

Historic Building Appraisal

No. 64 Hang Mei Tsuen, Ping Shan, Yuen Long

Ping Shan (屏山) was settled by the Tangs (鄧) in the late Southern Song (南宋, 1127-1279) dynasty. Tang Yuen-ching (鄧元禎) is considered as the first ancestor of the Tangs who settled there in 1216. Two villages were first founded including Hang Tau (坑頭) and Hang Mei (坑尾) villages, the former in the north and the latter in the south. The former was founded by Waai-tak (懷德, 1548-1622) and the latter by Waai-ye (懷義, 1529-1607), two brothers of the 14th generation. The residence at No.64 of the village was built by Tang Chok-yau (鄧作猷, 1810-1856), alias Shut-hing (述卿), in the mid-19th century for his second son Wai-sing (惠成, 1837-1886) as his house was inherited by his first son Wai-yuk (惠育, 1834-1865). The house was occupied by six consecutive generations of the family and has been inherited by Kwong-yin (廣賢) since 1986. The house was restored in 1994 for used as a private period house which could be open for public viewing.

**Historical
Interest**

The residential house is among a group of bigger houses in the middle part of the village. The Tang Ancestral Hall (鄧氏宗祠), the clan ancestral hall of the Tangs in Ping Shan, is three blocks away at its right. It is a Qing vernacular building having a one-hall-one-courtyard plan of four bays. It is constructed of green bricks with its walls to support its pitched roof of timber rafters, purlins and clay tiles. Two entrances are on either side of the courtyard for *fung shui* benefit. The courtyard is partially roofed for use as a kitchen and a storeroom. At the back is a main hall flanked by a bedroom and a living on its left and a bedroom on its right. An elegant wooden altar is at the end wall of the main hall housing a soul tablet of the branch for worship. Cocklofts are above the bedrooms and the living room. Above the lintel of each entrance is a projected eave with plastered mouldings of a lion, leaf patterns. The door frames, window frames and lower courses of the external walls are of granite. The main ridge of the building is with curling ends.

**Architectural
Merit**

It is a residential building to witness the history and settlement of the family of Tang Chok-yau in Hang Mei Tsuen.

Rarity

It has some built heritage value.

**Built Heritage
Value**

The authenticity of the house is basically kept.

Authenticity

It has group value with the Tang Ancestral Hall, Yu Kiu Ancestral Hall (愈)

Group Value

喬二公祠), Kun Ting Study Hall (覲廷書室) and other historic buildings of the village.

Chok-yau was a *xiucaai* (秀才, or *shengyuan* 生員, in official term), a government student. He had been a *yixiangsheng* (邑庠生, a town school graduate) and granted a 7th grade civil official. His descendents had also achieved status in the Imperial Civil Service Examination. His elder son Wai-yuk was a *juren* (舉人) and his younger son Wai-sing was a military *xiangsheng* (武庠生). Wing-fai (榮輝, 1866-1936), son of Wai-sing, was an Imperial College student (國子監大學生). Other descendents are prominent professionals having made much contribution to the village and the community. Shut Hing Study Hall (述卿書室, only part of the façade of the building still standing) was erected by his two sons at Tong Fong Tsuen (塘坊村) next to the village in 1874. Another study hall, Kun Ting Study Hall (覲廷書室), was built in the village in 1870 to commemorate his brother Kun-ting (覲廷). The village house is known as “Old Residence of Xiucai (秀才故居)”.

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