

Historic Building Appraisal
Entrance Gate
Lam Hau Tsuen, Ping Shan, Yuen Long

Lam Hau Tsuen (欖口村) in Ping Shan (屏山) of Yuen Long was first settled by the Wongs (黃) and later developed into a multi-clan village inhabited by the Cheungs (張), Moks (莫), Mans (文) and others, the Cheungs being the latest. Cheung Kwan-heng (張君亨), the 14th generation ancestor of the Cheungs, settled in the village after the Evacuation Edict (遷界令) was lifted in 1669 of the Kangxi (康熙, 1662-1722) reign, Qing (清) dynasty. He branched out from Shan Ha Tsuen (山下村), south of Lam Hau Tsuen, whose ancestor was one of the descendents of Cheung Chuk-ping (張祝平) who moved there from Huangcun (篁村) of Dongguan (東莞), Guangdong (廣東) province, in the Shunzhi (順治, 1644-1661) reign of the dynasty. The entrance gate was constructed in the 18th century in the earlier stage of village's development. The entrance gate was constructed for the protection of the villagers residing inside the village. It guarded against any intrusion from outside the village. It continues to serve as a passing-by gate entrance for the villagers.

Historical Interest

The entrance gate is at the first row of the village houses of the initial boundary of the village. It faces the shrine on the same axis in the far end of the village. It is a single-storey Qing vernacular building. It is constructed of green bricks with its walls to support its pitched roofs of timber rafters, purlins and clay tiles. The external rectangular doorway was constructed switched to the right for *fung shui* reasons. Its internal doorway is arched. Above the lintel is the name board of the village flanked by two circular holes. The brickwork of the wall is arranged in a one-to-nine course ratio of the header-and-stretcher bonding (九順一丁). The ridge is without any decoration. A wall painting of plant motif is the only decoration of the structure on its front façade.

Architectural Merit

It is a structure to remind the history of the village.

Rarity

The entrance gate has some built heritage value.

Built Heritage Value

Despite some of its bricks replaced with concrete ones, its authenticity is kept.

Authenticity

It has group value with the shrine and Yan Shau Tong (仁壽堂) of the village.

Group Value

A niche is constructed on the left wall of the entrance gate to house the Earth God (土地) giving protection to the villagers. When Dim Dang (點燈) ritual is held at the shrine for new born baby boys of previous year on a day between the 9th and 11th days of the first lunar month, the deity of the entrance gate would be invited to the shrine to attend the ceremony. A lantern would be hanged at the entrance gate, the shrine and Yan Shau Tong respectively. After the ceremony basin meal would be served at the open space of the village. No basin meal however is served now.

*Social Value,
& Local
Interest*