

## **BANFF'S ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER**

Over the past year, the Town has reviewed its heritage inventory and developed a summary of twelve (12) architectural styles which comprise Banff's historic architecture.

While Banff's dominant architectural styles have been diverse in underlying principles and in appearance, there are certain common themes that tie them together, and that combined contribute to Banff's unique character. Banff's historic structures are built at a village scale, are simple in their approach to ornamentation, and they have each been influenced by an enduring Rustic tradition, using woods and stone to convey structural expression. While the Rustic tradition was central to certain styles even outside the national park, the use of natural materials can be found throughout Banff's Folk, Ranch and International buildings, in ways that were much less common elsewhere. The architectural styles of Banff's many historic buildings span the Early Modern Era (1887-1945) and the Modern Era 1945-1990.

### **THE EARLY MODERN ERA: 1887-1945**

In the early 1900s, as early modern architecture began to take hold across North America, Banff entered an era of development characterized by Prairie and Craftsman styles. Both were western interpretations of the Arts and Crafts movement, rooted in simplicity, craftsmanship and Rustic influences. As the Dominion Parks Branch began to assert increased design authority in the 1920s, plans were standardized for public buildings across the growing national parks program. Although they were influenced by the American Rustic tradition, they incorporated an English revivalist approach, fostering a unique style known as Tudor Rustic.

#### **Associated Architectural Styles**

- Folk Front Gable 1890-1914
- Tall Pyramidal 1900-1914
- Hall And Parlour 1905-1925
- Wide Pyramidal 1905-1930
- American Foursquare 1905-1914
- Craftsman 1905-1930
- Tudor Revival 1925-1945
- Minimal Traditional 1935-1950

### **THE MODERN ERA: 1945-1990**

The early modern era had set the stage for new architectural philosophies in the 20th century, largely based in simplicity and a new focus on interior spaces. In the post-WWII period, new building technology facilitated a massive shift in architectural style. Buildings could now be constructed of lightweight metal skeletons, and could be used more flexibly, allowing for innovations such as long ribbon windows and cantilevered projections.

#### **Associated Architectural Styles**

- Ranch 1940-1975
- The International Style 1945-1980
- Contemporary 1945-1990
- Shed 1970-1985

## FOLK FRONT GABLE IN BANFF 1890-1914

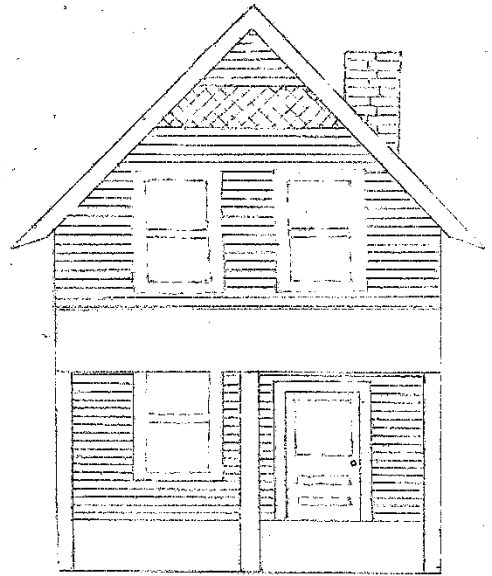
Folk houses in front-gabled and cross-gabled form represent Banff's earliest residential type. Early commercial buildings along Banff Avenue were also front-gabled, sometimes masked with a boomtown front to convey the appearance of a traditional commercial street.

### Architectural Principles

- Simple design
- Light framing
- Moderate- to steeply-pitched gabled roof
- Minimal eave overhang
- Tall, narrow window style
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### Identifying Features

- Narrow floorplan (most cases)
- Two storeys, with a front-gabled roof
- Wood siding wall cladding
- Entrance off centre
- Simple bargeboard
- Full-width or wraparound porch (many cases)
- Occasional Folk Victorian shinglework in the gable

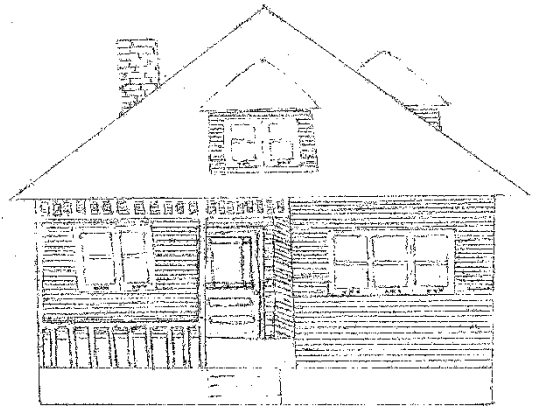


## TALL PYRAMIDAL IN BANFF 1900-1914

Banff's low pyramidal houses are built on square, or nearly square, floorplans. The earliest versions of the pyramidal form, built in the pre-WWI period, are known as Tall Pyramidal houses because their small massing causes their roofs to appear tall rather than wide.

