

Walking through Banff's History



Your walking tour

Learn about Banff's history and heritage buildings at your leisure by taking your own walking tour. Each building has a street address and a corresponding map number. For quick reference see the pull out map on the last page of the brochure. Many of the buildings on the tour are private residences and may only be viewed from the sidewalk or street, their owners thank you for your respect.



▲ Banff Avenue, 1880 NA66-1796

Banff's History

In 1883 a group of Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) workers came upon what is now known as the Cave and Basin natural hot springs. The turmoil of conflicting claims that resulted from the discovery, coupled with recommendations from the CPR, led the Federal Government to establish the Hot Springs Reserve in 1885. Two years later this reserve was expanded into Rocky Mountain Park, Canada's first National Park.

In 1886 George A. Stewart was hired as the first Park Superintendent, and charged with designing a townsite to attract the wealthy and well-travelled tourists of the Victorian era. He constructed the north side of town in a typical prairie fashion of small lots laid out in a grid. On the south side of the river, Stewart allocated large "villa lots" for hotels, sanatoria, hospitals, and wealthy vacationers.

As part of their tourism campaigns, the federal government and the CPR promoted the romantic lifestyle associated with mountain living. This image was achieved, in part, through a building design now known as the "Rocky Mountain" architectural style, which features a rustic design and exposed natural materials that were often sourced locally.

Archival photographs in this brochure provided by The Archives at the Whyte Museum of the Canadian Rockies.

1

Banff Mineral Springs Hospital

102 Spray Avenue

The Sisters of Saint Martha operated the original 1911 Mineral Springs Hospital. Today, this site houses several buildings with unique and different construction styles.



▲ Banff Mineral Springs Hospital, c. 1923 V263/NA71-3507

2

Administration Building & Cascades Of Time Gardens

101 Mountain Avenue

Harold Beckett designed this building and its gardens as part of the 1930s federal work relief program. The Administration Building, completed in 1936, was constructed on the site of the former Brett Sanatorium (a spa-hospital), which was destroyed by fire in 1933. The building is characteristic of the domestic Tudor Revival architectural style and features Tudor Gothic elements. The original garden plan included a series of waterfalls that cascaded through rock-lined pools, with each pool reflecting a stage in the geological history of the Rockies, but this feature was never constructed. However, the rest of the gardens were successfully completed and remain as they were originally planned.

3

Buffalo Nations Luxton Museum

1 Birch Avenue

In 1952 Norman Luxton, a prominent Banff businessman, established the Luxton Museum of the Plains Indian. It is now operated by the Buffalo Nations Cultural Society as the Buffalo Nations Luxton Museum.



▲ Banff Park Museum, a typical example of the Rocky Mountain Architectural Style V488/327 (1)

Several of the guides who had been employed as CPR workers stayed on in the new Town as permanent residents. As local tourism boomed, these guides adapted by taking visitors, adventurers, and artists into the park by horseback. After the federal government lifted a ban on automobiles in parks, the guides again adapted by providing motorized transport, which ushered in a new era of motor coach tourism.

Throughout the following years, the increasing affordability of private automobiles and the advent of air travel have allowed even more visitors to explore the area. Banff itself has transitioned from an exclusive resort community to a popular and broadly accessible tourist destination. In 1990, over a hundred years after the hot springs were first surveyed, the Town of Banff was officially incorporated, and became the first Canadian municipality to be located in a National Park.



▲ Superintendent Stewart's home and family, 1886-1888 NA 66-268NA66-1796

4 Sign of The Goat Curio Shop

100 Birch Avenue

In 1904, businessman Norman Luxton moved his Curio Shop from Banff Avenue to its current location. The Shop is typical of the rustic Rocky Mountain architectural style, and features a Pagoda roof, exposed log cross-bracing, and roof brackets.

5 Bow River Bridge

The Bow River bridge was constructed in 1923 and restored in 1987. It features magnificent views, decorative stone masonry, and six bas-relief concrete heads, created by Calgary artist James L. Thomson.

