

**Historic Building Appraisal**  
**Mau Wah Study Hall**  
**Lung A Pai, Lam Tsuen, Tai Po, N.T.**

Lung A Pai (龍丫排) is a Hakka (客家) village and one of the twenty-six *Historical Interest* villages in Lam Tsuen (林村/ 林村鄉). During the Qing dynasty (1644 – 1911) Lam Tsuen was a member of Tsat Yeuk (七約, literally, seven alliance). Tsat Yeuk was an inter-village alliance which established 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 of Lam Tsuen, only five are Punti (本地) while the others are Hakka. The history of Lam Tsuen can be traced back to the Song (宋) dynasty (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 inter-village alliance named Luk Wo Tong (六和堂, literally meaning hall of six harmonies), which was derived from the *baojia* system (保甲制) in the Qing times. Luk Woh Tong remained its vital role in the valley until it was replaced by the Lam Tsuen Rural Committee (林村鄉公所) in 1954.

Mau Wah Study Hall (茂華家塾) was built by Wan Chun-fu (溫振富) in the 1910s and named after Wan Mau-wah (溫茂華), his grandfather and the founding ancestor of the Wan clan of Lung A Pai. The Wans settled in Lung A Pai in about 1700. During the late Song dynasty, two ancestors of the Wans, namely Wan Kai-san (溫其新) and Wan Kai-yuen (溫其元), migrated from Putian (莆田) to Jiangxi (江西), and eventually to the New Territories. They first moved to Tai Che Tei (大輦地). After several decades, the elder brother Wan Kai-san moved to San Tong (新塘) and the younger brother Wan Kai-yuen moved to Siu Om Shan (小菴山). Wan Kai-yuen had three sons, namely Wan Mau-kwai (溫茂貴), Wan Mau-wing (溫茂榮) and Wan Mau-wah. These three Wans' ancestors formed San Sheng Tang Cho (三盛堂祖). They lived separately after they grew up and Wan Mau-wah settled in Lung A Pai.

The cost of constructing Mau Wah Study Hall came from the public property of the Wan lineage of Lung A Pai. Although named as a study hall, the premises functioned as an ancestral hall dedicated to Wan Mau-wah and as a meeting venue for village affairs. The Wans have moved out of the village and parts of their lands sold to a developer. Due to *fung shui* reasons, the hall has been abandoned and locked up since 1955.

The study hall is a Qing (清) vernacular building with a two-hall plan. It is a symmetrical building having an open courtyard separating the two halls. It is constructed of grey brickwork and rubbles with its walls to support its pitched roofs of timber rafters, purlins and clay tiles. The side and rear walls are constructed of rubbles, and the other brick walls are in seven stretcher course to one header course bonding (七順一丁). Granite was used for its door frame and lower courses of walls. Its side walls have been plastered and its flooring with cement screeding. Its ridges are with geometric mouldings. At its entrance above the doorway is the name of the study hall. Wall friezes under the eaves are wall paintings with auspicious treasures, chickens, and flowers. Wall friezes are also at its internal walls with flowers and peacocks.

***Architectural  
Merit***

It was a study hall to remind the settlement of the Wans, and has some built heritage value. The building is basically authentic.

***Rarity, Built  
Heritage  
Value &  
Authenticity***

Besides the soul tablets of the Wan ancestors being worshipped at the study hall, Kwun Yam (觀音) was also worshipped. The worship of the ancestors came to a peak on the second day of the first lunar month when the Wans would give special offerings and rituals including chickens, pork, traditional pastries, fruit, etc. Brides and bridegrooms of the Wans would also have wedding rituals at the halls. The Wans also made use of the hall to deal with village affairs.

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

There are no other graded historic buildings near the study hall.

***Group Value***