

Historic Building Appraisal
Luk Tak Study Hall
No. 36 Tai Om, Lam Tsuen, Tai Po, N.T.

It is believed that Luk Tak Study Hall (六德書室) in Tai Om (大輦), *Historical Interest* Lam Tsuen (林村) of Tai Po was built around the 1930s by Cheung Shi-wang (張仕宏) to commemorate one of the founding ancestors of the village named Cheung Luk-tak (張六德). Their ancestors moved from Wuhua (五華) of Guangdong (廣東) province to Tai Mo Shan (大帽山) first, and settled in the village in about 1800. The village is a single-clan Hakka (客家) village. Another smaller study hall in the village is called Yuk Yin Study Hall (育賢書室) erected around 1900. Luk Tak Study Hall next to Yuk Yin Study Hall was to cater the increasing number of village children. Other than Chinese classics, the study hall provided modern subjects such as geography and mathematics to the students. After the Japanese Occupation (1941 – 1945), village children studied at the bigger and better facilitated Lam Tsuen Public School (林村公立學校), which was opened in 1950. A branch school of Lam Tsuen Public School was then opened in Ping Long (坪朗) near Tai Om in 1970. Subsequently, Luk Tak Study Hall was used as a kindergarten for children in the village and those nearby. It was finally closed some years later. It has been abandoned now.

The study hall is a two-storey building in a mix of Chinese and Western *Architectural Merit* design. The building was constructed of grey brickwork with its walls supporting its pitched roofs of purlins and clay tiles. The walls are plastered, whereas the ground floor are concrete screeded. Its front facade has a verandah on its ground floor and a balcony on its upper floor. The verandah and balcony are with square columns. Above the balcony is a parapet of a four-column and cloud-shaped design having a pediment in the middle plastered with the name of the study hall. Above the name is the sun symbol of the Kuomintang (國民黨). The balcony is flat-roofed. Four classrooms on the ground floor and two on the upper floor were originally designed for the study hall use. The partitions have been removed.

It is a study hall of local context reflecting the education role of the *Rarity, Built Heritage Value & Authenticity* Cheungs of the Hakka village. The 1930s study hall has considerable built heritage value. It has been left vacated for a long time without proper care and maintenance.

The study hall played a major role in educating village children in Lam Tsuen. It combined with Yuk Yin Study Hall to work as a temporary branch school in 1946 for the Lam Tsuen Public School. *Social Value & Local Interest*

Luk Tak Study Hall is in very close proximity to Yuk Yin Study Hall (Nil Grade). *Group Value*