6 Banff Park Museum National Historic Site

91 Banff Avenue

Built in 1903 in the cross log motif rustic building tradition, the Banff Park Museum is the oldest natural history museum in Western Canada. The large central lantern is a distinctive feature of the building. During the early Edwardian era the museum was affectionately known as the "University of the Hills". The museum today displays natural history specimens (more than 5,000) From 1904 to 1937 a park zoo and aviary operated adjacent to the site in today's Central Park.

7 Dave White Block



▲ The Dave White Block during a large motorcade visit from Calgary, c. 1916 V683/III.F.1.a - B66

103/105 Banff Avenue

In 1908, Dave White's wooden "Park Store" was replaced by the existing brick building. The Edwardian Commercial facade was added during a 1913 expansion. Renovated in 1996, the Dave White Block is the oldest remaining commercial building on Banff Avenue.

8 Harmony Lane

111 Banff Avenue

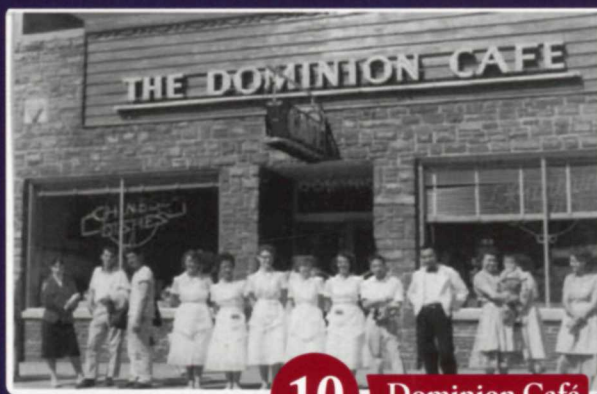
After a devastating 1917 fire, noted Banff photographer Byron Harmon reconstructed this building around the surviving river stone entry pillars. In 2001 the front façade was extensively restored and the building became Banff's first commercial building to be designated as a Municipal Historic Resource.

9 Rocky Mountain Tours & Transport Building

207 Banff Avenue

In 1946 this site served as the office and garage for Rocky Mountain Tours. The building's original garage entrance remains visible behind the canopy of the Grizzly House restaurant.

▼ Dominion Café Staff, 1959 Edith Wing Personal Collection



10 Dominion Café

209 Banff Avenue

This building was the former home of the Dominion Café, which operated between 1921 and 1967. In 1949, the Café was renovated to create a central door, two large show windows, and the stone façade that remains today.

11 St. Paul's Presbyterian Church

230 Banff Avenue

This Victorian Gothic Revival church was built in 1930 using local stone. A large stained glass image of Mount Rundle is located above the front door.

12 Banff School Auditorium

224 Banff Avenue

Built in 1939, the Auditorium (now the Parks Canada Information Centre) references the architectural style used in the construction of the Banff National Park entrance gates and the Park Administration Building with Tudor Revival detailing, a steeply pitched roof, half-timbering and a stone base.

13 Brewster Transportation Co. Building

202 Banff Avenue

This building's sleek Art Moderne style is unique in Banff. The streamlined appearance represents a deliberate backlash against the ornate Victorian styles.

14 Cascade Dance Hall

120 Banff Avenue

The Dance Hall was built in 1921, and features Dutch Colonial details such as a bell-shaped roofline, arched openings and a decorative parapet.

15 The Paris Restaurant

114 Banff Avenue

George and Ida Paris opened the Paris Tea Room in 1903 as a summer tea house and ice cream parlour. The Paris family was active in the early development of Banff's skiing industry, and several of their children worked at Skoki Lodge and Sunshine as ski guides during the early 1930s.

16 Rundle Memorial United Church

102 Banff Avenue

The Gothic Revival church, built in 1927, features modified Tudor half-timbering and a locally-quarried stone base. The stained glass windows depict the founding denominations, biblical scenes, and the diversity of Canada.



