

Historic Building Appraisal

Entrance Gate

No. 7 Tin Liu Tsuen, Shap Pat Heung, Yuen Long

Tin Liu Tsuen (田寮村) in Shap Pat Heung (十八鄉) of Yuen Long was a walled **Historical Interest** village occupied by four clans surnamed Wu (胡), Wong (黃), Yip (葉) and Sit (薛). It was a Puntí (本地) village in the early 19th century which was one of the alliance members of the Shap Pat Heung, literally meaning Eighteen Villages. The enclosing wall was built for the protection of the villagers against any attack from bandits, pirates or other enemies. Together with the walls, an entrance gate at the front wall and a shrine (rebuilt in 1935) at the back wall were constructed. They are on the same axis. The former is for the in and out of the villagers whilst the latter is the *shenting* (神廳) of the village in which Tai Wong (大王) is the protective deity of the villagers. The entrance gate was rebuilt in 1930. A *tanglung* (趟籠), a wooden sliding fence, was installed at the external doorway. It was removed in the 1950s.

The entrance gate is a Qing (清) vernacular building of a one-hall rectangular **Architectural Merit** plan. Its rectangular entrance doorway is facing north whilst its arched internal doorway is facing the village houses. It is constructed of green bricks with its walls to support its pitched roofs of timber rafters, purlins and clay tiles. Its external doorway is framed with granite blocks and above the lintel are two big circular holes. An Earth God (土地) niche is at the right corner of the internal doorway. It was at the left corner and was relocated due to *fung shui* reasons.

It is a building to remind the settlement of the Tin Liu Tsuen.

Rarity

It has considerable built heritage value.

Built Heritage Value

The gate has its authenticity kept.

Authenticity

The entrance gate and the main shrine have related group value.

Group Value

A patrol system was maintained for the security of the village. The patrol guards **Social Value, & Local Interest** were stationed at the entrance gate and patrol around the village until midnight. The system was discontinued in the early 1960s. When Dim Dang (點燈) ritual was held in the shrine, a small lantern would be hanged at the entrance gate whilst a bigger one at the shrine. The Earth God at the entrance gate would have every share of any worship, celebrations and offerings at festivals made at the shrine and in the village. Public notices for the villagers would be put up at the entrance gate for their attention.