participate in the Da Chiu (打醮) activities of the village held once every five years. Statues of different deities of the Pat Heung Temple (八鄉古廟) including Kwun Yam (觀音), Tin Hau (天后), Kwan Tai (關帝) and others would be invited to tour round the village to ward off the evil spirits. **Social Value,  
& Local Interest**