

## Historic Building Appraisal

Nos. 92 & 93 Sai Pin Wai

Yuen Long

Sai Pin Wai (西邊圍) village is on the west side of the Yuen Long Kau Hui (元朗舊墟, Yuen Long Old Market). The village was set up by the Tangs (鄧) of Kam Tin (錦田) probably in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. It was first occupied by the Tangs who later considered that the village together with Nam Pin Wai (南邊圍) village, south of the market also set up by them, were of bad *fung shui*. They then moved to Ying Lung Wai (英龍圍) village, a short distance in the east. Sai Pin Wai was a multi-clan village inhabited by many Punti (本地) families surnamed Ng (吳), Lau (劉), Fan (樊), Tang, Cheng (鄭), Leung (梁), Wong (黃) and Lam (林). The Lams settled in the village in 1626 coming from Xixiang (西鄉) of Baoan (寶安), Guangdong (廣東) province. Their founding ancestor was Hang-ho (行可), a 12<sup>th</sup> generation member of the clan. Nos. 92, 93 and 94 were a block of three houses built by a member of the 17<sup>th</sup> generation of the Lams in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. No.94 was rebuilt into a three-storey house in 1981. Nos. 92 and 93 were used as the residence of Hin-kwong (顯光), a 21<sup>st</sup> generation member. The two houses are the best preserved samples in the village.

**Historical  
Interest**

Sai Pin Wai is mainly five rows of houses facing west. The two houses are in the third row. They are Qing vernacular buildings each having a one-hall-one-courtyard plan. It is constructed of green bricks with its walls to support its pitched roof of timber rafters, purlins and clay tiles. The kitchen of each house is at the open courtyard in front of the hall. The living room is in front of a bedroom at the hall. A cockloft is above the bedroom also for use as a bedroom. Lower courses of the front façade and the side external walls are of granite blocks. Above the lintel of each entrance is a projected eave decoration. Wall frieze black-and-white curling grass pattern is on the wall gable.

**Architectural  
Merit**

They are two houses to witness the settlement of the Lams in the Sai Pin Wai village.

**Rarity**

They have some built heritage value.

**Built Heritage  
Value**

They have their authenticity kept.

**Authenticity**

They have group value with the Hang Yat Ancestral Hall (恆一祖祠) of the Lams in the village though the latter has been rebuilt.

**Group Value**

Hin-kwong and his family moved out of the two houses in 1990 and resided in another house of the village. The two houses have been used as a storeroom. The Lams were engaged in farming and fishing for generations though their houses were close to the Old Market. They were no longer engaged in farming since the 1960s and many of them worked in the factories. The Lams were also involved in the security, welfare and management system called Ping On Tau (平安頭). The village is divided into 11 units called kaps (甲) each is responsible for the annual communal worship of the Earth God (土地) shrine, celebration of Tin Hau Festival (天后誕), Pa Tin Kai (扒天箕, dragon boat rowing in the Chinese New Year on the 15<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> days), Fa Pow (花炮) activities and others. The Lams had their Dim Dang (點燈) ritual at their ancestral hall, the Tin Hau Temple (天后古廟) at the Nga Yiu Tau (瓦窯頭) village and also at their home where a lantern was hung at the ancestral altar.

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