▲ Stained Glass Detail, Rundle Memorial Church Don Bourdon Photo

Cemetery Circuit

1 St. George's-In-The-Pines Anglican Church

406 Buffalo Street

The cornerstone for this Gothic Revival style church was laid in 1889, and construction continued in increments until its completion in 1926. It is the oldest remaining church in Banff.

2 Park Superintendent Residence

313 Buffalo Street

This two-storey home was built in 1920 for the Park Superintendent, and features exposed logs that are typical of the Rocky Mountain architectural style. The building was restored in 2000.



▲ The Park Superintendent's residence on Buffalo Street in 1937, Block B Lot 3-5

3 Senator Forget Residence

501 Buffalo Street

Senator Forget, a Saskatchewan senator, had this home transported by rail from Winnipeg and assembled for summer use in 1910. It is the only example of a pre-fabricated house from this era remaining in Banff.

4

Cyril Childe Residence**533 Buffalo Street**

Architect Walter S. Painter built this home for Cyril Childe, the resident Parks Engineer, in 1934. As Chief Architect for the CPR, Painter also designed the 1914 additions to the Banff Springs Hotel, the Cave and Basin Bathing Pavilion, and the 1912 Painter Wing of Chateau Lake Louise.



▲ Childe Residence Block B Lot 17

5

Transformer Substation Building**606 Buffalo Street**

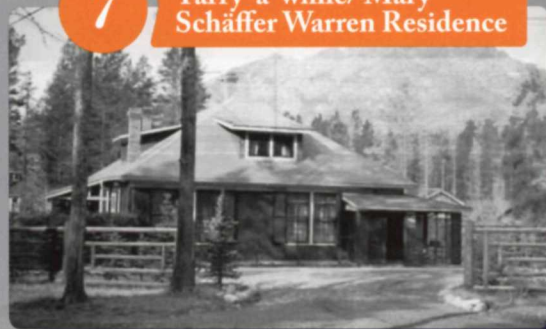
The substation building, built in 1905 when electricity first came to Banff, is one of Banff's finest examples of industrial architecture. It features Italianate details such as the raised pilasters and curved door and window surrounds.

6

Old Banff Cemetery

The Cemetery, which dates back to 1888, is the final resting place of many notable Banff residents. Most tombstones are built from local stone, and several feature scenes such as local mountains, golfers, horses, and cross-country ski tracks.

7

Tarry-a-while/ Mary Schäffer Warren Residence

▲ Mary Schäffer Warren's residence on Grizzly Street, 1937 Block 27 Lot 23-25

117 Grizzly Street

This home was built in 1913 for Mary Schäffer Warren, one of Banff's first female mountain explorers, by her future husband mountaineer William "Billy" Warren. The shingle exterior is typical of this era.

8

Crandell/Peck Cabin**514 Buffalo Street**

This modest one-and-a-half-storey log cabin was built in 1907 as a summer residence and rental property for business man Edward Henry Crandell. The vertical corner posts of the cabin and exposed exterior logs are characteristic of the Rocky Mountain architectural style.

9

Orr Residence**510 Buffalo Street**

Architect J. G. Johnson designed this home in 1928 for Lorne Orr, who managed Banff's King Edward Hotel for 25 years. It is architecturally unique to Banff, with its stucco finish and red tiled roof.

10

Grant-Hemming Residence**504 Buffalo Street**

This residence was built in 1921. The three arched front bays and tapered columns suggest Prairie style influences, although local materials are featured in the river stone chimney and stone steps.

110 Muskrat Street

Known as "Nature's Gentleman," Norman Sanson was a naturalist, meteorologist, and curator for the Banff Park Museum from 1896-1932. He lived in this home between 1910 and 1939.

