

Historic Building Appraisal
Shin Shut Study Hall
No. 20 San Uk Tsuen, Lung Yeuk Tau, Fanling

Shin Shut Study Hall (善述書室) in San Uk Tsuen (新屋村) of Lung Yeuk Tau (龍躍頭), Fanling, was erected some 200 years ago by Tang Wan-kai (鄧雲階), the 19th generation ancestor of the Tang clan in Lung Yeuk Tau. San Uk Tsuen was one of the 11 villages of the Tangs established in Lung Yeuk Tau collectively known as Five Wais and Six Tsuens (五圍六村).

*Historical
Interest*

The study hall has the dual functions to work as a study hall to provide education for the Tang children and as a family ancestral hall of the Wan-kai lineage. In the past, teachers were employed from the Chinese mainland. The study hall was the venue to provide traditional teaching of Chinese classics and martial arts for the village children to gain success in the Imperial Civil Service Examination so that the clan could gain more power and wealth. Later on, from 1917 to 1938, the study hall became the campus of Shin Shut School (善述學校) teaching modern subjects. A kindergarten was housed in the study hall in the 1960s with eight to ten children. It was closed in the 1980s and the children studied at the Lung Shan School (龍山學校) instead.

The study hall is the biggest building in the village in alignment with four rows of village houses. The hall is a Qing (清) vernacular building fronted by an entrance lodge. The study hall main block and the entrance lodge are separated by an open forecourt in the middle. One side room and two side rooms are on the right and left of the entrance. The main block has a two-hall-one-courtyard plan of three bays. A kitchen annex was added on the left of the main block in later stage. The open courtyard is in the middle of the entrance and main halls. Side rooms, aisles and side chambers are on either side of the open courtyard and the two halls in the middle bay. The building is constructed of green bricks with its walls, columns and brackets to support its pitched roofs of timber rafter, purlins and clay tiles. Part of the external walls and the internal walls are plastered and painted white. The floors are cement-screeded. Ten soul tablets are displayed on the carved wooden altar at the end wall of the main hall. In front of the altar is a finely carved wooden screen *huazhao* (花罩). Carved brackets supported by granite columns painted red are at the main and entrance halls and at the side aisles by the open courtyard to support the tiles roofs. The front roof is decorated with a pair of red geometric mouldings at its two ends and auspicious treasures in the middle. The rear ridge is of curling ends. The name of the study hall is engraved on the granite lintel at the entrance. The front façade is with wall friezes of landscape,

*Architectural
Merit*

flowers, rocks and figures mouldings and paintings.

It is a study hall of the Tangs to witness their settlement in San Uk Tsuen of Lung Yeuk Tau. **Rarity**

It has considerable built heritage value.

**Built Heritage
Value &**

Concrete trusses have been put up to strengthen the bracket system of the building. **Authenticity**

The Tangs did achieve success in the examination and a number of plaques hung in the hall show they obtained *juren* (舉人) title. The study hall has the ancestral worship regularly and with special offerings at festivals and on the 20th of the Chinese New Year. Banquets in the form of basin meal would be held at the hall after the worship. Wedding ceremonies were also held at the hall. The hall is managed in turn by the three branches of the Tangs. **Social Value,
& Local
Interest**