

Historic Building Appraisal
Chan Ancestral Hall
No. 98 Ping Yeung, Ta Kwu Ling

Ping Yeung (坪洋) is a single-clan Hakka (客家) village in Ta Kwu Ling (打鼓嶺) occupied by the Chans (陳). Originated in Shanghang (上杭) of Fujian (福建) province, the Chans moved southwards staying in a number of places in Guangdong (廣東) province. Three members of the 9th generation moved from Wuhua (五華) to Ping Yeung some three hundred years ago. They are Tung-kwok (棟國), Sit-wan (陟雲) and Sit-kin (陟乾). Tung-kwok was the first to settle in the village. Three ancestral halls were built in the village by descendents of the three branches. The Chans share the same ancestors as those in Sheung Kwai Chung (上葵涌), She Shan Tsuen (社山村) in Tai Po, Luk Keng (鹿頸) and Wing Tsuen Tong (穎川堂) in Tsuen Wan. This Chan Ancestral Hall (陳氏宗祠) is of the Tung-kwok branch. It is not known when it was built. It was probably built in the 18th century the earliest.

*Historical
Interest*

The ancestral hall is the biggest in the village in the middle of the village. It is a Qing (清) vernacular building having a two-hall-two-courtyard plan. The front hall is between the two open courtyards. The hall is located in two parallel rows of village houses occupying the structure of two houses, one in front of the other. This alignment is very unusual for an ancestral hall. This might be an extension of the hall making use of two houses. The long and narrow hall is constructed of green bricks with its walls to support its pitched roofs of timber rafters, purlins and clay tiles. The walls are plastered and painted. The floors are with ceramic tiles. Lower portion and upper portion of the internal walls are respectively with red and white paints. The lower portion of the front wall is also with the same red paint. The altar and the offering table at the end wall of the main hall are also painted red. A soul tablet is in the middle of the altar for worship. A large black colour Chinese character “壽” (longevity) is on the end wall flanked with a couplet. An image of Kwun Yam (觀音) is on the left of the tablet also for worship. The name of the hall is moulded on the wall above the lintel of the recessed entrance. The front ridge is with curling ends. Wall paintings of flowers, birds and calligraphy are at the front wall of the entrance and on the end wall of the altar.

*Architectural
Merit*

It is an ancestral hall to witness the settlement of the Chans in Ping Yeung.

Rarity

It has little built heritage value.

*Built Heritage
Value*

It was renovated in 1928 with some others. Its authenticity is diminished as its walls are unsympathetically painted.

Authenticity

This ancestral hall has group value with the other two ancestral halls and Nos. 138-139 of the Chans in the village.

Group Value

The Chans had the ancestral worships and celebrations of festivals at the three ancestral halls at almost the same time. They had worship on the last day of the lunar year and on the second day of the Chinese New Year with offerings in the ancestral hall. Wedding, funeral and Dim Dang (點燈) rituals were held at the hall with Hakka (客家) banquets and tea-cakes (茶果). Chan Yau-choi (陳有才), a member of the village, was the chairman of the Ta Kwu Ling Rural Committee (打鼓嶺鄉事委員會) and gained the M.B.E. title for his service in the area in 1984.

*Social Value,
& Local Interest*