▼ *Norman Sanson at the Sulphur Mountain Weather Observatory V547/PA12-8*

**Woodside Cottage/Mcaulay Residence****132 Otter Street**

This wooden home, constructed in 1912, features locally sourced materials, such as the tapered fieldstone entrance pillars, and is representative of the Rocky Mountain architectural style. Other notable elements are the long approach and the original dormer windows and frames.

Gair Lodge

▲ *Gair Lodge, 1937 Block 27- Lot 15*

607 Caribou Street
Cottage style architecture was a favoured design for early, pre-Second World

War park residences and Gair Lodge, built in 1919 by C.F. McGuffin, is one of the finest examples in Banff. Influenced by the "Arts and Crafts Movement," the building shows simple structural elements such as rafters and roof brackets, and an honest use of natural materials, including wooden shingles and river stone.

Byron Harmon Residence**136 St. Julien Road**

Byron Harmon, the Alpine Club of Canada's first official photographer and founder of the Banff Board of Trade, built his home here in 1932. The scale of this home is representative of an emerging high society in Banff.

4

Mountain School Annex

Margaret & Henry
Greenham Residence

5

608 & 606 Caribou Street

The Greenhams established Mountain School, Banff's first private school, in 1922. During the Second World War many British parents, including the actress Vivien Leigh, enrolled their children here. Margaret Greenham was a strong promoter of the dramatic arts in Banff, and organized the Banff Literary Dramatic Society and the first children's theatre group in Alberta. The Greenham's cultural activities contributed to the establishment of the Banff School for Fine Arts, now The Banff Centre, which includes a theatre named in Margaret's honour.

Greenham and class in front of the Mountain School, 1930. V273/NA66-1829



6

Bayne Residence

202 Otter Street

This home was built in 1913 for Banff's Notary Public, D.C. Bayne, and features red brick and a unique cobblestone foundation. The large covered porch and refined interior layout indicate Bayne's prominence among Banff's early high society.

7

Fire Hall

201 Beaver Street

Originally built in 1935 as part of the federal government's work relief program, the building's rustic appearance is typical of many of the buildings designed by the Parks Service Architectural Division during the 1930s.

8

Luxton Residence



Norman Luxton holding a model of the Tilikum with dog Barney, 1923 LUX/1/D1-3

206 Beaver Street

Built in 1905, this was the home of Norman and Georgina Luxton. Known as "Mr. Banff," Norman Luxton acquired Banff's Crag & Canyon newspaper in 1903, and also operated the King Edward Hotel, Sign of the Goat Curio Shop and the Luxton Museum of the Plains Indian. Georgina Luxton is said to have been the first non-native child born in what is now Alberta.

9

Tanglewood

208 Beaver Street

Tanglewood is Banff's oldest surviving building. It is believed to have been built around 1887 as a National Park Post Office, known as Siding 29, and was relocated to its current site around 1898 where it was used as a residence.

10 Beaver Lodge

212 Beaver Street

Built in 1914, this eight-bedroom log structure is typical of early Banff rooming houses, and features a log exterior and varnished wood interior. Guests have included famous painters, literary figures and musicians.

11 Holmes Residence

214 Beaver Street

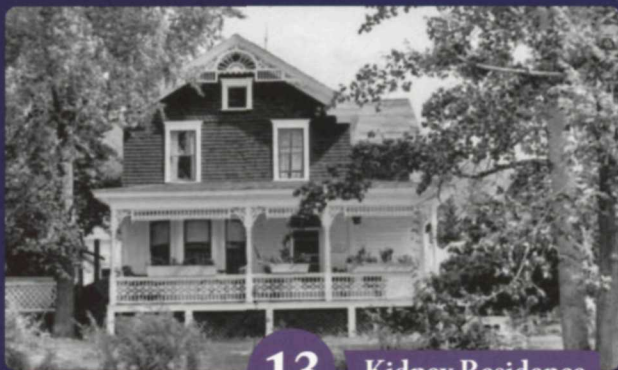
Reggie Holmes, a member of the Alpine Club of Canada and one of Banff's early pioneers, built this log cabin in 1905. The shingles were added in 1925.

