

Northern Cheyenne Agency,  
Building No. 56  
950 Feet North of US Highway 212 on  
US Highway 39  
Lame Deer  
Rosebud County  
Montana

HABS No. MT-86-A

HABS  
MONT  
44-LADE,  
2A-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Denver, Colorado 80225-0287

HISTORICAL AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY  
NORTHERN CHEYENNE AGENCY, BUILDING 56

HABS  
MONT  
44-LADE,  
2A-

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Location: On U.S. Highway 39, 950 feet north of U.S. Highway 212, Lame Deer, Rosebud County, Montana

Significance: Building 56 contributes to the signignificance of the Northern Cheyenne Agency. The building was part of the systematic construction and modernization program. The structure is significant because of its association with New Deal policies at the agency and with New Deal agency architecture.

History: Building 56 was erected in 1936-1937 by the Civilian Conservation Corps-Indian Division (CCC-ID) at a cost of \$4,240.64, as part of project number 93 of the CCC-ID at the Tongue River Agency. The Roosevelt administration established the CCC in early 1933 to provide work for the unemployed young men. A branch of the program, the Indian Division, was established by the Interior Department to aid the inhabitants of Indian reservations. By the time it was finally ended in 1942, the CCC-ID employed thousands of Indians, largely on conservation projects. Some funds, however, were appropriated for the construction of new BIA buildings, such as Building 56. Plans for the building may have been prepared at the District CCC office in Billings, which employed engineers and draftsmen. Building 56 may have been erected to house personnel of the Indian Emergency Civil Works program (which included the CCC-ID). [1]

Description:

The building is a one story rectangular house, which sits on a concrete foundation. It is a timber crib structure with the timbers milled to simulate logs. Building 56 is considered to be in poor condition.

Exterior:

1. Overall Dimensions: The building, including the front and rear porch, measures 28' across and 56'-01" long.

2. Foundation: The foundation is concrete and placed to form a basement. The porches rest on concrete masonry units that rest on concrete footing.

3. Wall Construction: Exterior walls are timber crib with timbers milled to simulate logs. The timbers are nailed together. The exterior timbers act as structural load bearing walls.

4. Porches: The west porch measures 24' across and 10' deep. It is a glassed-in porch with 3/4" x 3 1/2" tongue and groove flooring. The windows and framing rest on timber crib timbers. The east porch is 24' across and 10' deep. It is a screened-in porch with 3/4" x 3 1/2" tongue and groove flooring. The screens and framing rest on timber crib timbers. Both porches have hipped roofs covered with wood shingles.

5. Chimney: The chimney is a brick masonry type that extends from the basement through the roof. The chimney is located approximately in the center of the house. The chimney is no longer used since the house is heated by electric base board units.

6. Openings:

A. Doorways and doors: Both porches have screen doors that measure 32" x 6'8". The west interior door measures 32" x 6'8" and is a three panel solid wood door with a 21 1/2" x 25 1/2" single pane glass. The east interior door measures 32" x 6' 8" and is a hollow core wood door.

B. Windows: Windows are double-hung with single pane glass. There are two size windows in the house, 27" x 53" and 26 1/2" x 33".

7. Roof: The main roof is gabled. Wood shingles were used and the end gables are trimmed with 1" x 6" boarder. Both porches have hipped roofs.

Interior:

1. Floor Plan: Entry can be made at either the front or back door. The Front door opens into the living room which is flanked by a bedroom. The dining and living room are a single room. The kitchen is accessed by the dining room and the back door. The back bedroom is accessed through the kitchen, the back door and the hall and the hallway between the bedrooms. The bathroom is accessible through either of the two bedrooms or the dining room. The basement is unfinished.

2. Stairway: Access to the basement is provided by a single flight of stairs. The tread size is 2" x 10" x 41" with 7" risers.

3. Flooring: The flooring is laid east to west and consists of hardwood 3/4" x 3 1/2" tongue and groove. All the floors are covered with carpeting except the kitchen and bathroom, which have vinyl coverings. The sub-floor consists of true dimensions 1" x 6" lays diagonally. The floor joists are true dimension 2" x 12" placed 16" on center, they are medially supported by a 10" x 10" pine beam.

4. Wall and Ceiling Finish: Interior wall finishes average 4 1/2". The finishes are composed of lath and plaster with an oil base coating. The base boards in the house measure 1/2" x 7" and have an oil base coating.

5. Doorways and Doors: Doors are horizontal five panel, measuring 2'8" x 6'8". All are cased with 3 1/2" x 1/2" pine boards.

6. Windows: Windows are as described above. They are cased with 3 1/2" x 1/2" pine boards.

7. Light Fixtures: All are later twentieth century models.

8. Heating: Heat is provided by electric base board heaters. No insulation exists in this home.

9. Overall Condition: The overall condition of this home is poor at best. The kitchen is gutted, the room is sagging; approximately 10% of the exterior structural members are rotting and need replacement; the roof needs to be replaced; the bathroom is gutted; and the carpet has been pulled up half way and left. The wiring is in violation of the national electric code.

Project information:

This Historic American Building Survey (HABS) recording project was undertaken by the BIA, Billings Area Office. The historic documentation was conducted by Fred Quivik and Mark Fiege of Renewable Technologies, Inc. of Butte, Montana. The architectural analysis and descriptions were prepared by Bruce Ward of the BIA, Billings Area office. The photographs were taken by Jerry Leggate, photographer for the Bureau of Reclamation.

Endnotes:

1. Fred Quivik and Mark Fiege, Historic Architecture of 6 Montana Indian Agencies (1987) p. 146-163. Renewable Technologies, Inc. prepared for Bureau of Indian Affairs.