

Fireweed Studio (formerly Giant Mine explosive storage)

MAP ID: D-16

DESIGNATION: HERITAGE SITE

ADDRESS: 49th Avenue (City Hall grounds)

CURRENT OWNER: City of Yellowknife

OCCUPANT: Fireweed Studio (YK Guild of Crafts)

CURRENT USE: Commercial

BUILT: 1939

CONSTRUCTION:

Log

DESCRIPTIVE HISTORY:

This cabin was built in 1939, at the Giant Mine property, during shaft sinking operations on the Brock gold vein by Giant Yellowknife Gold Mines Limited. The Brock vein was developed during 1939-1940, and this cabin was located a short distance down the hill from the shaft, being used as a powder magazine where dynamite explosives were stored in a secure and dry shed. The magazine continued to be used in the 1940s during renewed mining operations at Giant, but it was no longer used for storage of explosives with the construction of modern magazine bunkers nearer to the new mine workings in the late 1940s. Later, the cabin was the location of reagent storage and other supplies as required.

In 1973, Giant Mine sold the old cabin to the Yellowknife Chamber of Commerce for one dollar, and it was moved into Yellowknife. The Chamber planned to renovate the old cabin into a summer tourist cabin. Some work was completed in the summer of 1974, with the assistance of Poole Construction Limited who had the contract to build the new City Hall in the winter of 1974-1975. In exchange for storing some of their construction materials in the old cabin, Poole agreed to help restore the cabin. However, the building continued to be used for storage purposes until the summer of 1976 when the Chamber of Commerce, under executive director Ronne Hemming, opened the cabin to tourists. Some repairs were conducted to replace interior dry wall and flooring in 1988, and with the completion of a new visitor's centre in 1992 the cabin found alternative seasonal uses including for several years as the "Fireweed Studio" arts and crafts store operated by the Guild of Crafts. It was designated a City of Yellowknife Heritage Site in 1998.

The structure was removed from its foundation during landscaping at the new City Hall park in the summer of 2009 and given a new cement foundation, being relocated slightly to the north in the process. It continues to be used today as a summer tourist shop operated by the Yellowknife Guild of Crafts.

NOTES:

The official plaque is incorrect as this building was never used as a blacksmith shop. The Brock shaft shop was adjacent to the shaft in a frame building, while this building was located a fair distance from the Brock site.



REFERENCES:

News of the North, December 12, 1973; November 13, 1974; May 26, 1976; June 9, 1976
The Yellowknifer, April 18, 1974; April 6, 1988
Giant Mine maps and files