

**Historic Building Appraisal**  
**Kun Ting Study Hall**  
**Hang Mei Tsuen, Ping Shan, Yuen Long**

Kun Ting Study Hall (觀廷書室) in Hang Mei Tsuen (坑尾村) of Ping Shan (屏山), Yuen Long, was built in 1870 by Tang Heung-chuen (鄧香泉, 1838-1879) and his sons to commemorate his father Kun-ting (觀廷, 1815-1838), the 21<sup>st</sup> generation ancestor of the Tang clan in Ping Shan. Other than serving as a venue for teaching village children, it is also an ancestral hall of Tang Heung-chuen's lineage for ancestral worship. In the takeover of the New Territories by the British in 1899, the then Governor Sir Arthur Blake had a short stay at the study hall and used it as his office. This elegantly built study hall at the mouth of the village had been visited by many distinguished guests including Governor Sir Cecil Clementi (金文泰) and leading members of the Chinese community such as Sir Robert Ho Tung (何東) and Fung Ping-shan (馮平山).

***Historical Interest***

The study hall is a medium size Qing (清) vernacular building having a two-hall-one-courtyard plan of three bays. The open courtyard is between the halls and flanked by two side chambers, one on each side. Through staircases at the main halls' side rooms, the library on the first floor can be reached. A footbridge is connected the library to the upper storey of the Ching Shu Hin (清暑軒), a guest house of the family, next to the Hall. It is in symmetrical design with the altar at the far end of the central axis in the middle of the main hall. The building was constructed of green bricks with its walls and columns supporting the pitched roofs. The recessed entrance has fine granite door frame, wall bases, wall corners and lintel above which is the finely carved stone name board of the study hall. The entire building is with richly ornated decorations. Its ridges are with mouldings of auspicious floral treasures and geometric patterns. Wall and gable friezes and fascia board are with paintings and carvings of fruits, flowers, treasures, scrolls and other motifs.

***Architectural Merit***

It is a finely decorated historic building of high rarity to show the wealth and status of the Tang clan in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

***Rarity***

It is a study hall of high built heritage value.

***Built Heritage Value***

The authenticity is kept.

***Authenticity***

It has group value with Ching Shu Hin, the Tang Ancestral Hall (鄧氏宗祠) and other historic buildings in Ping Shan.

***Group Value***

The study hall prepared teaching of Chinese classics and martial arts for village children to gain success in the Imperial Civil Service Examination. The Tangs did have a number of their members gaining the title of *juren* (舉人). After the abolition of the Examination in 1905, the education mode was modified. New modern subjects were taught and a Tat Tak School (達德學校) established in 1931 in the village then replaced the education role of the hall ultimately.

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