

**FEDERAL HERITAGE BUILDING REVIEW OFFICE (FHBRO)
HERITAGE CHARACTER STATEMENT**

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| FHBRO Number: | 92-26 |
| DFRP Number: | 56457 |
| Resource Name: | Hudson's Bay Company Warehouse |
| Address: | 1251-55 St. Joseph Boulevard, Lachine, Québec |
| Construction: | 1803; 1833-1848, expansion new shape roof; 1980, restoration following a fire that left only the masonry walls standing |
| Original Function: | Warehouse connected to the fur trade (until 1861) |
| Current Function: | Interpretation centre on the history of the fur trade |
| Custodian: | Parks Canada |
| FHBRO Status: | "Recognized" Federal Heritage Building |

Reasons for Designation

The Hudson's Bay Company Warehouse was designated a "Recognized" Federal Heritage Building primarily because of its important historical associations and its environmental significance.

Historical value

This fully reconstructed warehouse makes it possible to illustrate one of the most significant themes in Canadian history: the fur trade. It also makes it possible to spotlight the predominant role played by Lachine in the vast commercial trade network.

From the earliest days of New France, the fur trade was the driving force for the colonial economy. The age of the *coureurs des bois* accounts for the favourable location of Lachine upstream of the rapids that block the St. Lawrence at Montreal. Lachine is where flotillas of westbound canoes would assemble and where trade goods and furs would be stored. After Canada passed into British hands, the fur trade remained the main economic activity in the country. From then on, almost every pelt was shipped to Great Britain, which gave Montreal, more specifically Lachine, a prime spot in the network, as almost two thirds of all skins bound for England passed through its port. The Hudson's Bay Company Warehouse is the central interpretative element at the Fur Trade at Lachine National Historic Site of Canada.

Architectural value

The architectural value of this stone warehouse lies in its recollection of this important period of our history, namely the fur trade. The architectural form of this fully restored building is representative of a mid 19th-century building: traditional house form with dormer windows, rough masonry (the only heritage materials that still exist) and a wood shingle roof.

Environmental value

The environmental value of the Hudson's Bay Warehouse is linked to the fact that the warehouse is the foundation of the site on which it stands. It is the only warehouse left that recalls the trade theme associated with the site. Standing alone on Père Marquette Pier, the warehouse has a prime spot and easily gets noticed. Its presence has a considerable impact on the cultural landscape of Lachine, while its role as a museum has made it a meeting place for local, regional and national history buffs.

Character-Defining Elements

- The evocative power of this fully restored building that illustrates an important theme in history, the fur trade – the period chosen for the restoration was the period when the building was being used as a warehouse by the Hudson's Bay Company (1833-1861): rectangular plan, solid masonry walls, low hipped roof reminiscent of the English Classicism of 19th-century utilitarian buildings; the dormers, however, are from a later period.
- The old fieldstone masonry walls and all other historical relics associated with the period of occupation related to the fur trade (before 1861).
- The relationship between the warehouse and its site alongside the St. Lawrence River, as that relationship is essential in understanding the historical theme being evoked.
- The significant visibility of the warehouse.

For guidance on interventions, please refer to the *FHBRO Code of Practice*. For further information, contact FHBRO.

February 2002