

Joyce Estate, Bathhouse (Sauna) (Teahouse)
Chippewa National Forest Road 2144,
3 miles north of County Road 335
Grand Rapids vicinity
Itasca County
Minnesota

HABS No. MN-146-D

HABS
MINN
31-GDRAP.V,
3D-

PHOTOGRAPHS
HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Rocky Mountain Regional Office
Department of the Interior
P.O. Box 25287
Denver, Colorado 80225

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

JOYCE ESTATE,
BATHHOUSE (Sauna) (Teahouse)

HABS No. MN-146-D

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31-6DRAP.V
3D-

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. **Date of Erection** Ca. 1920.
2. **Original and Subsequent Owners** In 1916, David Gage Joyce secured the site of the Bathhouse and nearby buildings through the services of Simeon D. Patrick, who purchased the land as an intermediary. In 1917, Joyce acquired title in his own name. After Joyce's death in 1937, the property passed to his wife Beatrice Rudolph and daughter Beatrice Clotilde. In 1946, two years before her death, Beatrice Rudolph conveyed full title to Beatrice Clotilde, who retained ownership until her own death in 1972. In 1973, the Nature Conservancy purchased the property and resold it at cost the following year to the United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service for incorporation into the Chippewa National Forest.¹
3. **Builders, Contractors, Suppliers** Unknown
4. **Alterations and Additions** This building was originally a one-story bathhouse, with a roof sundeck edged by a simple wood balustrade. A long pole supporting a birdhouse arose from the center of the sundeck. A chimney was added in the late 1940s, when the changing room was converted into a sauna. In the early 1950s, in imitation of a Japanese teahouse, the porch was enclosed by sliding, plastic panels and a framed gable roof. Subsequently, the panels have been removed, and the roof changed to a hip configuration.² A stairway with an Adirondacks-style, stickwork railing descended from the second floor along the building's southeastern and northeastern sides; it was removed about 1990. A shed-roofed hood made of sticks, which sheltered the first-floor door, is also

¹ S.D. Patrick, Deed to David G. Joyce, 9 May 1917, Deed Book 35, 103; "In the Matter of the Estate of David Gage Joyce, Final Decree of Distribution," 30 June 1938, Book of Deeds 144, 401-406; Beatrice Rudolph Joyce, Deed to Beatrice Clotilde Joyce, 3 July 1946, Deed Book 167, 249 (all the foregoing in the Itasca County Recorder's Office, Itasca County Courthouse, Grand Rapids, MN); "Former Joyce Estate Is Dedicated to Public," Grand Rapids Herald Review, 14 October 1974.

² Author's interview with Joseph Waleski, Jr., Grand Rapids, MN, 22 January 1987.

gone. The sauna no longer functions.³

- B. Historical Context:** According to Joseph Waleski, Jr., a former caretaker of the Joyce Estate, the bathhouse was built about 1920. For further information, see the historical overview of the Joyce Estate in HABS No. MN-146.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. **Architectural Character** The Bathhouse is the only two-story building on the Joyce Estate. Since its construction, it has been transformed from a utilitarian bathhouse into a sauna, and then into a whimsical Japanese teahouse. Now stripped of most ornamentation, and its doors and windows covered with boards, the building recalls an abandoned tower of a frontier stockade.
2. **Condition of Fabric** Fair; deteriorated.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. **Overall Dimensions** Approximately 11'0" by 11'0".
2. **Foundations** Random-laid fieldstone.
3. **Walls** Peeled, saddle-notched logs, painted brown.
4. **Structural System, Framing** The first floor is of log construction. The floor of the second story is supported by log stringers, about 16" on center. The second-story porch is edged by an open wood frame.
5. **Porches** The second story is an open porch, edged by crossed-plank railing.
6. **Chimneys** The sauna's brick chimney rises through the second-story floor, piercing the northern ridge of the porch's hipped roof. The chimney is crowned by a pyramidal, sheet-metal cap.

³ The stickwork is noted in Rolf T. Anderson, The Joyce Estate: A Reuse Study (St. Paul: Chippewa National Forest and Minnesota Historical Society, 1989), 22; it was missing in July 1993, when the author conducted a site survey of the Joyce Estate.

7. Openings

- a. **Doorways and Doors** The building's only door, situated on the northwest wall, is covered with a plywood board. Stick brackets survive from the shed-roofed stick hood which once topped the doorway.
- b. **Windows and Shutters** A large window on the northeast side is covered with a plywood board. Split logs trim the opening's sides and top; a 2"x4" board edges the bottom. The same materials surround a small, high window opening on the northeastern side. This opening, which also is boarded, retains a shed-roofed stick hood, supported by stick brackets.

8. Roof

- a. **Shape, Covering** Pyramidal hipped roof with sheet-metal cap; green composition shingles.
- b. **Cornice, Eaves** Exposed 2"x4" rafter tails beneath the eaves.
- c. **Dormers, Cupolas, Towers** None.