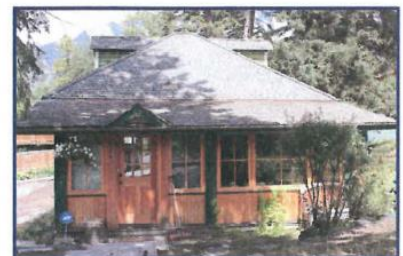
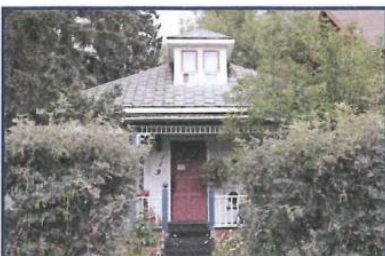
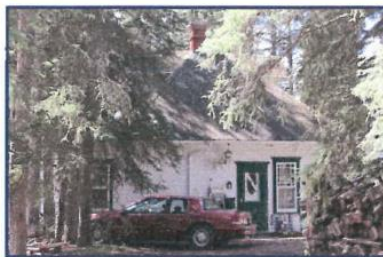
### Architectural Principles

- Simple design
- Light framing
- Low- to steeply-pitched hipped roof
- Minimal, enclosed eave overhang
- Small massing



### Identifying Features

- Square floorplan
- One storey
- Wood siding wall cladding
- Small, hipped dormers
- Occasional half-width porch, sometimes contained under the roof structure
- Occasional simple Folk Victorian porch spindlework

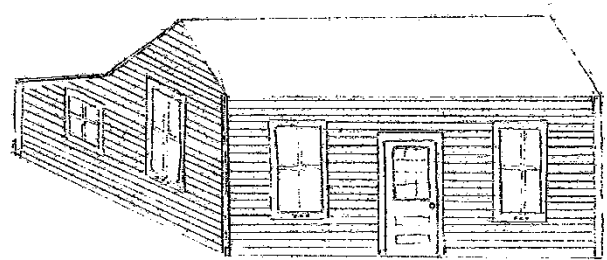


## HALL AND PARLOUR IN BANFF 1905-1925

Hall and Parlour buildings are a rarer residential form in Banff. The small, single-storey houses feature floorplans that are generally two rooms wide and one room deep, with frequent rear yard additions to provide increased living space. Later forms tend to be slightly wider than the earliest examples.

### Architectural Principles

- Simple design
- Light framing
- Moderately-pitched side-gabled roof
- Little-to-no eave overhang
- Breaks in roofline at porches and rear additions



### Identifying Features

- Small, rectangular floorplan
- One storey
- Centred entrance (most cases)
- Wood siding wall cladding



## WIDE PYRAMIDAL IN BANFF 1905-1930

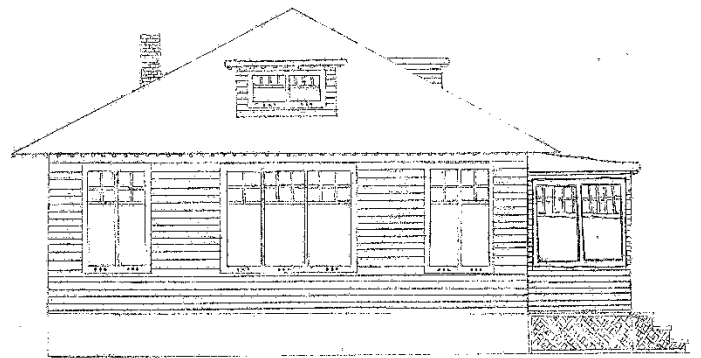
Banff's low pyramidal houses are built on square, or nearly square, floorplans. The later versions of the pyramidal form were built to be larger than their earlier small cottage-style variants, with increased living space both within the floorplan and in the roof area. They are known as Wide Pyramidal houses.

