

Historic Building Appraisal
Sik Lo – Main Building
Yeung Ka Tsuen, Shap Pat Heung

Sik Lo (適廬) in Yeung Ka Tsuen (楊家村) of Shap Pat Heung (十八鄉), *Historical Interest* Yuen Long, was built by two Yeung brothers, Yeung Chuk-nam (楊竹南) and Yeung Wai-nam (楊衛南) in 1933. It was the Yeungs' settlement in the area that the village and adjoining area is called Yeung Ka Tsuen, village of the Yeungs. They were Hakkas (客家人) from Meixian (梅縣) of Guangdong (廣東) province working in Indonesia to earn their living. They came to Hong Kong and built the house working as farmers. Some of their descendents still live in the house and some are in Indonesia. Their main agricultural activities were rice and vegetables growing with pig rearing. Their produces were sold at the Yuen Long Old Market (元朗舊墟). The Yeungs are no longer farmers and the vegetables grown are for self-consumption.

The Hakka house is at good *fung shui* location with Tai Lam (大欖) *Architectural Merit* mountain at the back and Yuen Long town area to its south. It is a typical Hakka village house of a two-hall-two-row (兩堂兩橫) plan. A gate house is at the north-east with the enclosing low wall surrounding its front compound. A separate block for farm implements, pig rearing is to its left.

The main building 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 right and left. Its entrance and main halls are flanked by one room on either side. At the far end of the main hall at the central axis of the house is the ancestral hall with an altar in the middle for ancestral worship. Other than the main recessed entrance, access entrances are provided at the two lanes. The gable walls of the side houses and the entrance hall are on the front elevation direction. The building is constructed of bricks and cement with its walls and columns to support its pitched roofs of timber rafters, round fir purlins and ceramic tiles. Its gables are in the fire type of the Five Elements (五行火型山牆). A plaque with the name of the house Sik Lo in Chinese characters is above the entrance doorway. Wall friezes with wall paintings are at the entrance and main halls having landscape, flowers-and-rocks, bird motifs. Arch mouldings are with external windows.

It is a rare Hakka house built in 1933 to show the Yeungs' settlement in the *Rarity* village.

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

***Built Heritage
Value***

The authenticity of the village house is kept though with minor modifications to suit its present uses.

Authenticity

The gate house, the Sik Lo main building and the ancillary block have co-related group value.

Group Value

The Yeungs have their ancestral worship at their main hall with photographs and a soul tablet at the altar. The hall is called Dun King Tong (敦敬堂) which three Chinese characters are written in the middle of the altar flanked by a pair of couplets. The Yeungs also take part in Tin Hau Festival (天后誕) activities at the Tai Shu Ha Tin Hau Temple (大樹下天后廟) in Shap Pat Heung on the 23rd day of the third lunar month. During the Japanese Occupation (1941-45) local guerrillas stayed for a year at the house with the Yeungs who did not move away.

***Social Value
& Local
Interest***