

Historic Building Appraisal
Pang Ancestral Hall
Fanling Pak Wai, Fanling

The Pang Ancestral Hall (彭氏宗祠) in Fanling Pak Wai (粉嶺北圍) *Historical Interest* village, Fanling, is the ancestral hall of the Pangs whose ancestors moved south from Gansu (甘肅) province to Jishui (吉水) in Jiangxi (江西) province in A.D. 739, to Chaozhou (潮州) and Dongguan (東莞) of Guangdong (廣東) province in the Northern Song dynasty (北宋, 960-1127) and to Lung Yeuk Tau (龍躍頭) of Fanling in A.D. 1220 of the Southern Song dynasty (南宋, 1127-1279). The founding ancestor, Pang Kwei (彭桂), moved from Lung Yeuk Tau and settled in Fan Ling Lau (粉嶺樓).

The Pangs had its first ancestral hall built in northern part of Wai Noi Tsuen (圍內村, now called Fanling Wai which are divided into 3 wais, namely, Pak Wai (北圍, north wai), Ching Wai (正圍, central wai), and Nam Wai (南圍, south wai). Due to *fung shui* reason, the ancestral hall was moved to the present site in the 26th year of the Daoguang reign (道光, A.D. 1846) of the Qing (清) dynasty. It was rebuilt in the 10th year of the Guangxu reign (光緒, A.D. 1884) of the same dynasty. The hall is also called Tai Tak Tong (大德堂) where soul tablets of the Pangs including Pang Yin-lin (彭延年), the founding ancestor of the Pang clan in Guangdong, Pang Kwei and others are worshipped. On the left room of the hall, a tablet of martyrs (忠烈牌主) is also on worship for those who have made sacrifices or contribution to the village.

The ancestral hall is a one-storey two-hall building of Qing (清) vernacular *Architectural Merit* design. It is in symmetrical layout having in its main hall a sizable elegantly carved altar housing soul tablets of different generations from the seniors in the top rows to the younger ones in the lower rows. The open courtyard between the two halls has an aisle and a chamber on each side. The building is mainly constructed of green bricks with granite columns and walls supporting its pitched roofs of timber rafter, purlins and clay tiles. Its recessed entrance is fronted by two raised platforms to each side with a system of granite columns and timber brackets to support the roof. The main ridge is decorated with a set of geometric pattern, two dragons chasing a pearl and treasures moulding. Fascia boards, wall and gable friezes are with auspicious patterns of floral motifs.

It is the core building to witness the lengthy settlement of the Pang clan in *Rarity* Fanling.

It is an outstanding ancestral hall having a high built heritage value.

***Built Heritage
Value &***

Though the walls have been plastered with false brick lines and the roofs of the side aisles turned flat concrete, the authenticity of the building on the whole can be retained.

Authenticity

The ancestral hall has been the centre for dealing with clan and village matters by the clan members. It is kept by a hall manager who is responsible for cleaning and preparing offerings of fruit and incense. Ancestral worship which takes place on the 2nd day of the second lunar month is attended by the elders and others with basin meals served after the ritual. Da Chiu (打醮) and Dim Dang (點燈) activities are still held in the village. The former would be held every 10 years whilst the latter held outdoor in a shed (not in the ancestral hall). The hall was used as classrooms for teaching village children of primary 5 and 6 (the others in Tsz Tak Study Hall 思德書室 in Fanling Nam Wai) from 1948 until the late 1950s. The hall was used as classrooms for a Fanling Kindergarten operated by the Rural Committee of Fan Ling Tsuen from 1979 to 1993.

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