

Historic Building Appraisal
Sing Hin Kung Study Hall
Hang Mei Tsuen, Ping Shan, Yuen Long

Sing Hin Kung Study Hall (聖軒公家塾) in Hang Mei Tsuen (坑尾村) of Ping Shan (屏山), Yuen Long, was probably built by descendents of Tang Sing-hin (鄧聖軒, 1672-1733) to commemorate him in the 19th century. He was the 17th generation ancestor of the Tang clan in Ping Shan which first ancestor was Tang Yuen-ching (鄧元禎). Sing-hin achieved the *shengyuan* (生員) title in the district examination of the Qing (清) dynasty Imperial Civil Service Examination and became a *yixiangsheng* (邑庠生), a candidate in the county school. It was the biggest purposely built study hall in Ping Shan. Before it was built village children studied at the Yu Kiu Ancestral Hall (愈喬二公祠) on its right. The hall provided education for village children to prepare them for the Examination which they would gain official position in the government so as to further enhance the clan's power and status. With the abolition of the Examination in 1905, the hall continued to provide education for the students. A Tat Tak School (達德學校) was established in 1931. The hall was also used as an ancestral hall and 70 soul tablets of the 17th to 23rd generation ancestors of Sing-hin's lineage are on display in seven rows at the altar in the middle hall for worship.

**Historical
Interest**

The study hall is a Qing vernacular building having a three-hall-two-courtyard plan of three bays. A bigger courtyard is between the front and middle halls and a smaller one between the main and middle halls. A forecourt is built in front of the entrance and access to the compound is through a small entrance on the left. It is in symmetrical design with the altar worshipping the ancestors at the central axis in the middle hall. The building was constructed of green bricks with its walls and granite columns supporting the roofs of timber rafters, purlins and clay tiles. The recessed entrance has granite door frame, threshold, wall corners and lintel above which is the stone engraved name board of the study hall. The ridges are with geometric mouldings. Its gable and wall friezes and fascia boards are with paintings and carvings of calligraphy, flowers-and-birds and floral motifs.

**Architectural
Merit**

It is an important historic building to show the settlement of the Tang clan in Ping Shan.

Rarity

It is a study hall of high built heritage value.

***Built Heritage
Value***

The roofs of the side chambers have been turned into concrete ones. Mezzanines were added to the middle hall and a cockloft added in the main hall. This would drastically deface the authenticity of the building

Authenticity

The Tang Ancestral Hall (鄧氏宗祠), Yu Kiu Ancestral Hall and this hall in the same village have inter-related group value.

Group Value

An honour board *wukui* (武魁), military champion, of the great-grandson of Sin-hin, Shui-tai (瑞泰), was hung on top of the *dangzhong* (擋中, the screen door) for his success at the Examination with the dating the 9th year of the Jiaqing reign (嘉慶, 1804).

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