### Architectural Principles

- Substantial construction, use of some natural materials
- Low-pitched hipped roof

### Identifying Features

- Large square floorplan
- One- or one-and-a-half storey
- Predominantly wood siding wall cladding
- Eave overhang frequently enclosed, occasionally open
- with exposed rafters
- Frequent window groupings, in twos or threes
- Frequent shed dormers
- Occasional full-width porch, often enclosed as a sunporch



## AMERICAN FOURSQUARE IN BANFF 1905-1914

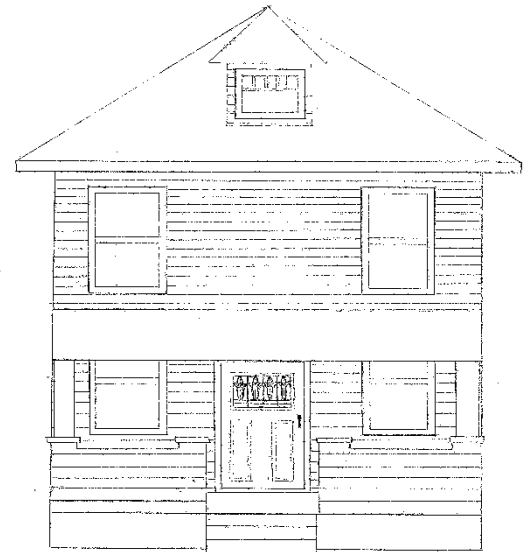
American Foursquare houses, or Prairie Boxes, are the most common vernacular form of the early modern Prairie architectural style. In Banff, their light framing and simple design brings them closer to Folk construction than to the traditional Prairie style. Most remaining American Foursquares in Banff were constructed within a brief, three-year period in the 1910s.

### Architectural Principles

- Light framing
- Horizontal emphasis, through contrasting horizontal materials between storeys, horizontal siding, contrasting colours at roof line
- Moderately-pitched hipped roof
- Single-storey porches and additions
- Wide, enclosed eave overhang

### IDENTIFYING FEATURES

- Square floorplan, with four rooms on each floor
- Two storeys
- Wood siding wall cladding
- Hipped dormers, sometimes gabled
- Prominent fascia board
- Full-width porches and rear extensions
- Substantial, boxy porch supports
- Double-hung sash windows
- Geometric or floral decorative detailing (primarily in windows)



## CRAFTSMAN IN BANFF 1905-1930

The Craftsman style is the most prevalent architectural style in Banff from the early modern period. Found in front-gabled, cross-gabled, side-gabled and hipped forms, Craftsman buildings, sometimes known as Craftsman bungalows (in residential form), comprise the western North American evolution of the British Arts and Crafts style, based in unique design and handcraftsmanship.

### Architectural Principles

- Substantial construction
- Appearance of handcraftsmanship
- Use of natural materials -wood and fieldstone/riverstone
- Low- to moderately-pitched roof (primarily gabled)
- Multi pie roof planes
- Wide, open eave overhang
- Prominent porch
- Architectural ornamentation

### Identifying Features

- One-and-a-half storeys
- Eave overhang with rafters exposed
- Porches
- Massive, often tapered square porch supports clad in
- distinct materials (e.g. brick, stone, stucco), and
- continuing to the ground without a break at porch level.
- Frequent false bracketing (knee braces) in gable ends
- Frequent false half-timbering (stickwork) in gables
- Frequent window groupings, in twos or threes.
- Double hung sash windows, usually with geometric patterning in the upper sash, and a single pane below
- Occasional peaked or flared roof line



## TUDOR REVIVAL IN BANFF 1925-1945

The Tudor Revival trend in Banff was led by the Dominion Parks Branch, which initiated a Canada-wide 'Tudor Rustic' building program in the mid-1920s, blending the English Tudor Revival tradition with the Rustic building program in Canadian national parks. The Tudor Revival style was soon adopted for commercial and limited residential use in town.

