

FINAL

Banff National Park of Canada

The Devonian Pavilion was constructed in 1934-35. It was designed by architect Harold C. Beckett. Alterations include the replacement of shingle roofing in the early 1960s; alterations to the doorways to the basement tool storage areas; and, removal of lighting fixtures from the archways. 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 Devonian Pavilion has been designated “Recognized” because of its historical, architectural and environmental associations.

The development of the Devonian 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 Devonian 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 Devonian 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 Devonian 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 Devonian Pavilion is a familiar structure to the townsite’s residents.

Character Defining Elements

The heritage character of the Devonian Pavilion resides in the features characteristic of its status as a gazebo built in the rustic style. Externally, the features characteristic of this building type are the simple massing (an octagonal plan and a turret roof with overhanging eaves); the uniform elevations (side walls finished with shakes laid in staggered lines, a single tall arched opening in each face, the head of the arch straight with the angles splayed); the field stone basement (stone, natural course with deeply raked mortar joints); the bull-nose corner beads applied at the inside and outside angles of all openings; the decorative railings (each of a unique design) placed in all but

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the entrance arch; the pole rafters exposed at the eaves; the roof finish of hand-split cedar shakes laid in staggered lines to give a random roof pattern; the burl specimen (abnormal bulges on the limb or trunk of a spruce tree) incorporated as a finial; and, the common lap or close hip treatment of the hip-ridges. 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. The condition of the finial, which is highly vulnerable to the elements, should be monitored on a regular basis.

Internally, the features characteristic of this building type are the exposed roof framing (peeled pole rafters abutted against a shaped block at the apex and tie-beams framed into a peeled pole center post); the exposed peeled pole laths carrying the shakes; and, the burl specimens selected for the tie beams, bench legs and center drop ornament.

The heritage character of the interior would be best protected by careful maintenance of the shake roof finish and the clearing of any snow accumulation, which on thawing, could be drawn into the walls and contribute to decay.

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 position of the Devonian Pavilion in the northwest corner of the garden adjacent to the Devonian Pool, gives it a visual prominence. The pavilion also provides a viewing point to the Cambrian Pavilion. These relationships should be protected.

The site of the Devonian Pavilion is characterized by a natural flagstone walkway, and steps which reflect the construction of the upper walls. 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. The rustic vocabulary of the pavilion and its setting is important and this relationship should be reflected in its site.

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

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