

1 Quebec Indian Community Project

The Quebec Indian Housing Project initiated and executed the design and construction of experimental houses in response to environmental and socio-cultural needs of Quebec Indians. The project intended to demonstrate that environmental needs could be satisfied through energy-saving techniques effected in design, and that socio-cultural aspirations could be met by involving Indians at all levels of planning and work — as clients, in construction, design, and administration. Each of the four units were designed to be culturally and environmentally appropriate for a particular region of Quebec. Two houses were constructed at Manitou College, an indigenous vocational school for Indian, Inuit, and Metis, about 170 km. north of Montreal. One house was built at Mistassini, a reserve 545 km. north of Montreal, and one at Waswanipi River about 320 km. east of Matagami.

The project was designed to employ natural energy systems (solar, wind), and to use locally-available building materials in the construction of the dwellings. The introduction of environmentally appropriate building and energy systems combined with the use of indigenous labour and local materials addressed the desire for indigenous control of housing and the need for an efficient and economic approach to housing design.

The primary thrust of the project has been to involve the Indian community in the design and construction process: In this context, the innovations in technology were not gratuitous contributions, but integrated with the working principles that governed the project's objectives.

The project was developed and directed by Brian McCloskey of the Shelter Systems Group, McGill School of Architecture. Research associate was Blair Hamilton, and solar consultants, the Brace Research Institute. Funding was provided by the Donner Canadian Foundation, the Quebec Department of Indian Affairs and the Ministry of State for Urban Affairs.

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Mistassini solar collector is brine-filled barrels.

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South-east view of Pointe Bleu house.

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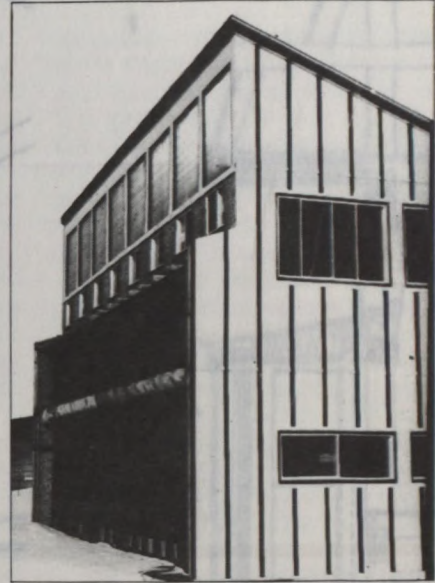
Waswanipi solar collector is water-filled plastic bottles.

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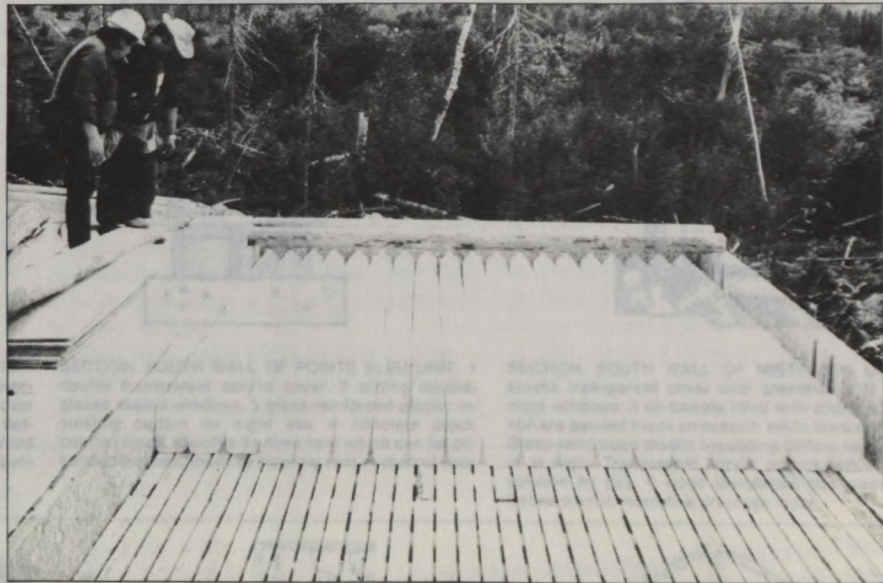
Front view of Cote Nord house.



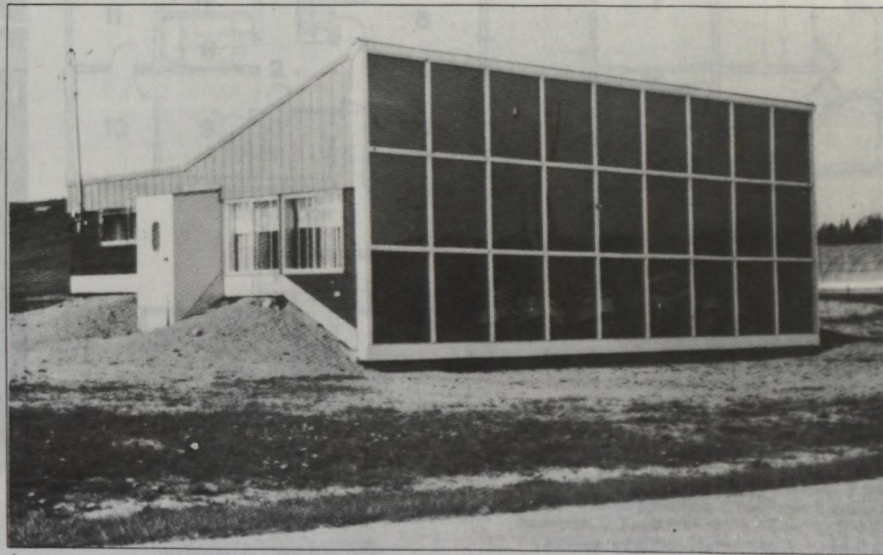
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