12 James Thomson House & Tourist Cabins

220 Beaver Street

During the 1920s and 1930s rush to provide tourist accommodation many homeowners, such as James Thomson, built cabins and tent houses behind their homes. These cabins are one of the few remaining examples of this "backyard" development.

▼ *The Kidney residence built in Bankhead V218/PA165-285*



13 Kidney Residence

328 Muskrat Street

The Kidney Residence, built around 1910, was once located in the nearby coal mining town of Bankhead, and is typical of many company-built manager's homes. After the mine's closure in 1922, houses were sold for \$50 a room and moved to Banff, Canmore and Calgary.

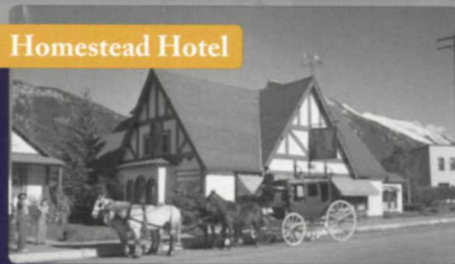
Whyte Wander

1 St. Mary's Catholic Church

312 Lynx Street

St. Mary's was constructed in 1951. It was designed by Father Robert McGuinness, who was the resident architectural engineer of the Banff Springs Hotel before he became a priest.

2 Homestead Hotel



▲ *The Homestead Hotel, c.1937 V469/2841*

210 Lynx Street

John Locke constructed the original Homestead Hotel around 1910. The hotel's rustic log interior dining room (now Melissa's Misteak) is the remaining portion of the early hotel.

3 Old Crag Cabin

211 Bear Street

Built between 1888 and 1890, the Old Crag Cabin is one of Banff's oldest buildings. It was restored in 1999 and now has a permanent home in the Bison Courtyard on Bear Street.

4 Cascade No. 5 Masonic Lodge

103 Caribou Street

The Masons have operated in Banff since 1888, although the Lodge was not constructed until 1924. Along with serving as a meeting place, the Lodge hosted many community events.

5 Sibbald Residence

135 Lynx Street

This rustic cottage was once home to Howard Sibbald, the first Chief Warden of Banff National Park. Built in 1915, it is typical of the CPR's early worker housing and features a gable hip roof, half-timbering, exposed rafters, and shingled exterior.

6

Moore Residence

125 Lynx Street

Built in 1907 in the Rocky Mountain style, the Moore family's log home was the

▲ *The Moore Residence, 1942 V439/452*

first building in Banff to incorporate wiring, central heating and indoor plumbing. In 1971, the building was relocated from its original site at the corner of Banff Avenue and Fox Street.



7

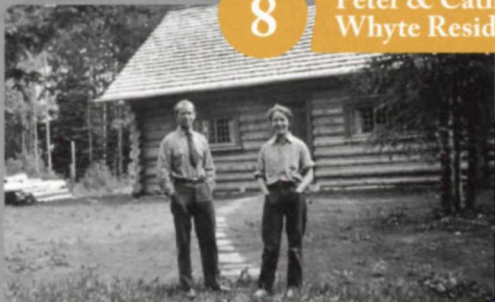
Whyte Museum of The Canadian Rockies

111 Bear Street

Discover the rich history of the Canadian Rockies at the Whyte Museum, and explore the archives for more information on Banff's heritage. The museum is open year-round and offers guided tours.

8

Peter & Catharine Whyte Residence



◀ *Peter and Catharine Whyte outside their home, 1932-1933 V683/ i.c.3/1*

130 Bow Avenue

Peter Whyte designed and built this studio-house for himself and his wife Catharine in 1931. They first used it as a summer base camp while spending their days painting in the surrounding mountains, and later renovated it for a permanent residence.

9

Crosby Residence

136 Bow Avenue

The Crosby home, built around 1913, incorporates an eclectic mix of Craftsman and Mission architectural styles. In the tradition of naming homes, the Crosbys called their house "Abegweit" after the native Miq'maq name for Prince Edward Island.

