

Historic Building Appraisal
Shek Lo, Annex Block
Shung Him Tong Tsuen, Lung Yeuk Tau, Fanling

Shek Lo(石廬), situated in Shung Him Tong Tsuen (崇謙堂村), a Hakka *Historical Interest* Christian village founded by Basel Mission (巴色傳教會) in 1903, was built in 1924 by Peter Tsui Yan-sau (徐仁壽), the founder of Wah Yan College (華仁書院). The main house was the residence of Peter Tsui and his family. The house was also used as a venue for village meeting. The annex block was used as a dormitory and to hold family parties and social functions. Shek Lo was inhabited by the Tsui family until the late 1980s. It has remained vacant ever since.

Peter Tsui Yan-sau, born in 1889 in Wuhua county (五華縣) in Guangdong Province, moved to Hong Kong with his family when he was a child. He graduated from St. Joseph's College (聖約瑟書院), where he was converted to Catholicism. Having graduated from St. Joseph's College, Peter Tsui went to Meixian (梅縣) and taught at a local secondary school. In 1919, he returned to Hong Kong and established Wah Yan College (華仁書院) at Hollywood Road.

In the 1920s, Peter Tsui went to Malaysia and was engaged in rubber business. In the late 1920s, he returned to Hong Kong. Together with Pang Lok-sam (彭樂三), he got actively involved in community affairs. They founded Luen Wo Tong (聯和堂) in the late 1920s. The organization functioned until the Japanese Occupation. In 1952, when a new town market was established in Fanling, it was called Luen Wo Market (聯和墟) which was named after Luen Wo Tong. Peter Tsui passed away in 1981 at the age of 92. His funeral was held at St. Ignatius Chapel at Wah Yan College.

Shek Lo is a two-storey Italianate Renaissance style villa with *Architectural Merit* colonial-style characteristics. The main walls are built of grey brick stuccoed and whitewashed externally and plastered internally. The lower courses are built of granite slabs up to the ground floor window cills. The main part of the building has a Chinese tiled pitched roof. Each gable end of the pitched roof is formed in a triangular pediment featuring a circular bull's eye window in the tympanum. The polygonal portico is designed with simple Tuscan order columns supporting a balcony on the first floor with green glazed ceramic balustrading. Located centrally over the porch is a semi-circular upstand panel or pediment inscribed with the name of the house in Chinese characters. There is an ornamental parapet wall to the main roof with ornamental pinnacles and *fung shui* spikes on top of the intermediate posts. Windows are barred and

shuttered.

The annex block is a simple two-storey building consisting of a Chinese tiled pitched roof house and a front façade divided into five bays with open verandahs. The walls are plain whitewashed stucco externally built of grey bricks and plastered internally. The building is plain and functional with virtually no decorative features. Windows are a mixture of wooden and steel framed casements. As the construction of the house is mixed style, it can be classified as Chinese Eclectic.

Shek Lo is a relatively large-scale villa of an architectural style which is quite rare to find in a rural village. As the residence of the Tsui family for over 50 years it has built heritage value. Both buildings have retained much of their original appearance and authenticity.

***Rarity,
Built Heritage
Value &
Authenticity.***

The social value of the two buildings comprising Shek Lo lies in their role as meeting place for villagers and venue for Tsui family reunions and celebrations. Its local interest is that it was the home of the founder of Wah Yan College, one of the most prestigious Catholic schools in Hong Kong.

***Social Value
& Local
Interest***