

HERITAGE CHARACTER STATEMENT

Bunkhouse

Skoki Ski Lodge National Historic Site
Banff National Park, Alberta

The Bunkhouse of the Skoki Ski Lodge National Historic Site was built in 1936. Believed to have been constructed by Earl Spencer for Jim Boyce, it was one of three structures erected in the same year to provide additional accommodation. The building currently retains its original use as tourist accommodation. Parks Canada is the custodian of this National Historic Site. See FHBRO Building Report 96-105.

Reasons for Designation

The Bunkhouse of the Skoki Ski Lodge National Historic Site has been designated Classified primarily for its environmental significance but also for its architectural qualities and historical associations.

The Skoki Ski Lodge is environmentally significant for many reasons. Situated twelve miles north of Lake Louise in the Skoki Valley, the resort lies in the centre of magnificent ski touring country close to several glaciers. The Bunkhouse along with the four other guest cabins are arranged in a fan-like semi-circle around the centrally placed main building. Since access to the site remains unchanged, restricted to foot, horseback and ski trail, the remote wilderness character has survived.

Architecturally, the Skoki Ski Lodge in Banff National Park is a unique example of an original, rustic winter resort characteristic of the Banff region. It has remained virtually unchanged since its completion in 1936.

The historical significance of the Bunkhouse, as a component of the lodge, derives from its association with the growth of back-country recreation in the national parks and the development of tourism. Being the first such facility to operate on a commercial basis in Canada, the Skoki Ski Lodge represents the pioneering phase of skiing as a major recreational activity.

Character Defining Elements

The heritage character of the Bunkhouse at the Skoki Ski Lodge resides in its picturesque mountainous setting and in its simple rustic design. Its simple configuration and use of local materials exhibit the basic tenets of rustic architecture. The cabin's massing is simple: a single-room with a gabled roof. The roof is extended on log purlins over the entrance to shelter the stoop. The door is centred on the front gabled end. A single multi-paned window is centred on each of the remaining three elevations. The only additional features include a wooden stoop and a rustic porch swing. The patina of weathered wood contributes to the historic appearance. The

simple massing of the Bunkhouse is an important feature of the rustic aesthetic.

Wood is the predominant construction material. Locally-hewn spruce logs supply the bulk of construction material. The walls are of unscribed horizontal log construction with saddle-notched corners, characteristic of the traditional log construction practiced in the mountain parks during the early decades of this century. Multi-paned windows, the plank door and the tongue-and-groove floorboards are constructed of milled lumber components. Aluminum sheet-metal roofing has replaced the original wood shingles. Any repairs or upgrades should match the original construction materials and simplicity of execution. Consideration may be given to replacing the roof covering with wood shingles based on the original design.

The single-room interior is heated by a wood-burning stove. Facilities are simple but adequate, contributing to the back-country recreational experience. It would be fitting to maintain the function and the layout.

Located in a clearing on the banks of Little Pipestone Creek, the lodge consists of the main building surrounded by five guest cabins. The Bunkhouse remains on its original site, to the west of the main building. The historic relationship both to the alpine landscape and the other buildings has remained virtually unchanged since its construction in 1936. Beyond maintaining the traditional site relationships, preventing vehicular access is the most important factor in maintaining the remote, wilderness quality of the resort's setting.

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

Revised: 1998.12.16