

BEAR CREEK, Yukon

FHBRO Number: **89-08**

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Machine Shop (Buildings #1 and #2)

Bear Creek Compound

The Machine Shop (Buildings #1 and #2), constructed in 1924, was the third machine shop at the Bear Creek industrial complex, a service facility for the mining operations of the Yukon Consolidated Gold Corporation (YCGC). The first machine shop was erected in 1910, and was replaced eight years later by a more up-to-date facility that was destroyed by fire, necessitating the construction of the present-day Machine Shop. In 1939, a small addition was built on the east side to house an air compressor. The Machine Shop was a key component within the complex, as it provided repair and maintenance services for mining machinery. Operations at the Bear Creek complex ceased in 1966, and the property was acquired by Parks Canada, the present custodian, in 1975.

Reasons for designation

The Machine Shop (Buildings #1 and #2) is a “Recognized” Federal Heritage Building because of its historical, architectural, and environmental values:

As a key structure for the mining operations of the Bear Creek service facility and the largest building on the site, the Machine Shop is one of the best illustrations of the facility’s association with the corporate phase of Yukon’s gold mining history. It also demonstrates the dependency of mining operations on service and repair activities.

The Machine Shop is simple and functional in design, and exhibits good workmanship and appropriate use of materials. Made up of two very large sections, it is 68 metres long and 14 metres wide. Its one-storey elongated rectangular form is clad with corrugated metal siding, and its sweeping gable roof is covered with metal and topped with a boxed ventilator. Its front gable possesses double doors and a distinctive projecting housing for the crane tracks, which run through the entire shop and out double doors at the rear. The Machine Shop possesses a wood-frame structure. Its interior, which is clad with tongue-and-groove boarding, is made up of two functional areas: the “dirty” area in front (Building #1), for blacksmithing, welding, and casting; and the “clean” area, or babbitt shop, in the rear section (Building #2), for white metal casting and lathe work. An addition was constructed on the east side to house the air compressor. The interior contains evidence of machinery placement and work patterns.

The Machine Shop, the most dominant buildings on the site due to its sheer scale, reinforces the industrial character of this functionally obsolete but remarkably intact village-like mining service facility, with its 80 structures and several landscape features relating to large-scale mechanical placer mining. Like the site’s other main buildings, it faces the large open yard, and it is a key

component within the grouping of industrial buildings on the south side. This large structure, with its unusual front elevation, is a conspicuous and memorable landmark.

Character-defining elements

The following character-defining elements of the Machine Shop should be respected:

- Its impressive scale and massing.
- The simple and functional nature of its design, and its overall good workmanship and appropriate use of materials.
- The features of its form, construction, and materials that unify it with the site's other buildings, including its simple rectangular shape, its gable roof, its corrugated metal siding and roof covering, its wood-frame structure, and its rooftop ventilator.
- The large double doors at both gable ends of the building, and the pattern of windows and subsidiary doors.
- The distinctive overhead crane housing projecting from its front gable, and the crane tracks, which extend through the entire building and out the rear.
- The functional configuration of its two principal work areas.
- The tongue-and-groove boarding that lines its interior.
- The interior fittings that illustrate its function, such as the equipment and equipment mountings, and the workstations and their fittings.
- Its comfortable relationship – due to its form, materials, detailing, and colour scheme – with the other structures and landscape features of the site, in particular the trade buildings on the south side of the yard, such as the nearby Tin Shop (Building #4) and Auto Repair Shop (Building #7).

For guidance on interventions, refer to the *FHBRO Code of Practice*. For further information, contact FHBRO.

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