

**Historic Building Appraisal**  
**Tin Hau Temple**  
**Chung Hing Street (Tai Shek Hau), Cheung Chau**

Tin Hau Temple (天后宮) in Tai Shek Hau (大石口) of Cheung Chau was built in the 37<sup>th</sup> year of the Qianlong (乾隆, 1772) of the Qing (清) dynasty by the fishermen and boat people of the Sai Wan (西灣, West Bay) as a bronze bell in the temple has the dating inscribed on it. It had a major renovation on the 4<sup>th</sup> year of the Tongzhi (同治, 1865) reign of the dynasty. Tin Hau is the most popular deity of the fishermen in Guangdong (廣東) and Fujian (福建) provinces. Other than the Tin Hau deity, Lady Kam Fa (金花娘娘) and Tai Sui (太歲) are respectively worshipped on her left and right of the altar. The temple is managed by the Chung Hing Street Kaifong Committee (中興街街坊值理會) since 2000 and it has funding from the Chinese Temples Committee (華人廟宇委員會) for its renovations and activities.

**Historical  
Interest**

Built on the southern shore of the Sai Wan facing the sea, the temple is a Qing vernacular building of a two-hall plan flanked by a later added side chamber on either side. Its symmetrical design has the altar at the end wall of the main hall. A side entrance lane is between the entrance hall and the side chamber on the left and right. The temple was built on rocks as a portion of the rocks can still be found on the internal wall behind the Tai Sui side altar. The building is constructed of green bricks with its walls to support its pitched roofs of timber rafters, purlins and clay tiles. The external walls have been plastered and painted in grey colour and its internal walls are with false brick lines or painted white. The symmetrical temple has its altar at the end wall of the main hall facing the entrance. A finely carved *caimen* (彩門) with the dating of 1865 is hanged above the offering table. Its main ridge is with a set of Shiwan (石灣) ceramic opera figurines and a pair of *ruilong* (夔龍) patterns at both ends topped with a pair of *aoyus* (鰲魚) and a pearl in the middle. The ceramics were made in the 1865 by the Qiyu (奇玉) kiln of Shiwan. A stone engraved name board is above the doorway flanked by a pair of couplets. Its gables are with black-and-white friezes of *ruilong* patterns.

**Architectural  
Merit**

It is a Tin Hau temple to remind the settlement of the fishing folks of Sai Wan.

**Rarity**

It has some built heritage value.

**Built Heritage  
Value**

Despite some minor defects, the authenticity is kept.

**Authenticity**

Tin Hau Festival (天后誕) on the 18th of the third lunar month is highly celebrated instead on the normal 23<sup>rd</sup> of the month as the locals have been accustomed to celebrate it a few days earlier depending on brighter moonlight to lead their way to the temple in the past. A shed in front of the temple would be mounted for the performance of Cantonese opera for three days and nights starting from the 17<sup>th</sup> day. During the Tai Ping Ching Chiu (太平清醮) in the fourth lunar month, the Tin Hau deity would be invited among other deities on the island to attend activities organized by the festival including a procession carried them on armchairs.

*Social Value,  
& Local  
Interest*