Further Forays

1

Bankhead Train Station

801 Tunnel Mountain Drive

After the 1922 Bankhead mine closure, many of the buildings from the nearby coal mining community were transported to Banff. The train station is one of the few remaining "Bankhead" buildings in Banff, and was restored in 1986 at its present location where it is used as a hostel.

▼ *Bankhead Train Station, c.1920 NA66-360*



2

Walter S. Painter Residence

Leighton Artists Colony

This building, constructed in 1913, was the home of architect Walter S. Painter and originally located at 505 Buffalo Street. As Chief Architect for the CPR, Painter designed the 1914 additions to the Banff Springs Hotel, the Cave and Basin Bathing Pavilion, and the Painter Wing of the Chateau Lake Louise. In 2007, the building was donated to the Banff Centre and moved to its current location where it functions as a private studio for visiting artists.

3

Canadian Pacific Railway Station

Lynx Street

In 1888, the CPR constructed this railway station at the end of Lynx Street. To accommodate the increasing tourist traffic, the station was replaced in 1910 with this larger building.

4

Fish Hatchery Superintendent's Residence

302 Glen Avenue

In 1913 the federal government established a fish hatchery to introduce non-native sport fish into the region's lakes, and built this residence for the Hatchery's Superintendent in a typical Prairie "four square" design. The hatchery was removed in the early 1970s, as fish stocking is no longer a Park policy.

5

Belmore Browne Residence**124 Spray Avenue**

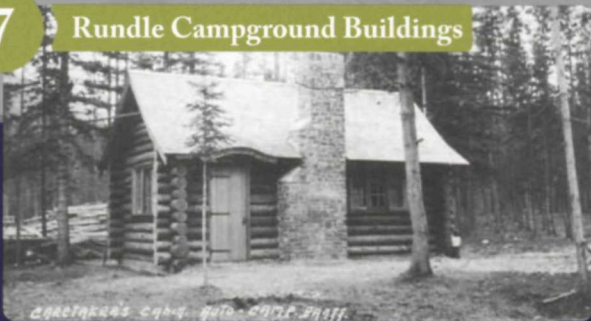
In 1921 Belmore Browne, an American adventurer and wildlife artist, arrived in Banff and purchased the single room log cabin located on this site. The original log structure has since been incorporated into the Elkhorn Lodge, and this reuse is an excellent example of the adaptation of heritage buildings in Banff.

6

**Banff Springs Hotel
National Historic Site****405 Spray Avenue**

The Banff Springs Hotel first opened to visitors in 1888 as a modest wooden building, although an eleven-storey tower was added in 1911-1914 by architect Walter S. Painter. After a devastating fire destroyed the original building, the familiar stone main block, designed in the Arts and Crafts style by J. W. Orrock, was built in 1927.

7

Rundle Campground Buildings

▲ Rundle Campground Buildings Courtesy of Parks Canada

Middle Springs Drive

This rustic saddle-notched log structure, built in 1923, is an amalgamation of two original buildings that were relocated from Rundle Campground, the first official national park campground. These buildings were designed specifically for campground use and became models for future park buildings.

8

Banff Upper Hot Springs**Mountain Avenue**

The naturally heated Upper Hot Springs, located at the base of Sulphur Mountain, feed a stone-clad historic outdoor pool that is open to visitors. The bathhouse was constructed in 1932.

9

Charlie Beil Kiln Building**119 Cave Avenue**

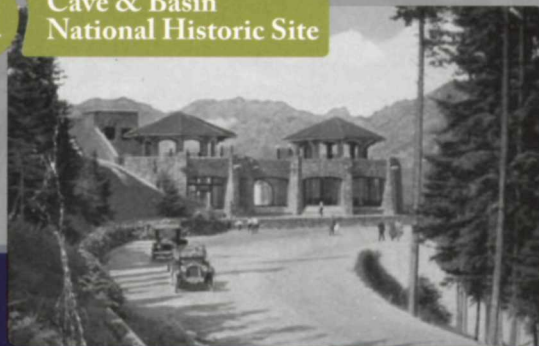
Charles A. Beil, the famous "Cowboy Artist" arrived in Banff in 1930. In 1942, he built this kiln shed, which he used to fire many of his famous bronze sculptures.

