

93-107

Banff, Alberta

### **Bryant Creek Warden Cabin**

Banff National Park

## **HERITAGE CHARACTER STATEMENT**

The Bryant Creek Warden Cabin was constructed in 1945 to a standardized plan developed in 1918 by James T. ChiIde, Dominion Parks staff engineer. Parks Canada is the custodian. See FHBRO Building Report 93-107.

### **Reasons for Designation**

The Bryant Creek Warden Cabin was designated Recognized for its architectural and environmental qualities.

The cabin at Bryant Creek is one of a network of cabins built to house the wardens patrolling the park on horseback in summer and on snowshoes or skis in winter. It was situated to minimize the travel time to other cabins. Together, these cabins formed the transportation and communications network that linked the park by patrol district to the farthest reaches of its boundaries.

This cabin's aesthetic design, materials of construction and craftsmanship are of very good quality. Eclectic wood carvings by Warden Jack Romanson add a unique folk art character to the building and site.

The cabin is a gable-roofed, one-room log structure, rustic in character, offering a picturesque landmark for backcountry travellers. The cabin, its tack shed and other site features such as the corral, the flagpole and the carved log waterspout, provide an excellent example of a backcountry patrol station.

Set in a sub-alpine meadow, this cabin backs onto Mount Mercer and faces up the open valley to the Allenby Pass. It is a backcountry landmark for travellers en route to Mount Assiniboine.

### **Character Defining Elements**

The heritage character of the Bryant Creek Warden Cabin resides in its simple utilitarian design, its construction materials, and its site relationships. Its massing is plain: a gable-roofed cabin with a sheltered porch constituting the front third of the structure. The main entrance door is tucked away under the gabled porch roof and situated off-centre. The simplicity of the massing should be protected.

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**Bryant Creek Warden Cabin (Continued)**

**The** building derives much of its character from the textures of its materials. Round logs are laid horizontally onto a foundation of poured concrete piers with rough rubble-stone walls between. Wood is the predominant material of construction. Corners are saddle-notched, with thin round branches as chinking in the joints between the logs. Three log columns and a log tie-beam support the open-gabled roof of the porch along the front elevation. The ends of the round log roof purlins and the dimension-lumber rafters are visible at the exterior, reinforcing the rustic character. Multi-pane horizontal sliding wood windows, wooden shutters, doors, and interior board finishes are also important features that should be retained. Cedar shingles clad the roof. Any repairs should use the same construction materials and techniques, and respect the intended rustic character of the building.

The paint scheme is appropriate to the cabin's rustic aesthetic. The walls, columns and balustrade are painted dark brown while the fascia boards, balustrade railing, and the endgrain of the wall logs, purlins, and rafters are highlighted in white. The green-tinted wood shingle roof is a traditional feature of warden cabins and should be repeated when roof replacement is required.

The historic relationship of the Bryant Creek Warden Cabin to its surrounding landscape has remained unchanged. The nearby tack shed exhibits the same construction system and materials as the cabin and reinforces its character.

Other features that reinforce the character of the site include the log and wire-mesh fence, the corral, the flagpole, and the folk art elements: In the yard a carved log in the shape of a human head spouts water piped in from Bryant Creek. Painted wood carvings of an Indian in headdress adorn the front gables of the main cabin and barn. The carving on the cabin has been removed to the Banff Museum for long-term preservation and replaced with a replica carved by a present-day warden. The surviving original carvings on site are also at risk of deterioration; the decision whether to remove them or leave them in place requires careful deliberation under FHBRO and CRM policy.

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For further guidance, please refer to the *FHBRO Code of Practice*.