9. **Stairways** A stairway with an Adirondacks-style stickwork railing descended from the second floor along the building's northeastern corner; it was removed between 1989 and 1993.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor Plans

- a. **Describe Floors** The following discussion of the building's interior is based on documentation prepared by Stuart MacDonald and Jeffrey A. Hess in 1986.⁴ First- and second-floor interiors were not accessible when survey was undertaken for this HABS documentation. According to MacDonald and Hess, each floor consists of a single, undivided space.

2. **Stairways** Steps with a railing ascend to the sauna platform on the first floor.

⁴ Stuart Macdonald and Jeffrey A. Hess, HABS/HAER Inventory Card for Bathhouse, 1986, in MacDonald and Mack and Jeffrey A. Hess, "Cultural Resource Overview, Joyce Estate," prepared for Chippewa National Forest, 1987, in Chippewa National Forest Headquarters Building, Cass Lake, MN.

3. **Flooring** The first story has a concrete floor. On the second story, the floor is covered with canvas, painted black.
4. **Wall and Ceiling Finishes** Exposed log walls. Composition ceiling first floor; exposed 2"x4" framing and wood sheathing over porch.
5. **Openings**
 - a. **Doorways and Doors** Vertical log door with half-log battens.
 - b. **Windows** No information available.
6. **Decorative Features and Trim** The first-floor sauna has an elevated wood-frame sauna platform with a bench.
7. **Hardware** No information available.
8. **Mechanical Equipment**
 - a. **Heating, Air Conditioning, Ventilation** The sauna was heated by a brick stove; its condition is uncertain.
 - b. **Lighting** No information available.
 - c. **Plumbing** No information available.

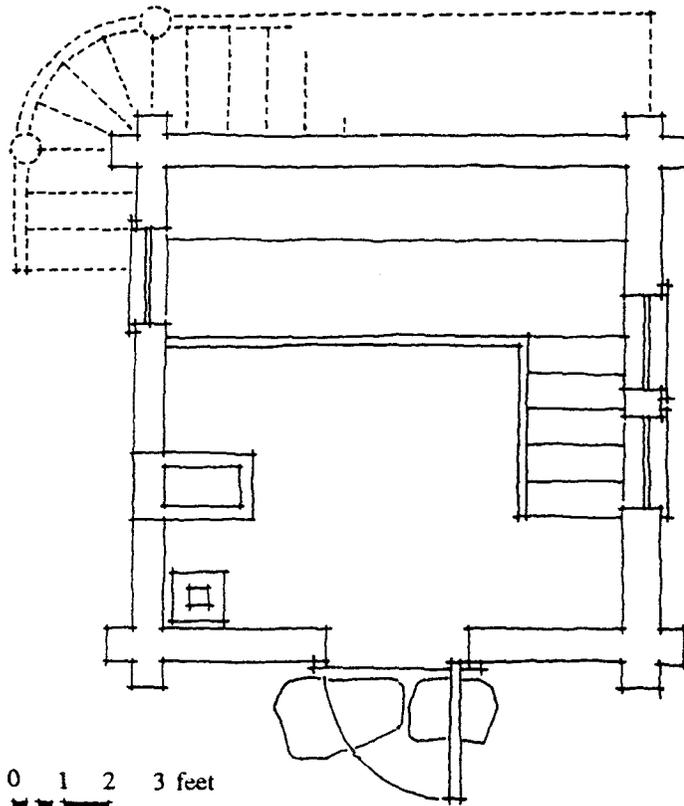
D. Site:

1. **General Setting and Orientation** The Bathhouse is located near the tip of Larson's Point, one of the most picturesque sites on the estate. Designed as a changing room for swimmers, it is adjacent to a sand beach. For further information, see HABS No. MN-146.
2. **Historic Landscape Design** A graveled path led from the Bathhouse to the Main Cabin (HABS No. MN-146-A) about 200 feet to the west. The intervening area, comprising mostly level ground, was landscaped with a grassy lawn dotted with native conifers and irregularly shaped beds of flowers and ornamental plantings banked by rocks and gravel.

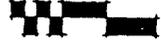
PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- A. **Early Views:** Photograph of north and west sides, dated ca. 1925, in Joseph Waleski, Jr., Photograph Album, in Chippewa National Forest Headquarters Building, Cass Lake, MN. Documents original construction, showing one-story structure with railing-enclosed sundeck and birdhouse. No exterior stairway is visible.
- B. **Interviews:** See HABS No. MN-146.
- C. **Bibliography:**
 - 1. **Primary and Unpublished Sources** See HABS No. MN-146.
 - 2. **Secondary and Published Sources** See HABS No. MN-146.
- D. **Likely Sources not yet Investigated:** See HABS No. MN-146.

PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION See HABS No. MN-146.



0 1 2 3 feet



0 1 meter



north

SKETCH PLAN: BATHHOUSE