

Shaxi Ancient Town (沙溪古镇), Yunnan, China

www.watermetermuseum.org

Situated along China's historic Tea Horse Road, Shaxi (between Dali and Lijiang) was once a bustling caravan trading centre linking Yunnan, Tibet and Southeast Asia. Today, its beautifully preserved market square, temples and traditional Bai architecture provide visitors with a rare glimpse into life in a medieval Chinese trading town. During their travels, Alex and Erica explored this remarkable heritage site, documenting its historic streets and traditional water infrastructure.

Shaxi's origins date back more than 1,000 years, with its importance growing during the Tang Dynasty (618-907) as a Tea Horse Road trading hub. The town reached its peak prosperity during the Ming and Qing Dynasties (1368-1912).

In 2001, the historic Sideng Market Square was listed among the World Monuments Watch's endangered heritage sites, helping preserve the town's unique character.

It is worth noting that the town's preserved streets, bridges, wells and merchant compounds provide an excellent example of how water was managed in rural trading settlements before modern utilities. Traditional stone wells and irrigation channels can still be seen throughout the valley, offering insight into historic water supply systems.



The Market Town Square



Ningbo Water Meter Co. (宁波水表二厂), Ningbo, Zhejiang Province, China. DN15 dry-dial cold-water meter. Nominal flow rate 2.5 m³/h. The meter was found during HWM field investigations, mostly buried in concrete probably after renovations to the walkway.





The Quyang Courtyard House was constructed from the late Qing Dynasty. It contained first-class rooms for caravan leaders and merchants, complete with a small stage, hidden tunnels, and a vault. It is a precious architectural cultural heritage site on the Tea and Horse Caravan Trail.



www.watermetermuseum.org



A famous recent 2023 Chinese drama was filmed in Shaxi Ancient Town this was **Meet Yourself** (去有风的地方), starring Liu Yifei and Li Xian. Many scenes were filmed in and around Shaxi, it can be seen on NetFlix.



民用水表 ("domestic water meter")., is a **15mm Ningbo Water Meter Co. Multijet water meter** that services the Quyang House. The water meters were difficult to find and many hidden in timber boxes to retain the ancient tranquillity.