

Statement of Significance

St. Francis in the Woods - Queens Bay, BC



Description of Historic Place

St. Francis in the Woods is a timber frame single storey church with a cross gable roof and small belfry located on Lauder Road in the Kootenay community of Queens Bay, British Columbia.

Heritage Value

St. Francis in the Woods is valued as an important community resource and focal point for the residents of Queens Bay - a place for "strengthening their sense of community," and as a representative example of a surviving locally built vernacular church that reflects the early 20th century settlement patterns along the shore of Kootenay Lake.

Built as a church in 1914, with the first service in April of 1915, St. Francis in the Woods was consecrated in 1927 and deconsecrated in 1994. Through its construction with donated materials and labour, the celebration of important events and its revival and reinvention as a community hall, the building and property have strong social and cultural value as the focal point for the surrounding community.

Additionally, heritage value is found in its prominent location that serves as a gateway to the community. Its locally derived vernacular form of asymmetrical gabled roofs and shingled walls with a simple but expressive interior structure has been well maintained and sympathetically adapted to its new role as a community hall.

Character Defining Elements

The elements that define the character of St. Francis in the Woods are:

- prominent position at the bend of Lauder Road next to the ravine
- the form and massing of a single storey vernacular church with asymmetrical gabled roofs and shingled walls
- original casement window assemblies with original hardware
- arched leaded glass windows in the chancel from the old St. Andrews in Trail, BC
- open front porch with planked door, side entrance with open gabled porch
- open soffits under the eaves and closed gable soffits
- shingle pattern and installation at the corners
- belfry with open sides and wide plank siding - dedicated in 1971 to Pte. Thomas C. Ough
- interior details include window trim, baseboards, open ceiling and timber work, and original floors

Map



a current aerial showing St. Francis in the Woods located on Lauder Road at Hamilton Drive

Historic Brief

Queens Bay was part of the Anglican parish of Kokanee, formed in 1909, which also included Balfour, Procter, Longbeach, and Crawford Bay.

Construction on St. Francis in the Woods began in mid-1914 on a piece of land donated by the Bashford family to a design sketched out by Harry Scott Lauder. It was completed almost a year later in April, 1915. Materials for the construction were donated by local residents and Nelson merchants. Nearly everyone in Queens Bay was involved, with the handcrafted altar, pews and font created by Stephen Hollingworth. The church was originally given the name of All Hallows, but on May 13th 1927 when it was consecrated by Bishop Doull, it was renamed as St. Francis in the Woods.

The stained glass windows in the chancel were procured by Vicar Edington (St. Francis in the Woods Vicar 1956-1963) from the old St. Andrew's Church in Trail, with installation financed by the Attree and Hirst families on behalf of loved ones. Miss Haroldine Copp became the patron of the church and supported it through a variety of fundraising efforts resulting in a new roof, electric baseboard heaters, interior painting, the addition of a small washroom annex (re-purposed in 2005 as a kitchen) and foundation repairs - between 1969 and 1974; a belfry was also erected during this period as a memorial dedicated in 1971 to Pte. Thomas C. Ough.

Faced with declining attendance the church was deconsecrated by archbishop David Crawley in 1994, and in 1996 St. Francis in the Woods was purchased by the community of Queens Bay (The Queens Bay Residents Association) for one dollar. After the purchase additional renovations were carried out including insulating the roof, building a small kitchen extension added to the south side of the transept in the early 2000s, and other interior modifications. Floors were insulated and electric heating was installed. In 2014 the stained glass windows were removed, repaired and reinstalled in the chancel. A new covered porch was built at the north end of the transept in a style that is in keeping with the church. Most recently, work was carried out on the foundation with the addition of exterior metal panels to keep animals out of the crawl space.

Research Findings and Resources

All historic resources provided by files and records compiled by the Queens Bay Residents Association including church records, local newspapers, maps etc.

Construction date: Begun 1914, completed April 1915

source: Queens Bay Residents Association files, Nelson Daily News April, 1915

Original owner: Diocese of Kootenay

Land donated by the Bashford family

source: Queens Bay Residents Association files

Architect: plans sketched by local resident Harry Scott Lauder

source: Queens Bay Residents Association files