

BEAR CREEK, Yukon
FHBRO Number: **89-08**
DFRP Number: **20008**
Mess Hall and Bunkhouse (Building #22)
Bear Creek Compound

The Mess Hall and Bunkhouse (Building #22) was constructed before 1934 by the Yukon Consolidated Gold Corporation (YCGC) as part of a renewal and expansion program at the Bear Creek industrial complex, a service facility for the YCGC's mining operations. It accommodated some of the crews needed to run the Bear Creek facility and dredging operations. Besides the installation of a walk-in refrigeration room in 1948, the building has changed very little since its construction. 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 Mess Hall and Bunkhouse is a "Recognized" Federal Heritage Building because of its historical, architectural, and environmental values:

As part of the Bear Creek complex, the Mess Hall and Bunkhouse is associated with the corporate phase of Yukon's gold mining history. It illustrates a response to the need to provide new and improved residential accommodation for the expanded crews of men working at the facility as a result of the YCGC's renewal and expansion program of the 1930s.

The Mess Hall and Bunkhouse is simple and functional in design, and exhibits good workmanship and appropriate use of materials. It is a rectangular two-storey, wood-frame structure that is clad with horizontal wood siding, painted grey, with white trim, and surmounted by a gable roof covered with metal. Its main entrance in the south gable, facing the open yard, is protected by a small porch. Its north gable wall has a projecting covered outdoor stairway from the second floor and a porch at the ground floor level. The side elevations have a regular pattern of windows on both levels. The ground floor has four main spaces: a recreation area, a mess hall or dining area, a kitchen, and a pantry with a walk-in refrigerated space. The kitchen retains several built-in features, such as an institutional stove and large sinks, and there are large storage bins in the pantry. The upper floor has ten bedrooms, a central corridor, and an auxiliary space with cubicles and an interior stair at one end. Because it provided bedrooms rather than an open dormitory, the Mess Hall and Bunkhouse represented an improvement over earlier standards of accommodation.

The Mess Hall and Bunk House reinforces the residential 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. Due to its residential function, its large size, and its late construction, it was located north of the open yard, with most of the other residential buildings, but behind the General Manager's Residence (Building #20).

Character-defining elements

The following character-defining elements of the Mess Hall and Bunkhouse should be respected:

- 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 rectangular shape, its gable roof, its horizontal wood siding, painted grey, with white trim, its metal roof covering, and its wood structure.
- The arrangement and detailing of its doors and windows, its porches, and its covered stair.
- The layout of the ground and upper floors, which illustrates its communal residential function.
- The built-in equipment and storage features in the kitchen and pantry.
- Its comfortable relationship – due to its form, materials, detailing, and colour scheme – with the other structures and landscape features of the site, in particular with the General Manager's Residence (Building #20).

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

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