

BEAR CREEK, Yukon
FHBRO Number: **89-08**
DFRP Number: **20008**
Gold Room (Building #29)
Bear Creek Compound

The Gold Room (Building #29) was constructed by the Yukon Consolidated Gold Corporation (YCGC) in 1939, as part of a program of renewal and expansion at the Bear Creek facility, a service facility for its mining operations. It apparently replaced an earlier Gold Room (Building #67), which was converted into a residence. A small annex on the south side and an attached concrete vault on the east side may be later additions. 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 Gold Room is a “Recognized” Federal Heritage Building because of its historical, architectural, and environmental values:

As part of the Bear Creek complex, the Gold Room is associated with the corporate phase of the Yukon’s gold mining history. Its key function as the building where placer gold recovered from the dredges was brought for processing, weighing, and safe-keeping makes it one of the most important structures on the site and one of the best illustrations of the renewal and expansion program underway in the 1930s.

The Gold Room building is a one-storey, insulated wood-frame construction with a concrete floor and a gable roof. The exterior treatment of the main building is similar to that of several residential buildings on the site: the walls are clad with horizontal wood siding, and the roof is covered with corrugated sheet metal. The small annex is clad with vertical wood siding, and the walls of the vault are exposed concrete. At the rear of the building, the windows are small and a narrow door opens onto a small loading dock. The interior of the main section of the Gold Room is made up of a large working area and a small office near the front entrance. This work area is lined with sheet metal and has floor drains equipped with traps for recovering the mercury used in recovering gold. The tilting retort, or melting furnace from which gold was poured into ingots, is still in place.

Although set apart from the other buildings on the site, the Gold Room reinforces both the industrial and 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. It is situated in an isolated location, and surrounded by trees, west of the large open yard. However, its association with recovering gold and its accessibility to visitors have made it one of the most familiar landmarks at the Bear Creek Compound.

Character-defining elements

The following character-defining elements of the Gold Room 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 the rectangular shape of the main building, its gable roof, its horizontal wood siding, and its corrugated metal roof covering.
- Its residential character despite its key industrial function.
- Its special features, including its annex, its concrete vault, the sweeping roofs that extends over them, its broad eaves, its tall front and side windows, its large front porch with triple posts and trellis work.
- Its rear door and loading dock.
- Its layout, and the detailing and finishes of the large work area, office, and vault.
- The fittings and equipment that express its special function, including the tilting retort, the mercury traps, the metal lining, the office furnishings, and the security apparatus of the vault.
- Its comfortable but distinct relationship – due to its form, materials, detailing, and colour scheme – with the other structures and landscape features of the site.

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

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