

Historic Building Appraisal

Entrance Gate

Pak Mong, Lantau Island

Pak Mong (白芒) is a small Hakka (客家) village in the west of Tai Ho Wan (大蠔灣), north of Lantau Island. It was a multi-clan village inhabited by the Kowks (郭氏) and the Cheungs (張氏). The main clan of the village is the Kwoks whose origin was Taiyuan of Shanxi province (山西省太原). Their great ancestor is Kwok Tsz-yee (郭子儀), a famous general of Tang Dynasty (唐朝, A.D. 618-907) who was bestowed with the title of Fenyang Wang (汾陽王) which literally means King of Fenyang). The descendants of Kwok Tsz-yee migrated to Fujian province (福建省).

*Historical
Interest*

Kwok Shi-ching (郭仕禎), an 8th generation member of the Kwoks in Pak Mong, came from Shanghang (上杭) in Fujian. He first settled at Por Kai Shan (婆髻山) in the west of the village in the 1st year of Wanli (萬曆, 1573) reign of Ming (明) Dynasty. The Kwoks moved from Por Kai Shan to settle in Pak Mong in the 15th year of Qianlong (乾隆, 1750) reign of Qing (清) Dynasty. Some of them later branched out to Lin Fa Tei (蓮花地) of Pat Heung (八鄉), Yuen Long.

The **Entrance Gate** at the east corner and at the mouth of the village was erected for security purpose in the **mid 18th century** when the village was established. Along the Entrance Gate is an enclosing wall extended to the east and north of the village boundary. The Entrance Gate together with the watch tower (built in 1942) and the enclosing wall formed an integral unit in defending the village against pirates and bandits who once ravaged the area. In the old days the Entrance Gate had to be locked at night for security reason.

The Entrance Gate is a Qing vernacular structure in an H-shaped plan. It is constructed of green bricks with its walls to support the pitched roof of timber rafters, purlins and clay tiles. The walls are plastered and painted in earth yellow colour. Square holes engraved on a granite slab on the ground and circular holes cut a timber beam under the lintel are at the doorway for the fir posts used to be installed at night time. The wooden double door is painted with a set of Door Gods (門神). At the foot of the left external wall is an incense trough for the Earth God (土地). The wall is with cornice mouldings under the eave.

*Architectural
Merit*

It is an entrance gate to remind the settlement of the villagers.

Rarity

It has some built heritage value. It was renovated in 2002 by the Architectural Services Department with the Door Gods painted on the timber door.

***Built Heritage
Value &
Authenticity***

Many villagers participated in the construction of the entrance gate and the wall. It provided security purposes for any possible attack from the front and side directions. The hill at the back of the village and a stream called Pak Mong Ditch (白芒坑) in its west provided natural barrier protection to the village. Gun holes were provided at the wall. The entrance gate was locked after dusk and unlocked in the morning. The villagers engaged themselves in rice and vegetable growing and fishing. Two villagers participated in the guerrillas to fight against the Japanese during wartime (1941-1945).

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

It has group value with Pak Mong Watchtower and Kwok Ancestral Hall in Pak Mong. Besides, there is a huge rock preserved beside the watchtower. The entire village is planned in the same orientation with the entrance gate. The rural mountain landscape, the water stream on the west of the village and the waterfront blend well with this old village and benefit it in *fungshui* setting.

Group Value

It is considered that the question of adaptive re-use does not arise at the present time.

***Adaptive
Re-use***