

FHBRO Number 92-017

Longview, Alberta

Saddle Horse Barn (Building 16) *FINAL*

Bar U Ranch

The Saddle Horse Barn was built in 1883 and is part of the first group of buildings erected at the Bar U Ranch. The building has undergone several modifications over the years to meet changing needs, including the extension to the south to store hay and feed, the doubling of the east wing and the reworking of the interior stall arrangement to provide single standing stalls rather than mixed accommodation. The Saddle Horse Barn is a component of the Bar U Ranch National Historic Site. Parks Canada is the custodian. See FHBRO Building Report 92-17.

Reasons for Designation

The Saddle Horse Barn, as a component of the Bar U Ranch complex, was designated “Classified” because of the historical associations of this building and the ranch as a whole, because of the exceptional qualities of the site and setting, and because of its functional design and contribution to the overall aesthetic qualities of the complex.

As part of the Bar U Ranch complex, the Saddle Horse Barn is closely associated with the development of ranching in Alberta. The structure is one of the earliest buildings constructed on the site and has been an important structure at the Bar U since the early days of the Ranch. Constructed in 1883, the Saddle Horse Barn is also associated with George Lane, a prominent Alberta cattleman, who was hired at the Bar U in 1884 to serve as the ranch foreman and who ran the ranch between 1902 and 1925. Finally, the Saddle Horse Barn is associated with Patrick Burns, who purchased the Bar U Ranch in 1927 to add to his vast cattle empire. Burns, who is recognized as the kingpin of the meat processing industry in western Canada during the mid-1920s, has been designated a person of national significance.

A major building on the site, the Saddle Horse Barn is the product of a simple, function-oriented design and yet has a strong aesthetic impact due to its scale, massing and patina. It is an excellent example of its type, and served to define this type of working building on a foothills ranch. Its log construction is similar to that found at Storage Buildings 8 and 9, the Blacksmith Shop and the Work Horse Barn. The many modifications give evidence of the Ranch’s ability to adapt buildings successfully to changing needs.

As part of a cohesive complex of buildings arranged to great functional effect in a simple and beautiful natural setting, the Saddle Horse Barn contributes significantly to the character of the Bar U Ranch. The structure is associated with the corral to its west, and is located immediately south of the main road and east of the Work Horse Barn. Located within the community centre, it is a component of the historical grouping that acted as the engine of the overall ranch operation. The grouping strongly complements the Pekisko Creek valley grassland and valley ridge on which it is located.

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The Saddle Horse Barn is also a component of the collection of pre-1927 buildings which contribute to the landmark value of the complex as one of the region's most important early ranch sites. This landmark value is reinforced by the designation of the complex as a National Historic Site.

Character Defining Elements

The heritage character of the Saddle Horse Barn resides in its construction techniques and materials, exterior finish, plan, interior features and setting.

The Saddle Horse Barn has two components: the original one-storey log building and a light-frame south addition, both with gable roofs. The walls of the original section consist of round logs with squared dovetail-notched corners. The side walls of the original section were constructed with vertical connector posts to link abutting horizontal logs. The roof is built with pole rafters supported at mid-span by heavy timber beams, and is clad with vertical shiplap under milled cedar shingles. Two dormers exist on each side of the roof, which were added after the addition was built, to improve ventilation. The addition's roof follows the original roof's shape, but is constructed with a light timber frame and is sheathed with horizontal shiplap and battens under milled cedar shingles. All of these features and materials contribute to the building's heritage character and should be respected in any future modifications or maintenance work.

The interior plan of the Saddle Horse Barn is a conventional, centre-hall plan, with stalls running along both sides and an upper loft area used for hay storage. A window and entrance door are located at each end, while a third door opens onto the paddock on the western side.

Any clues to the Saddle Horse Barn's evolution should be protected, including the surviving stone foundations, the three chinking and daubing configurations found at the logs of the main section, the obvious connection between the original log section and the frame section, and the archeological vestiges of no-longer-extant East Wing's location in both its shed-roofed and gable-roofed forms.

Any development should seek to retain the functional quality of the site and respect existing patterns of access and circulation. The relationships of the Saddle Horse Barn to the Work Horse Barn, the corral, the Blacksmith Shop, the main access road and to other structures of the community centre are important to its heritage character and should be protected. Any changes to circulation or access should consider historic patterns related to the movement of horses, their riders, wagons and motorized vehicles.

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

2000.03.27