10

**Rundle Campground
Service Building****Recreation Grounds**

This saddle-notched log cabin was built in 1924 for the Rundle Campground, and its architectural design style provided an architectural prototype for future Parks' campground buildings. In 1998 the Town of Banff saved and relocated the structure.

11

**Cave & Basin
National Historic Site**

▲ Cave and Basin Hot Springs, c. 1920
Coast Publishing Company, Malins Collection

311 Cave Avenue

This site commemorates the birthplace of Banff National Park and Canada's National Parks system. Used by Aboriginal people for many years, the mineral springs at the Cave and Basin remained unknown to the rest of the world until three Canadian Pacific Railway workers came across them in 1883. In 1885, the Government of Canada set aside a small area to protect the springs for public use. This was truly the beginning of the national park idea – the very first recognition of the need to protect special places for the benefit of the nation. The current rundle limestone masonry of the long house bathing pavilion and red Spanish tile-clad roofs of the belvederes were designed by architects Walter S. Painter & Francis Swales.

Index of walking routes

Downtown Discovery

A 2 km, 45 minute loop, with a focus on Banff's early commercial and institutional buildings. This route crosses the Bow River and provides excellent views of Cascade Mountain down Banff Avenue.page 1 - 4

Cemetery Circuit

A 1.2 km, 25 minute loop, past the Old Banff Cemetery along Buffalo Street. In 1911, the local newspaper predicted that Buffalo Street "promised to be the finest built in the entire townsite," and residences for many prominent Banff families were built along its path.page 5 - 8

Culture Cruise

This 1.2 km, 25 minute route, starts with a stroll up Caribou Street that travels past several luxury properties constructed for Banff's early cultural elite. The second portion along Beaver Street, one of the first block's settled in Banff, provides a contrast of humble log homes and is an excellent example of an early streetscape.page 9 - 12



