

Historic Building Appraisal
Tang Chan Yui Kuen Ancestral Hall
No. 201 Shui Mei Tsuen, Kam Tin, Yuen Long

Tang Chan Yui Kuen Ancestral Hall (鎮銳鎬鄧公祠) in Shui Mei Tsuen (水尾村), Kam Tin (錦田), was built by Tang Man-wai (鄧文蔚), 23rd generation ancestor of the Tang clan who obtained a *jinshi* (進士) degree in the 24th year of Kangxi reign (康熙, 1685), Qing (清) dynasty. The hall was built probably in the Kangxi reign (1662-1722) to commemorate the three sons of Tang Hung-yee (鄧洪儀), namely, Chan (鎮), Yui (銳) and Kuen (鎬). Tang Hung-yee, a 15th generation ancestor, and his descendents had played a significant role in the development of Kam Tin. The hall is the second biggest and one of the two ancestral halls in the historic Shui Mei Tsuen, the biggest being the Tang Tsing Lok Ancestral Hall (清樂鄧公祠). The hall is also called Mau King Tong (茂荊堂).

Historical Interest

The building is slightly smaller than the Tang Tsing Lok Ancestral Hall in the same village. It is a Qing vernacular building having the same three-hall-two-courtyard plan of symmetrical design. The ancestral altar is at the far end of the central axis in the middle of the main hall. The front courtyard is much bigger than the rear courtyard. The building is constructed of green bricks having its walls, granite columns and buttresses to support its roofs of timber rafters, purlins and clay tiles. The recessed entrance has one platform on either side. Its ridges have curling ends with auspicious treasures and floral patterns. Its fascia boards and wall friezes are with similar motifs.

Architectural Merit

It is one of the significant historic buildings in Kam Tin to witness its development. The building has high built heritage value.

Rarity & Built Heritage Value

The external walls of the entrance hall and part of the internal walls of the main hall are covered with ceramic tiles. Some columns are concreted. This would slightly affect its authenticity.

Authenticity

A number of historic buildings in Shui Tau (水頭) and Shui Mei Tsuens in Kam Tin including Tang Tsing Lok Ancestral Hall, Yi Tai Study Hall (二帝書院) and this one have close related group value.

Group Value

Other than for ancestral worship, the hall was used as a study hall preparing its children clansmen for the Civil Service Examination of the Qing dynasty so that the clan could prosper in power and wealth. A number of honour boards to commemorate its clansmen gaining the *jinshi*, *wuju* (武舉) and other titles are on display at the hall. The building continued to be used for teaching village children in the early 20th century until separate schools were established in the villages. The hall continues to be used for ancestral worship and special offerings are made during the Chinese New Year and at important festivals.

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