

Historic Building Appraisal

Tin Hau Temple

Near Pak She San Tsuen, Cheung Chau Wan, Cheung Chau

Tin Hau Temple (天后古廟) in Pak She San Tsuen (北社新村) of Cheung Chau is built in the 32nd year of the Qianlong (乾隆, 1767) reign of the Qing (清) dynasty as a bronze bell of the temple has the dating inscribed on it. The temple has a number of renovations including those in 1889, 1909 and one in the Tongzhi (同治, 1862-1874) reign of the Qing dynasty. The temple is built by fishermen of the island for the worship of Tin Hau, the most popular deity of the fishermen and boat people. Kam Fa Liang Liang (金花娘娘) and Choi Pak Shing Kun (財帛星君) deities are also worshipped in the temple. The former is for the birth of baby whilst the latter for wealth.

**Historical
Interest**

The temple is a Qing vernacular building of a two-hall-one-courtyard plan of three bays. The courtyard between the entrance and main halls was covered. The symmetrical design temple has the altar in the middle of the end wall housing the Tin Hau deity facing the entrance. A statue of a Qianliyan (千里眼) and a Shunfenger (順風耳), two guards of the Tin Hau, are standing on either side of the 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 with false brick lines. The gables are of fire style of the Five Elements (五行之火形) in horse-back shape. The name of the temple is engraved in stone above the doorway. The main ridge is with Shiwan (石灣) opera figurines made by the Meiyu (美玉店) kiln in the Tongzhi reign. A pair of *aoyus* (鰲魚) is above the figurines. At the descending ridges are a Sun God (日神) and a Moon God (月神) on either side. Wall friezes are of paintings of landscape, dragon, flowers and rocks motifs.

**Architectural
Merit**

It is a Tin Hau temple to remind the fishing settlement of Cheung Chau.

Rarity

It has some built heritage value.

**Built Heritage
Value**

The temple was renovated in 1889, 1909 and 1968 among some other unknown ones. The authenticity is barely kept.

Authenticity

Tin Hau Festival (天后誕) is celebrated on the 18th of the third lunar month instead of the normal 23rd 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 old days. During the Tai Ping Ching Chiu (太平清醮) in the fourth lunar

**Social Value,
& Local
Interest**

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 touring the island.