

## Historic Building Appraisal

No. 23 Tai Wan Tau,

Hang Hau, Sai Kung

Tai Wan Tau (大環頭) is a small village in the northeast of Clear Water Bay First Beach (清水灣第一海灘) in Sai Kung. The village was established by the Laus (劉) and the Chows (鄒) in the Wanli (萬曆, 1573-1620) reign of the Ming (明) dynasty. Lau Chi-king (劉子琮), a 15<sup>th</sup> generation member of the Laus and a native of Wuhua (五華) of Guangdong (廣東) province, moved from Huizhou (惠州) of the province and settled in the village. Most of his members later moved to Tai Au Mun (大坳門) village, a short distance in its northwest. The house at No.23 of the village is a block of detached residential house built by Lau Shing-fung (劉勝鳳) before 1907 as land record shows. The house was rebuilt in 1949 to become the present form by Lau Mau-cheong (劉茂昌). The building is still owned and occupied by the Laus. *Historical Interest*

The two-storey detached building is on the left of a row of houses in the village all facing southwest to the sea. It is a Chinese Eclectic building constructed of concrete and green bricks with its walls to support its flat roof. The recessed ground floor front façade has the entrance doorway in the middle. An open balcony is on the upper floor. The balcony is fenced with concrete geometric patterned balustrades. A pediment is at the roof end of the front façade with a semi-circle in the middle moulded with a sun with rays and a *taiji* (太極) symbol in the centre. Four short posts each topped with a ball are with the pediment. *Architectural Merit*

A living room at the front, a bedroom behind it and a kitchen are on the ground floor and bedrooms are on the upper floor. The timber staircase to the upper storey is located at the end of the house, where entry to the kitchen block is also facilitated. The upper space is partitioned into bedrooms. The internal floors of the house are covered with mosaic tiles on the lower level and red cement tiles on the upper level. The walls are plastered and painted white.

It is a residential building of the Laus to witness their settlement in Tai Wan Tau village. *Rarity*

It has some built heritage value.

*Built Heritage Value*

The house was last renovated in 1999. Its authenticity is basically kept.

*Authenticity*

The Laus engaged in fishing and rice growing as the village is close to the sea. The land for cultivation in the area is limited as the village is backed with the Tai Leng Tung hill (大嶺洞) at its back. An ancestral hall of the Laus, rebuilt in recent year, is on the right of the house among a row of houses. Ancestral worship would be held at the hall at Ching Ming (清明節) and Chung Yeung Festivals (重陽節).

*Social Value,  
& Local Interest*