



PHOTO: JAY/IM

Fly
like
an
eagle

Canada Olympic Park ski jump tower

Built for the 1988 Winter Olympics for \$5 million, the ski jump tower at Calgary's Canada Olympic Park remains the best place to take in awesome views of the city skyline and the Rocky Mountains.

Designed by Stone & Webster Inc., a Massachusetts engineering, design, construction, consulting, and environmental services company that is now part the Shaw Group, the concrete structure rises 90 m off the ground and is equipped with a glass elevator. An observation area at the top includes an outside deck.

Only the best of the best were brave enough to zip down the steep slope and fly into open air. (Who can forget Britain's first ski jumper, Eddie "The Eagle" Edwards?) Today, the tower is no longer used for skiing, but visitors can ride a zipline from the jump deck to the bottom of the hill.

Cana Management Ltd. finished construction of the structure, including the finished interior spaces, in 1986, before detailed databases were kept. Ed Stern, VP of construction services at Cana,

doesn't remember all the facts, figures, and names—Cana was extremely busy at the time, undertaking numerous projects as the city geared up to host the Olympics—but does remember the excitement and challenge of building the tower. Although building the structure was much like building a concrete elevator shaft, the Cana's 14-person crew had to work without the benefit of the surrounding floors of a high-rise.

"All the wind coming over that hill made it difficult to get the forms up there safely," he says. "There were only windows of time you could actually raise those forms. At 295 feet, it was a long way up for the boys on the hill. But everyone was excited and eager to participate and get the job done."

Two smaller ski jumps were built at the same time, and Cana has been working at the park off and on ever since. But the 90 ft ski jump remains one of its most interesting projects. Says Stern: "It was one of a kind." ●