

Historic Building Appraisal
Oi Yuen Villa
Lot No. SSL 2RP, Kwu Tung, Sheung Shui, N.T.

The building now known as Oi Yuen Villa (愛園別墅) is believed to have been built before 1919 as there is an old photo of the building in that year in the Public Records Office. At the time, the building was described as “Ladies Club House” and it might have been historically associated with the nearby Fanling Golf Club. From 1922 to 1946, the building was owned by Jardine Matheson & Company Limited, a well-known British firm in Hong Kong. E.B. Moller bought the building in 1947 and used it as a villa. From 1949 to 1956, the building was bought by Mollers Lands Limited, a steamship company.

***Historical
Interest***

After changing hands several times, the villa eventually was acquired in 1957 by Mr Hui Oi-chow (許愛周) (1881-1966) as his private residence and renamed “Oi Yuen Villa”. Mr. Hui was a famous businessman in Zhanjiang (湛江) at the early stage of his life. Through the years, he became a large real estates owner. He was also active in charity and education in Hong Kong and South China. The Hui Oi Chow Science Building (許愛周科學館) of the University of Hong Kong, established in 1981, is named after him. Hui passed away in 1966 at the age of 85 and was buried at the site of Oi Yuen Villa. After his death, Oi Yuen Villa was inherited by his descendents.

Oi Yuen Villa is a single-storey house with a mezzanine floor built on a small hill within a wooded compound. A wide driveway leads up to the front of the house and the main entrance with its colonnaded and balustraded portico. The entrance is flanked by two projecting gabled bays. What appears to be an enclosed colonnaded verandah runs along the front of the house on the right hand side. On the left hand side there is a complex arrangement of small rooms built around internal courtyards. The rear elevation of the house has a colonnaded and balustraded open verandah and two gable ends. The various roofs are all pitched and tiled with projecting chimney stacks. The finish to the external walls is rough cast rendering. Windows are mullioned and transomed and divided into small glazing squares. Some windows are set in canted bays. The gables have decorative half-timbering. The architecture is a blend of Tudor and Classical styles and may be classified as Arts and Crafts.

***Architectural
Merit***

The building and its luxurious setting are very rare for Hong Kong. As

Rarity,

far as can be seen there do not appear to have been many alterations so that the building retains its authenticity and should be regarded as a valuable piece of built heritage.

***Built Heritage
Value &
Authenticity***

As a private residence the villa has limited social value to the community, but the Hui family have been very prominent businessmen and philanthropists. The house is not only a place for the family to live in, but also a venue for holding feasts, where social and political leaders such as Sir David C.C. Trench (戴麟趾 1964-1971), Hon. Sir Tsun-nin Chau (周峻年), Sir Sik-nin Chau (周錫年) and Sir Shiu-kin Tang (鄧肇堅) would be invited to join. Local villagers were employed as servants by the Hui family.

***Social Value
& Local
Interest***

Oi Yuen Villa, Yeung Garden (楊園), Kam Tsin Lodge (金錢別墅) and Enchi Lodge (恩慈之家) form a group of Western buildings and has group value recalling the lifestyle of the well-to-do people in Hong Kong.

Group Value