

CHAPTER 5

PRESERVATION OF ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES



Introduction

Ornamental trim, including cornices, brackets and moldings are usually key character-defining features that contribute to the significance of historic structures in Truckee. This chapter provides general guidelines for treatment of such features. These apply to all historic structures. In addition, chapter six which follows, provides more information for some of the most typical details. Both chapters apply.

The best way to preserve historic building features is through well-planned maintenance. In some cases, historic building features may be damaged or deteriorated. When damage or deterioration occurs, repair the feature and any other related problems. In other situations, however, some features, or portions of the feature, may be beyond repair. In such a case, consider replacement. It is important, however, that the extent of replacement features be minimized, because the original feature contributes to the authenticity of the property as a historic resource. Even when the replacement feature exactly matches that of the original, the integrity of a historic building is to some extent compromised when extensive amounts of a feature or features are removed. This is because the original feature exhibits a record of the labor and craftsmanship from an earlier time. It is also important to recognize that all features weather over time and that a scarred finish to a feature does not represent an inferior feature, but simply reflects the age of the building. Preserving original features that show signs of wear is therefore preferred to their replacement.

Topics Discussed in this Chapter:

1. Preservation of historic features
2. Repair of deteriorated features
3. Replacement with new features
4. Reconstruction of missing features



Historic features, including building and architectural details, building form and scale contribute to the character and significance of a structure and should be preserved.

References:

- ☞ Also consult *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Rehabilitation of Historic Buildings*.
- ☞ Also consult *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Illustrated Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings*.

1. Preservation of Historic Features

Overall, a high percentage of the original materials and features of a property must be maintained in a good condition, in order to retain the integrity of the resource as an historic property. Historic features, including architectural details, form and scale contribute to the character and significance of a structure and should be preserved. Continued maintenance is the best preservation method.

A. Protect and maintain significant stylistic features.

- 1) Maintain historic features so that intervention is not required. Employ preventative treatments such as rust removal, caulking, limited paint removal and reapplication of paint.

B. Avoid removing or altering significant architectural features.

- 1) Original doors, windows, porches, turned columns, brackets and jigsaw ornaments are examples of architectural features which should not be removed or altered.



Maintain character-defining features. Then, repair only those features that are deteriorated. Finally, replace only those features that are beyond repair.



Employ treatments such as rust removal, caulking, limited paint removal and reapplication of paint in preservation procedures.

References:

- ☞ For treatment of architectural features on non-historic buildings and for new buildings see Chapter 13.

2. Repair of Deteriorated Features

In some cases, original architectural features may be deteriorated. All details weather over time and a scarred finish does not represent an inferior material, but simply reflects the age of the building. Where repair is necessary, however, these guidelines apply.

A. Repair those features that are deteriorated.

- 1) Isolated areas of damage may be stabilized using consolidants. For example, epoxies and resins may be considered for wood repair.
- 2) Patch, piece-in, splice, consolidate or otherwise stabilize existing materials.
- 3) Removing a damaged feature that can be repaired is inappropriate.
- 4) Protect other architectural features that are adjacent to the area being worked on.

B. When disassembly of an historic feature is necessary for its restoration, minimize damage to the original material.

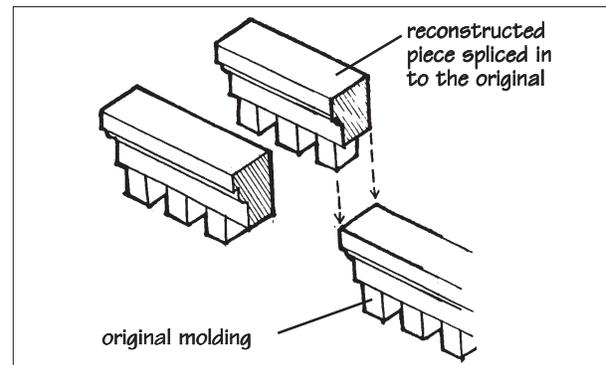
- 1) Document the location of an historic feature to be disassembled so it may be repositioned accurately.



