

Historic Building Appraisal

Tin Hau Temple

Leung Shuen Wan, Sai Kung

Tin Hau Temple (天后宮) in Leung Shuen Wan (糧船灣), Sai Kung (西貢), *Historical Interest* was built in the 6th year of the Qianlong (乾隆, 1741) reign of the Qing (清) dynasty as a bell in the temple has the dating inscribed on it. The temple was built by fishermen and villagers of Leung Shuen Wan and those in other areas in Sai Kung. Other deities including Kwan Tai (關帝), Kwun Yam (觀音) and others are also worshipped at the temple. A spacious forecourt is in front of the temple which faces west to the sea.

Built on a terrace, the temple is a Qing vernacular building of a *Architectural Merit* two-hall-one-courtyard plan of three bays. Two side chambers with courtyards are attached to its left and right. The symmetrical building has its altar of Tin Hau at the end wall of the main hall facing the entrance. The building was constructed of green bricks with its walls and granite columns to support its roofs of timber rafters, purlins and clay tiles. The temple was renovated with modern materials in 1999. The roofs are turned into reinforced concrete ones. Its external walls are with brown ceramic tiles and so are the roofs with green glazed tiles. The main ridge is with ceramic decoration of the Eight Immortals (八仙) topped with two *aoyus* (鰲魚), two dragons and a firing pearl. Its other ridges, wall friezes and fascia boards are with flowers, fruits, birds, landscape and calligraphy ceramics and carvings. The name of the temple is engraved on the stone lintel flanked with a pair of couplets.

It is one of the two temples which have marine parade to celebrate the Tin Hau Festival (天后誕). The other is the Tin Hau Temple in Tap Mun (塔門) which has it once every ten years. *Rarity*

The temple has considerable built heritage value. *Built Heritage Value*

The temple was renovated in 1883, 1886, 1971, 1990 and 1999. The last one has modernized the building with new building materials very much diminished its authenticity. *Authenticity*

The temple was used a venue to provide winter school for the children of the fishermen in the 9th- 11th lunar months. After the establishment of the Leung Shuen Bay School (糧船灣公立學校) in 1947, the school ceased to function. *Social Value, & Local Interest*
The temple has a marine parade during the Tin Hau Festival on the 23rd of the

third lunar month held twice every three years. The joss of the Tin Hau deity would be toured round the port of Leung Shuen Wan to the sea between Fo Tau Fan Chau (伙頭墳洲) and Basalt Island (火石洲) led by three boats and followed by many others all decorated with colourful flags. Cantonese opera performance (神功戲) and Tanka (疍家) basin meals are also organized to celebrate the festival. Da Chiu (打醮) is also held to celebrate the festival once every three years.