

Historic Building Appraisal
Ling Mui Chong
No. 110 Shui Tsan Tin, Pat Heung, Yuen Long

Ling Mui Chong (嶺梅莊) located between Shui Tsan Tin (水盞田) and Ngau Keng (牛徑) villages of Pat Heung (八鄉), Yuen Long, is a Hakka (客家) house built by Law Cha-hin (羅質軒), a Hakka of Nankou (南口) in Meixian (梅縣), Guangdong (廣東) province. He went overseas for work when he was young. He was a grocery assistant and later had his grocery shop in Indonesia. He also had business in Australia. He went to Hainan Island (海南島) looking to build a house and failed. On his way home, he came to Hong Kong and bought a piece of land in Shui Tsan Tin and built the house. He employed builders, geomancers and workers from Meixian to build his house which green bricks were from a kiln in the village. It cost him \$10,000 for the construction of the house. It was completed in 1932. **Historical Interest**

The Hakka house is at good *fung shui* location with a range of mountains at its back. It is a typical Hakka house of a two-hall-two-row (兩堂兩橫) plan. A semi-circular pond is to its front separated by a grand *heping* (禾坪), open ground. A gate house is to its left. A semi-circular mound is at the back of the house called *huatai* (化胎). The house is in symmetrical layout with a core hall-courtyard-hall middle portion flanked by one row of six rooms separated by an open lane to its left and right. At the far end of the main hall in the central axis of the house is an elaborately carved altar for ancestral worship. The name board of the family Shing Chi Tong (誠致堂) is hanged above the hall. The gables of the side houses and the walls of the entrance hall are on the front elevation direction. The building was constructed of green bricks with concrete columns to support its pitched roofs of timber rafters, purlins and ceramic tiles. Its recessed entrance has the name board above the doorway with wall friezes of landscape motif. **Architectural Merit**

It is a rare Hakka house built in 1932 to show the Laws settlement in the area. **Rarity**

It is a 1930s version of a Hakka house of high built heritage value.

Built Heritage Value

The side houses are much altered with bridges linking the halls. Two small houses are constructed connecting to the left side house. The gate house and part of the facades of the halls have also been plastered. **Authenticity**

Until now five generations of the Laws have been staying in the house including Cha-hin's father, his sons and descendents. The Laws have connection with the Laws in Lo Uk Tsuen (羅屋村) of Ha Tsuen (廈村) which they believe they have the common ancestors. They also take part in activities of the Hakkas of Ng Ka Tsuen (吳家村) in Kam Tin during festivals and at Chinese New Year.

*Social Value
& Local
Interest*