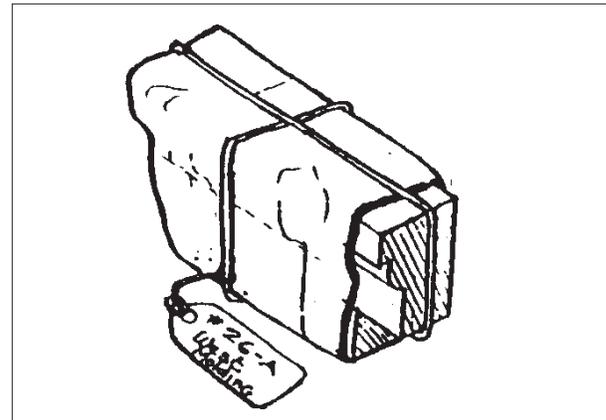
Maintain character-defining features such as original porches. Repair those features that are deteriorated.

C. Use procedures for cleaning, refinishing and repairing an architectural feature that will not damage its appearance or material.

- 1) When choosing a preservation treatment, use the gentlest means possible that will achieve the desired results. Sandblasting is inappropriate.
- 2) Repairs such as rust removal, caulking, limited paint removal and reapplication of paint are recommended.



Repair only those features that are deteriorated.



When disassembly of an historic feature is required in a restoration procedure, document its location so it may be repositioned accurately.

3. Replacement with New Features

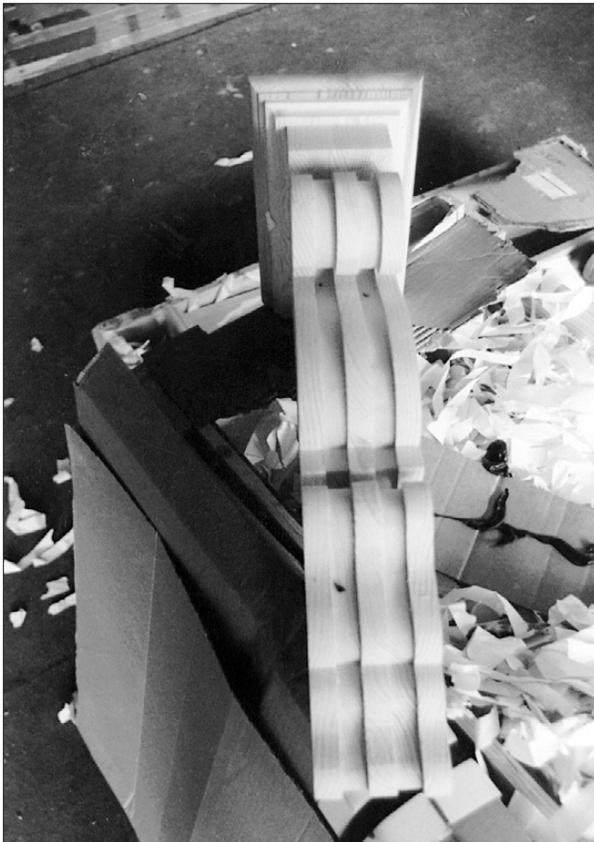
While restoration of a deteriorated feature is the preferred alternative, replacement may be necessary if it is beyond repair. The new material should match that being replaced in design, color, texture and other visual qualities.

A. Replace a deteriorated feature in-kind.

- 1) Use the same kind of material as the original when feasible.
- 2) In some instances, a substitute material may be acceptable if the size, shape, texture and finish convey the visual appearance of the original material.

B. When replacing a deteriorated feature remove only that which is deteriorated and must be replaced.

- 1) The new element should be similar in size, shape, texture and finish.



Replacement of missing architectural elements should be based on accurate duplications of original features.

4. Reconstruction of Missing Features

If an original feature is missing, reconstructing it is encouraged. This is especially important in Truckee, where many buildings have lost significant features.

A. Reconstructing a missing feature is encouraged.

- 1) The design should be substantiated by physical or pictorial evidence to avoid creating a misrepresentation of the building's genuine heritage.
- 2) A design that is based on details from similar structures within the Character Area may be considered. For example, where "scars" on exterior siding suggest the location of decorative brackets but no record exists of its design, then an historic bracket on another house that is clearly similar in character may be used as a model.
- 3) When reconstructing a feature, use the same material as the original when feasible. In some cases, however, an alternative material may be considered.

B. Adding a new decorative element that did not exist historically is inappropriate.

- 1) Conjectural designs that cannot be substantiated by written, physical or pictorial evidence are generally inappropriate.