

THE MODERN ARCHITECTURE OF NORTH VANCOUVER, 1930-1965



Heritage Building Inventory
Donald Luxton & Associates

'THE SKY BUNGALOW'
3355 Aintree Drive
Fred Thornton Hollingsworth,
Architect
1950

This striking structure is one of the icons of the development of Modernism on the West Coast. In 1949, developer Eric Allan and Architect Fred Hollingsworth approached the manager of the Hudson's Bay in Vancouver with an idea for promoting Allan's Capilano Highlands subdivision. They proposed that they would build a version of Hollingsworth's generic post-and-beam house - the 'Neoteric' on the Bay's Seymour Street parking lot. This would not only promote this type of housing, but also modern furnishings and appliances, and the new postwar suburban lifestyle. The pitch was accepted, and the 'Sky Bungalow' was built and opened to the public.

The design was similar to Hollingsworth's standard residential floor plans, but was lifted into the air on a concrete block pier, and cantilevered on steel beams, in order to minimize the amount of parking spaces affected - in the end the house's footprint only took six parking spots. Rather than the usual ground-hugging appearance of these houses, this gave the 'Sky Bungalow' a dynamic, soaring profile that excited both thousands of visitors who toured it and journalists of the time. It was considered startlingly contemporary, and was the first time that many people saw what soon became common features of the new West Coast houses.

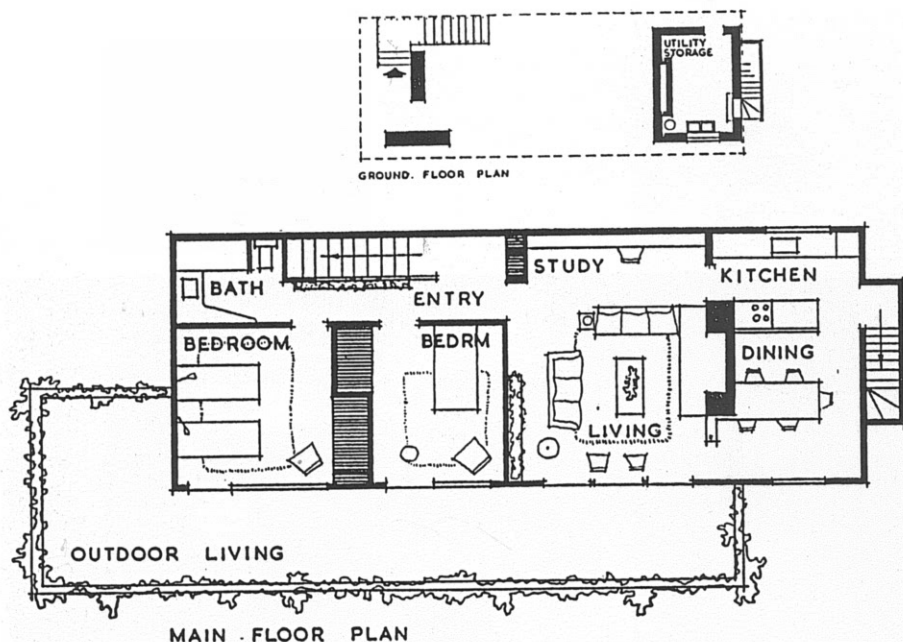


'Perhaps most remarkable about the Sky Bungalow is its warmth. We've rarely seen anything that deserves more the word "modern." Yet most of us want coziness in our homes, and contemporary design, however breathtaking, must give it to us if we are to part easily from our Cape Cods and Colonials. The Sky Bungalow does!'

'Maybe it was the natural fir plywood and warm cedar walls, or perhaps the red brick fireplace wall. At any rate, we felt it would be a pleasant place in which to live. Canadians understand the warm glow of natural wood, the reddish-brown of brick, the alive spring colorings of green and yellow, and like to live with them.'

'The decorating staff of the local department store which supplied the furnishings were stimulated by Hollingsworth's sensitive feeling for color and texture. The cocoa brown chesterfield and heavy-textured citron yellow drapes in the living room blend perfectly with the cedar shelves and fir plywood. Little Chinese Kwan Yins beside the fireplace and pieces of Indian brass on the limed oak coffee table add accent spots of interest.'

'This sense of unity in color and texture is carried throughout all the rooms, and is achieved with a variety of shades of green, yellows and browns. Chocolate-brown corduroy bedspreads in the master bedroom with golden-yellow drapes figured with chocolate

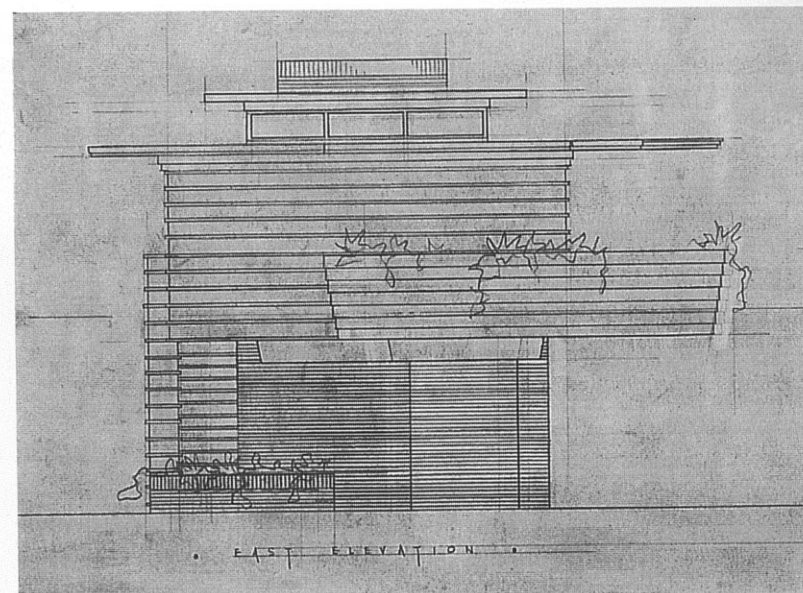


Canadian Homes & Gardens
June 1950, Vol.27, P. 23

brown leaves, for example. Add to this blond oak furniture, oak floorings and heavily textured rugs and you will know some of the color-texture harmony which prevails in the modest two-bedroom "Sky Bungalow."

Canadian Homes & Gardens, June 1950, pages 22-24.

After the exhibition ended, the house was purchased by Len A. Nikoloric, and moved to a permanent site in the Capilano Highlands. It was placed on a new base, designed by Hollingsworth, rooting the building to the ground in a manner more typical of his other buildings, and survives today in surprisingly original condition. Much of the interior is also intact.



Original plans, 1950
© Fred Thornton Hollingsworth

