

Fog Alarm Building

Meldrum Bay
Mississagi Strait, Ontario

The fog alarm building at Mississagi Strait was constructed in 1906-07. The design was prepared by the Department of Marine and Fisheries. Alterations include removal of two chimneys, interior alterations, door and window modifications, re-roofing, and removal of the fog alarm. The building is currently a seasonal restaurant and is no longer used as an aid to navigation. The Canadian Coast Guard is the custodian. See FHBRO Building Report 93-57.

Reasons For Designation

The fog alarm building has been designated Recognized because of its environmental significance as well as its architectural importance and its historical associations.

The inter-relationship of the fog alarm building to the lighthouse and adjacent buildings on the site reflects the early functional character. Despite the remote location, the fog alarm building is a familiar landmark because of its association with the lighthouse, which has been extensively promoted in Manitoulin Island tourist literature.

The commodious wood-framed structure has pleasing proportions and simple massing. The principal features of the building are the offset gable roofs of the two main volumes of the building. The utilitarian design exhibits the smooth, simplified and crisp appearance typical of many marine buildings. The variety of window types reflects functional requirements, and their scale and generally symmetrical arrangements contribute to the domestic character of the modest structure.

The building is associated with efforts to improve maritime safety by providing navigational aids at dangerous locations. The fog alarm was an important aid to traffic using the Mississagi Strait, and aided the development of lumbering and fishing industries on Manitoulin Island, Georgian Bay and the North Shore.

Character Defining Elements

The heritage character of the fog alarm building resides in its overall form and proportions, construction materials, and site relationships.

The fog alarm building is a rectangular one-and-a-half-storey gable-roofed structure with a smaller gable-roofed wing. The structure has a simple stepped massing and

profile. The main volume was designed to serve the principal internal function of housing the fog alarm equipment, and the large, open volume should be maintained. The main roof profile has a cupola ridge ventilator, which also appears in early photographs and should be maintained. The roof profiles, footprint and massing should be respected.

The simple, traditional character of the building is a result of the use of materials such as wood shingle siding and roofing, and simple trim details. Extant features like the decorative gable panels and the roof ventilator should be maintained. The generally symmetrical door and window locations, with their simple, smooth forms and details, contrast with the fine-scaled texture of the shingle-clad facades and contribute to the visual richness. These materials merit an ongoing maintenance program.

The current roofing is asphalt shingles, which replaced wood shingles seen in early photographs. The asphalt shingles introduce a smoother and less textured appearance and do not follow traditional material precedents. Replacement roofing, where practicable, should follow historic precedent for materials and colours.

The multi-paned wood sash windows with their relatively heavy sashes and lighter muntins are sympathetic to the original design and should be maintained. The wood panelled entrance doors appear to follow the original design intentions and should also be maintained. Surviving original interior materials and finishes should be documented and preserved.

The informal landscape consisting of rock outcrops, conifers, and scrub brush contributes to the heritage character and should be maintained. The plant materials close to the building which are overgrown should eventually be removed.

97.06.30

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