

Bullock's Bistro (formerly Weaver & Devore Trading Post)

MAP ID: C-60

DESIGNATION: HERITAGE SITE

ADDRESS: (Lot 17, Block 2, Plan 179)

CURRENT OWNER: Weaver & Devore Trading Ltd.

OCCUPANT: Bullock's Bistro restaurant

CURRENT USE: restaurant

BUILT: 1936 or 1937 (see Notes)

CONSTRUCTION:

Log cabin with frame addition on rear.



DESCRIPTIVE HISTORY:

Harry Weaver and Ellis 'Bud' Devore arrived in Yellowknife Bay in the summer of 1936 and established a trading business, "Weaver & Devore Trading Ltd.", the first such commercial enterprise in the Yellowknife mining district. The two men operated the only fur trading post until 1938 when the Hudson's Bay Company arrived. The log cabin post was erected in 1936 or 1937 (see Notes) and constituted only the front log section; the second log section was added in July of 1938, and the very rear frame section sometime later in the 1940s. Apparently the floor of one of their barges was dismantled and formed the original floor of the trading post. The upstairs was storage and living space for the Weaver family.

Harry E. Weaver obtained first lease to Block 2, Lot 17 on August 1, 1938; this was renewed to July 31, 1968 but under a land sale agreement in October 1950 the property was held under an annual free-hold tenure through the town administration.

Weaver & Devore continued as a very successful general merchant and outfitting business during the post-war gold boom in the 1940s, and continued to thrive in the 1950s after most of the other business moved to New Town. Bud Devore sold out of the business in 1954. In June 1959, the adjacent A.S. Hodgson Limited, another long-term Old Town general merchant, closed down, and Weaver acquired its warehouse building (the former Mining Corporation warehouses). Weaver & Devore relocated to A.S. Hodgson's renovated premise in August 1961. The old log cabin was from then on used only as storage by the Weaver business and slowly deteriorated until the Weaver family with City support replaced the foundation logs in 1993.

Sandra Bullock opened "Bullock's Bistro" here in about 1998 and it thrives today as a very popular local restaurant serving fish and chips, and is a well-known tourist landmark. The front façade was replaced in 2003, removing the original asbestos clad tiles and "Weaver & Devore" sign, replacing it with a similar tile material. A side porch entrance was added in 2011.

NOTES:

The date of construction is not clear. While it is certain that Weaver & Devore made their first trade run to Yellowknife Bay in 1936, it is likely that they did not erect this post until the summer of 1937. No building is visible at this location in photographs taken of the nearby Mining Corporation double warehouse (which were built in 1937). Shack at the rear of the property dates from the late 1930s and has been used as a warehouse by Weaver since it was built.

REFERENCES:

News of the North, August 24, 1961
The Yellowknifer, January 9, 2002
AANDC Land Files; GNWT Land Titles
Heritage Building Inventory for Old Town, 1986