

**Historic Building Appraisal**  
**Tin Hau Temple & Hip Tin Temple**  
**Po Tung Road, Sai Kung, N.T.**

Tin Hau Temple and Hip Tin Temple (天后古廟及協天大帝廟) in Sai Kung was built in the 1910-1920s for the worship of Tin Hau (天后) and Kwan Tai (關帝) deities. The two temples had been in other areas in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century and moved to the present site. Located in the centre of Sai Kung Market (西貢墟), the temple site has been the centre of the local inhabitants where many affairs were discussed. A school named Po Tung School (普通學校) was set up at the north chamber of the temple for teaching local children in the 1920-30s. Local organizations had their initial set ups at the temple before they made their individual centers. They include, for example, Sai Kung Chamber of Commerce (西貢商會) (formed in 1941) and Sai Kung Self-Governing Committee (西貢區自治委員會) (formed in 1947 and renamed as Sai Kung Rural Committee (西貢鄉事委員會) in 1952). The Sai Kung Kai Fong Committee (西貢街坊值理會), currently accommodated in the north chamber, is responsible for the management of the temple site.

**Historical  
Interest**

It is a Qing (清) vernacular building of a two-hall-one-courtyard plan of five bays. Two entrances are at the recessed bays which house the two deities at the altars of the main halls. The two recessed bays are between the three protruded bays which two left ones each has a light well between the front room and the back hall. The left protruded bay is used by the Kai Fong Committee as its office. The building was constructed of green bricks with its walls and columns to support its flushed gable roofs of timber rafters, purlins and clay tiles. The temple underwent renovations in 1916, 1965, 1992 and 1996. It was entirely renewed in 1996. The roofs are covered with glazed green tiles and its walls and floors with red or grey tiles. Its internal walls are with false brick tiles. Its ridges are with ceramic lions, *aoyus* (鰲魚) and pearls. Its gables are in *wok yee* (鑊耳) style. The doorframes of the two entrances have the names of the temples engraved on its stone lintels flanked with a pair of couplets. Its front façade and internal walls are decorated with mouldings and fascia boards of auspicious treasures, flowers, fruits, birds, landscape and calligraphy.

**Architectural  
Merit**

It is a Tin Hau and Kwan Tai temple to witness the historic development of Sai Kung.

**Rarity**

It has some built heritage value.

***Built Heritage  
Value***

The authenticity is diminished due to the unsympathetic recent renovation.

***Authenticity***

Po Tung School (普通學校) in the temple continued to operate until Sai Kung Public School (西貢公立學校) was set up next to the temple. The Sai Kung Market became prosperous from the 1930s and the Sai Kung Rural Committee occupied the north chamber of the temple after the school closed down.

***Social Value,  
& Local Interest***

The temple has also housed a number of local organizations. It was said that a rice rationing programme was organized by Sai Kung Kai Fong Committee for six to seven years since 1946. The temple was used as the rice distribution centre.

Celebration would be organized for the Tin Hau's birthday on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of the third lunar month but not for the Kwan Tai. Cantonese opera performance would be held in April or May, not at the Tin Hau's birthday, as the expenses are high during the peak time.