

***FINAL***

Banff National Park of Canada

The Cambrian Pavilion was constructed in 1934-35. It was designed by the architect Harold C. Beckett. Alterations include the replacement of the roof and some structural supports (no dates). The building continues in its original use as a garden pavilion within the Cascades of Time Garden. The Parks Canada Agency is the custodian. See FHBRO Case File No. 97-11.

### Reasons for Designation

The Cambrian Pavilion has been designated “Recognized” because of its historical, architectural and environmental associations.

The development of the Cambrian Pavilion is directly associated with the completion of Banff National Park’s Administration Building and its broader setting, the Cascades of Time Garden, in the 1930s. This construction was part of an effort to attract international tourism to Banff National Park. The Cambrian Pavilion is closely associated with this intense period of development, an increase in visitation, and ultimately an important turning point in the history of the park. It was built by unemployed relief workers during this period.

The Cambrian Pavilion is a very good example of rustic design within the national parks program, and is characteristic of Harold C. Beckett’s work set within the realm of landscape design. Very good craftsmanship is evident throughout the structure.

The Cambrian Pavilion is an integral component of the Cascades of Time Garden. Its site has remained virtually unchanged since the original development, with the exception of maturing vegetation. The rustic form and detailing of the pavilion reinforces the Picturesque character of the established garden setting. A key element of the larger site development, the Cambrian Pavilion is a familiar structure to the townsite’s residents.

### Character Defining Elements

The heritage character of the Cambrian Pavilion resides in the features characteristic of its status as an open-walled garden pavilion built in the rustic style. Externally, the features characteristic of this building type are the simple massing (rectangular, squat, a hipped roof with wide overhanging eaves); the symmetrical facade (five bays wide with a central entrance arch); the masonry end-bays (solid stone walls, strengthened by a pair of buttresses with “set-offs”, a semi-circular arched opening in each face of the end-bays); the log colonnade between end bays (peeled log lintels and columns, diagonal braces and an ornamental balustrade); the style of masonry (ledge stone with deeply raked joints to give the appearance of dry stone masonry); the roof finish of

**FINAL**

Banff National Park of Canada

hand-split cedar shakes laid in staggered lines to give a random roof pattern; and, the modified “Boston” ridge and hips. These features deserve protection.

The heritage character of the exterior and interior would be best protected by replacement in-kind of any heavily weathered or mechanically damaged building components, materials and finishes as the need arises.

Internally, the features characteristic of this building type are the exposed roof framing (peeled pole rafter pairs abutted against and spiked to a ridge board; the feet of the rafters tied by a pole tie-beam); the exposed peeled pole laths carrying the shakes; the flag stone floor; and, the plank benches with burl specimens (abnormal bulges on the limb or trunk of a spruce tree) as legs.

The heritage character of the interior would be best protected by careful maintenance of the shake roof finish and winter protection of the more vulnerable bench furniture.

The Cascades of Time Garden is nestled into a hill on the grounds of the Administration Building, its landscape designed in conjunction with the building. The garden was created in the romantic tradition of English Picturesque landscapes, boasting deliberately irregular pools, flagstone walkways and planted clumps of trees that blend with the surrounding forest. The original program for the landscape, although never fully realized, was intended to depict the evolution of life through the geological eras.

The prominent position of the Cambrian Pavilion in the northeast corner of the garden, adjacent to the Cambrian Pool, makes it highly visible from the Administration Building. The pavilion also provides a viewing platform to points off-site. These relationships should be protected.

The site of the Cambrian Pavilion is characterized by a natural flagstone walkway, and steps which reflect the construction of the columns. Contrasting rubble stone terraces complete the composition. The form and materials of these features, and their relationship to the pavilion, should be maintained.

The larger garden emphasized a wide variety of floral and shrub species which complemented the pavilion and the stonework. The relationship between this pavilion and these naturalistic plantings is important and should be protected. Ornamental plantings should be maintained at the planters formed on the “set offs” of the buttresses.

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

HERITAGE CHARACTER STATEMENT  
FHBRO Number 97-011  
Banff, Alberta  
Cambrian Pavilion

Page 3

***FINAL***

Banff National Park of Canada

2000.03.15