

**Laitinen Log House**  
**751 Highway 97 NE**  
**Salmon Arm, B.C.**  
**Circa 1922**

Previous location: 3861 30 Street NE (formerly Broadview Road North) (1922 until moved to current location)

### **Description**

The Laitinen Log House is a one-and-a-half storey, gable roof home complete with a small front veranda. Located at R.J. Haney Heritage Village & Museum in Salmon Arm, the house dates back to the early to mid 1920s, when newlyweds Albert and Vera Laitinen constructed it from logs on their property.

### **Values**

The Laitinen Log House is valued for its social and aesthetic significance.

The Laitinen Log House is valued for both its societal significance and association with Albert and Vera Laitinen. Albert was the son of Matt Laitinen, an early Finnish settler who was killed in a railway accident working for the CPR in 1911. Mary Catarine (Catherine) Laitinen, Albert's mother, earned the letters patent for 160 acres on the SE ¼ Section 25 Township 20 Range 10 West of the 6<sup>th</sup> Meridian on Broadview Road. Mary subdivided 19.15 acres from the property to give to her son when Albert and Vera were married in 1922.

Vera Laitinen nee Halpenny was the first teacher at the Broadview School. Opened in 1918, it is now located at R.J. Haney Heritage Village & Museum.

The couple made significant social contributions to the City of Salmon Arm. Albert was a volunteer fireman, an ambulance attendant, and worked with the Red Cross, CNIB, and Meals on Wheels.

Vera worked tirelessly as a volunteer to help cancer survivors, with the Women's Institute, Red Cross, United Church Women's Auxiliary, and Broadview Community Club. She was the first person in Salmon Arm to earn her St. John's Ambulance Certificate.

Both Vera and Albert were thrifty and did not believe in spending money needlessly. Their shared character trait is reflected in the choice of finishes in their simple dwelling.

Their home was a social hub and the couple frequently entertained. Tom Davidson often played fiddle at their place and dances were held in the living room. Vera loved to feed people and was famous for her cheese straw recipe.

The Laitinen House is cabin-like in construction. It is aesthetically important for its largely original exterior materials and unassuming form and detailing. The house was built by Victor Pelto, a Finnish-born family friend, and Jack Hautala, Albert's brother-in-law, while the couple lived with Albert's mother, Maria (Mary) Laitinen. Constructed from second growth forest from the property and from locally available materials, the house is unique as the logs were not hewn, but rather peeled, left rounded, and then side-notched and chinked. Strips of wood cover the chinking between the logs both in and outside the structure. The couple painted the exterior of the house brown.

The house had no services (electricity or plumbing) when it was built. Part of the porch was closed in for a dining nook and two additions were added on as the family grew—a sleeping room adjoined the living room where the couple slept, while a bathroom was added west of the kitchen around 1946. The two additions were taken off the building in preparation for the move from Broadview Road to R.J. Haney Heritage Village & Museum and were not restored as they were not original to the structure.

### **Character Defining Elements**

#### Site:

- A yellow rosebush planted outside the kitchen window in memory of Vera Laitinen

#### Building:

- One-and-a-half-storey round log construction
- Gable roof
- Gable ends and porch enclosure clad in tapered cedar shakes
- Cedar shingle roof
- Log exterior walls
- Original doors and single pane windows
- Original fir floors with a trap door that went to the cellar
- Two matching six paned windows in the breakfast nook that were used in the original construction