

FHBRO Number 96-114

Fort Langley, British Columbia

**Servants' Quarters**

Fort Langley NHS

The Servants' Quarters was constructed in 1957 to the design of architect J. Calder Peeps as part of the partial reconstruction of Fort Langley by Parks Canada. The building is part of the Fort Langley National Historic Site. Parks Canada is the custodian. See FHBRO Building Report 96-114.

**Reasons for Designation**

The Servants' Quarters has been designated Recognized for its contribution to the character of the reconstructed Fort Langley site, for its architectural interpretation of a "generic" building that could have been on this site, and for its historical associations with the efforts of Parks Canada to interpret Canadian history through the reconstruction of historical sites.

The Servants' Quarters complements the design, materials and construction techniques of the sole original structure of the Fort (the Storehouse) and of the other reconstructed structures on the site. The design of the reconstructions and their placement with new "generic" structures within the reconstructed palisade were based on historic photographs and narratives and reflect the 1950s interpretation of the original Fort's character.

The Servants' Quarters is interesting as a product of the 1950s approach to reconstruction. It is a simple utilitarian building that was not intended to replicate any particular original building, with interior spaces that serve as a "stage" for the presentation of site interpretation.

The construction of this "generic" structure typifies Parks Canada's approach to reconstruction in the late 1950s, which emphasized the educational role of historic sites. The Fort Langley site was acquired by the federal government and designated a National Historic Site in 1923, but it was not until the late 1950s that the partial reconstruction of the site's early buildings took place. As part of the reconstructed Fort, the building reflects the interpretive programming put in place by Parks Canada which was based on reconstruction and the concept of "outdoor museums".

**Character Defining Elements**

The heritage character of the Servants' Quarters resides in features which contribute, by means of sympathetic form, volume and detailing, to recalling the original character of Fort Langley.

The one-and-one-half storey Servants' Quarters is a rectangular structure that is five bays in length and two bays in width. The building has been altered at various times to

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reflect the interpretive intent of the site. It is currently divided into three apartments, presenting an asymmetrical main elevation and recalling the functional uses of the original Fort's structures. The building was erected with heavy timbers using the Red River frame construction method and is covered with a hipped-roof. With its simple form, volume and construction details, the Servants' Quarters serves an important interpretive role within the Fort's palisade, and exhibits a consistency of design, materials and techniques with the other buildings on the site. Any interventions which would detract from this harmonious character, or which would alter evidence of the building's provenance as a 1950s reconstruction, should be avoided.

The management and maintenance of the structure's exterior should be designed to support the commemorative intent of the site and the principles of Cultural Resource Management.

Any alteration to the landscape surrounding the Servants' Quarters should be based on sound historical documentation, and should respect the intended presentation of the reconstructed Fort.

For further guidance, please refer to the *FHBRO Code of Practice*.

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