Whyte Wander

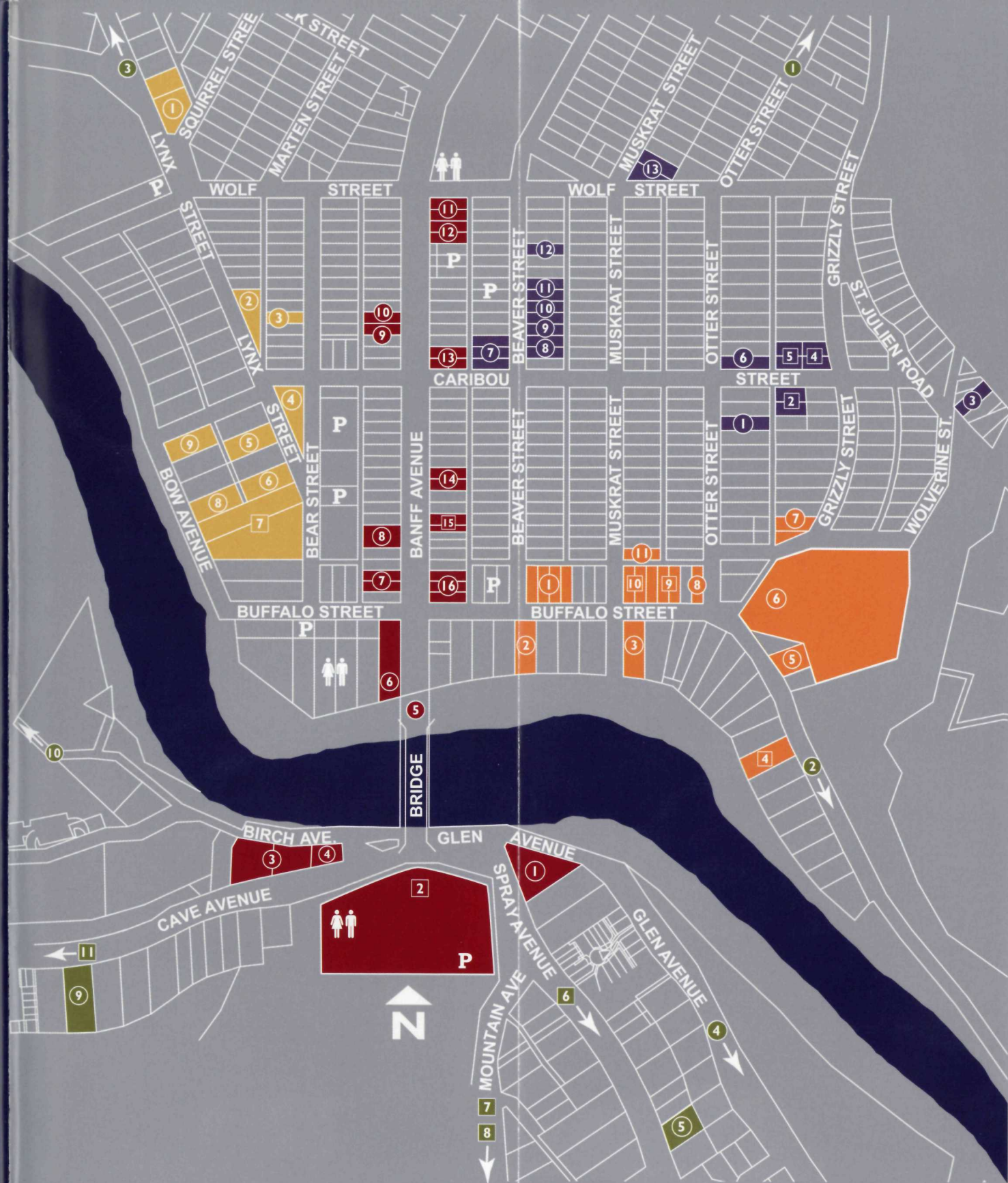
This leisurely 1km, 20 minute route, starts at the picturesque St. Mary's church and circles back past the Whyte Museum and Bow River. Many of the properties on this route have been preserved for their excellent heritage value but relocated to their present locations.page 13 - 14

Further Forays

A number of heritage properties require slightly longer walks, but are well worth the effort. An interactive map is available at www.banff.ca/heritagewalk to help guide visitors to these sites, and several locations are conveniently accessible via ROAM Banff's public transit system.page 15 - 17

Map Legend

-  *Plaqued Historic Building or Site*
-  *Historic Building or Site*



The Town of Banff Heritage Corporation

– works to identify, protect, preserve and commemorate the community's rich historic resources in order to enhance the quality of life of current and future generations.

Banff.ca

The Whyte Museum of the Canadian Rockies

– actively protects and acquires aspects of Banff's built heritage, and provides a gateway for residents and visitors to experience and enjoy the art, culture and history of the Canadian Rockies.

whyte.org

Banff Heritage Tourism – assists businesses and organisations in providing unique and memorable visitor experiences, and fosters an appreciation of the history and culture of Banff National Park.

banffheritagetourism.com

Heritage Programs, Parks Canada, Banff Field Unit – protects and presents the national historic sites, cultural resources and built heritage of Banff National Park and Rocky Mountain House.

pc.gc.ca/lhn-nhs/ab/caveandbasin/natcul.aspx



Parks
Canada

Parcs
Canada

©2012. All rights reserved. No part of this brochure covered by the copyrights here in may be reproduced or used in any form or by any means – graphic, electronic or mechanical without the prior permission of The Banff Heritage Corporation.

