



WHITEHORSE, YUKON

SKOOKUM JIM FRIENDSHIP CENTRE

TOWER ER ADDI- TION

The Skookum Jim Friendship Centre (SJFC) in Whitehorse bears the name of James Mason otherwise known as Skookum Jim, a Tagish man and discoverer of gold on Bonanza Creek in 1897 leading to the great Klondike Gold Rush.

Skookum Jim was highly regarded by his people. Upon his death, Skookum Jim's fortune from the gold rush was put in trust, and according to the terms of his will, the interest generated by the money was to be used to help obtain a better standard of health and education for first nations people in the Yukon. The trust fund is still in existence today and assists in the financing of the SJFC which provide programming services to urban aboriginal people.

Kobayashi + Zedda Architects developed a concept design based on a stylized 'food cache'. The raised structure of the tower addition held an association with the ubiquitous food cache used by first nations people and pioneers to safeguard their food stores from wild animals. While far different in scale, the food cache structure was abstracted to create a modern notion of attachment to the land and a traditional lifestyle. The food cache can be associated with act of sharing food that takes place frequently at the Friendship Centre.

The proposed renovation and tower addition will allow SJFC to more than double their available programming area. This design will also provide open work areas for the majority of staff, instead of enclosed offices, which not only increases area for programs, but allows for staff growth in the future. The tower format allowed the SJFC to provide additional area on their existing tight urban sight without having to move their entire operation to another location within the downtown core.