### Architectural Principles

- Substantial construction
- Vertical emphasis
- Steeply-pitched side-gabled or hipped roof
- Steeply-pitched front-facing cross-gable(s)
- Tall, narrow window style
- Minimal, open eave overhang

### Identifying Features

- Distinctive full-storey wall cladding material (brick or Rundle stone)
- False half-timbering (stickwork) in stuccoed gables
- Massive stepped chimneys, sometimes capped in decorative chimney pots
- Multiple window groupings, with multi-paned glazing
- Occasional presence of rounded arches and/or horizontal repetition of wood-carved motifs





## MINIMAL TRADITIONAL IN BANFF 1935-1950

The Minimal Traditional residential style emerged as affordable, worker-style housing during the Great Depression, and briefly characterized residential development through the WWII period before increased prosperity led to a shift toward larger; similarly styled Ranch homes.

### Architectural Principles

- Utmost simplicity
- Ught framing
- Small massing
- Moderately-pitched side-gabled roof
- Little-to-no eave overhang
- Single-colour; single-material cladding

### Identifying Features

- Rectangular floorplan
- One storey
- Enclosed entrance with a cross-gabled, low-pitched roof
- Single- or multi-pane double-hung sash windows
- Occasionally raised, with a basement unit



## RANCH IN BANFF 1940-1975

Traditional long, low Ranch architecture can be found in Banff predominantly in post WWII neighbourhoods. On smaller lots in older neighbourhoods, Ranch houses tend to be more square shaped than long, with hipped roofs, but can be distinguished from the Folk Pyramidal styles due to their horizontal emphasis, their modern picture windows, and their tendency to be raised off the ground. Ranch architecture is primarily residential, but was used in Banff through the 1950s for additions onto older commercial and institutional buildings as well. Ranch houses in Banff also come in split-level form, conducive to sloping lots with their multiple interior storeys and their lower-level integrated garages.

### Architectural Principles

- Low horizontal emphasis
- Low-pitched hipped, side-gabled, cross-hipped or cross
- gabled roof, without dormers
- Free flowing, open-plan interior
- Moderate- to wide eave overhangs
- Large, square picture windows
- Entrance recessed and sheltered under the main roof
- Garage integrated into the building

### Identifying Features

- Large square picture windows framed by narrow windows on either side, broken up into multiple lights
- Other forms of multiple-light windows, broken up vertically or horizontally
- Changes in wall-cladding materials (often integrating Rundle stone) at entry areas, bases of windows, and/or within gables
- Occasional window shutters and integrated planters



## THE INTERNATIONAL STYLE IN BANFF 1945-1980

The International Style has influenced commercial development in Banff since the mid century. The style is characterized by an underlying philosophy of buildings devoid of ornamentation, and designed solely to facilitate interior needs. In Banff, the sleek, predominantly stuccoed International Style was modified to suit the Rustic approach, using stone and wood cladding in ways that were limitedly employed in later International buildings elsewhere.

### Architectural Principles

- Machine-style buildings designed for function rather than ornamentation
- Focus on free-flowing interior volume and spaces, enclosed by simple, lightweight walls
- Window placement based on interior uses
- Flat roof, set flush with walls

### Identifying Features

- Large window groupings (horizontal ribbons, sometimes floor-to-ceiling), and other large expanses of blank wall
- Simple casement window forms
- Multiple roof levels, and cantilevered sections (distinct from Contemporary style, with its continuous flat overhanging eave lines)
- Single-material wall cladding, sometimes interspersed with large vertical sections in a distinct material
- Use of natural wall cladding materials (smooth wood boards, brick, flat stone)



## CONTEMPORARY IN BANFF 1945-1990

The Contemporary style has dominated residential and institutional buildings in the modern period, with forays into commercial construction as well. Similar to other styles of the modern period, Contemporary buildings are primarily focused on interior spaces, but they are designed to blend and relate with their surrounding outdoor environment, through wood cladding and windows that allow interior spaces to flow into adjacent gardens. Contemporary buildings are conducive to sloping sites in that they can be designed either as split-levels or simply raised above the slope. Later multiunit residential developments have used Contemporary-style roofs on plainer two-storey buildings.

### Architectural Principles

- Flat, or low-pitched gabled roof (including inverted butterfly form)
- Wide, open (or flat) eave overhangs
- Integration of building and landscape, through use of natural materials (primarily woods)
- Focus on interior spaces, and their relationship/connection to outdoor gardens and views using careful placement of windows
- Minimal ornamentation

### Identifying Features

- Wide, low buildings
- Angled windows present in gable ends
- Exposed roof beams within gable ends
- Downplayed entrances
- Low, broad, gable-side stone chimneys (frequently facing the street)
- Multiple window groupings

