

Historic Building Appraisal
Nos. 24B, 24C and 24D Ha Tin Liu Ha
Tai Po, New Territories

Tin Liu Ha (田寮下) is a Hakka (客家) village and one of the twenty-six villages in Lam Tsuen (林村/ 林村鄉). During the Qing dynasty (清朝, 1644-1911), Lam Tsuen was a member of Tsat Yeuk (七約, literally seven alliance). Tsat Yeuk was an inter-village alliance which formed Tai Wo Market (太和市) in 1892 to break the monopoly of the old Tai Po Market (大埔墟) formed by the Lung Yeuk Tau Tang clan (龍躍頭鄧氏). Of the twenty-six villages in Lam Tsuen, only five are Punti (本地) while the other are Hakka. The history of Lam Tsuen can be traced back to Song dynasty (宋朝, A. D. 960-1127). Its early settlers were the Chungs (鍾氏) who form a large proportion of the population in the area. The villages were linked together by an alliance named Luk Woh Tong (六和堂), which was derived from the *baojia* system (保甲制) in the Qing times. Luk Woh Tong remained its key role in Lam Tsuen until it was replaced by the Lam Tsuen Rural Committee (林村鄉公所) in 1954. **Historical Interest**

A block of three connected houses at Nos. 24B, 24C and 24D Ha Tin Liu Ha was built in the 1910s by the Chungs who are the descendants of Chung Ning-kau (鍾寧玖). Chung Ning-kau moved to Ping Long from Qingqi (青溪) of Dongguan (東莞) in Guangdong (廣東) province, in the twenty-fifth year of Kangxi (康熙, 1686) reign of the Qing dynasty. One of his grandsons Chung Yuk-chin (鍾毓遷) moved to Tin Liu Ha to establish a new village. Tin Liu Ha was later subdivided into Sheung Tin Liu Ha (上田寮下, literally upper Tin Liu Ha) and Ha Tin Liu Ha (下田寮下, literally lower Tin Liu Ha). Built by the fifth generation descendants of Chung Yuk-chin, the houses have been left vacant since the 1970s.

The block of three residential houses is in the far western end of the village. An open foreground is in front of the building. It is a Qing vernacular building of Hakka *doulang* (斗廊) style. The recessed unit in the middle (No. 24C) is sandwiched by a projected unit on either side (Nos. 24B and 24D). Each unit is with an open courtyard in its front and a hall at the back. The three units share a common roof at the back. **Architectural Merit**

The building block is constructed of grey brickwork with its walls to support its pitched roofs of timber rafters, purlins and clay tiles. Each unit has its own entrance. The doorframe of the recessed unit is of granite. A

wooden *tanglung* (趟籠, sliding door) is installed at the entrance. A pair of *ruilong* (夔龍, geometric dragon) mouldings is at the two ends of the front ridge of the middle unit and at the rear ridge. Under the front eaves of the middle unit are wall frieze paintings of landscape, flowers and rocks and calligraphy and a fascia board of flowers and treasures carving. Wall frieze plastered mouldings of flowers and curling grass pattern are at the external walls of the side units and at the gable walls. The rooftops of the two projected units are decorated with parapet walls bearing fine plastered mouldings and vase-shaped green glazed ceramic balusters.

It is a block of three residential houses of the Chungs to witness their settlement in Ha Tin Liu Ha in Lam Tsuen. It has high built heritage value in Lam Tsuen, with delicate decoration and craftsmanship at the wall frieze paintings and plastered mouldings, and the wood carvings at the fascia board. The authenticity of the house block is basically kept.

**Rarity, Built
Heritage
Value &
Authenticity**

The Chungs made their ancestral worship at the Chung Ancestral Hall (鍾氏家祠) in the village. The hall was first built in Sheung Tin Liu Ha in the Qianlong (乾隆, 1736-1795) reign of the Qing dynasty but relocated to Ha Tin Liu Ha due to *fung shui* reason. The first hall is said to be built by Ting-yuk (廷玉), son of Yuk-chin, to commemorate his father who founded the village. The present hall has a history of over a hundred years. The hall has the ancestral worship of the Chungs at festivals and at Chinese New Year. Other than ancestral worship, wedding and funeral ceremonies and the *dim dang* (點燈, literally lighting the lantern) ritual were held at the hall. The Chungs having moved away from the village would return to the ancestral hall at the Chinese New Year to make worship to their ancestors. The children of the Chungs studied at the Yuk Lan Study Hall (玉蘭書室, demolished) in Sheung Tin Liu Ha, a short distance in the west of the village. The study hall was replaced by the Lam Tsuen Public School (林村公立學校) established in 1950.

**Social Value,
& Local Interest**

This row of houses is within walking distance of other historic buildings, including the village house at Nos. 32 – 33 (Grade 2), and the Chung Ancestral Hall and Chung Man Tsoi Ancestral Hall (鍾文彩家祠) (both Grade 3) in the village.

Group Value