

Historic Building Appraisal

Entrance Tower, Fanling Wai

Fanling

Fanling Wai (粉嶺圍) in Fanling was settled by the Pangs some 700 years ago and the wai (walled village) was constructed in the Wanli (萬曆, 1573-1620) reign of the Ming (明) dynasty. Pang Kwei (彭桂) was the founding ancestor of the Pang clan who went to Lung Shan (龍山, now known as Lung Yuek Tau 龍躍頭) of Fanling from Dongguan (東莞) in 1220, 13th year of Jiading (嘉定) reign of the Southern Song (南宋) dynasty. He then moved to Fan Ling Lau (粉嶺樓) and established a village over there. As the population of the clan increased, they moved westward to settle in Fanling Wai and other places. The walled village was built to provide security for the villagers residing inside the village. Over the years the wall has lost its protective functions and fell into ruin. The entrance gate-tower and two corner watchtowers were rebuilt in 1986.

**Historical
Interest**

The wall was constructed of green bricks in Qing (清) design having four corner towers at its four corners with an entrance gate-tower in the middle of the north-west facing front wall. The entrance is at the central axis of the walled village with village houses built connected to the walls and seven rows on the left and right of the central axis. Guns were installed at the corners towers for defensive purposes. Around five to seven gun holes are at the tower. The entrance tower is a one-hall two-storey structure with its green-brick walls supporting its pitched roofs of reinforced concrete with ceramic tiles and green glazed ceramic drippers. A niche housing the Earth God (土地) is at the left corner with offerings on a table in its front. The doorway of the entrance is rectangular whilst its internal one is arched. Its cockloft can be accessed by ladder. Three circular gun holes are on the wall of the façade wall with three painted white circles for *fung shui* reasons. A timber sliding fence is installed at the doorway.

**Architectural
Merit**

The remaining structure of the wai is to remind the historic settlement of the Pangs.

Rarity

It is of considerable built heritage value.

**Built Heritage
Value**

The 1986-retored structure is in good condition.

Authenticity

It has group value with the watchtowers of the wai, the Pang Ancestral Hall (彭氏宗祠), Sam Shing Temple (三聖宮) and other historic buildings nearby.

Group Value

The Earth God at the niche of the entrance gate-tower is for the protection of the villagers. Regular offerings of incense and fruits are given on the first and fifteen days off each lunar month and at festivals and the Chinese New Year. The Earth God is considered as one of the deities giving blessings to the villagers. Even at the Dim Dang (點燈) ritual at a shed by the gate-tower, a ritual called Chicken Feather Grabbing (搶雞毛) will be held with chicken feathers cast away from its upper floor.

***Social Value
& Local
Interest***