

FHBRO Number 95-132

DFRP Number - 02873

Ottawa, Ontario

### **Refreshment Stand**

Hog's Back Park

The group of structures known as the Refreshment Stand at Hog's Back Park (open-air public shelter, refreshment booth, kitchen and public washroom facilities) was built in 1954-55. It was designed by local architect Watson Balharrie. The National Capital Commission is the custodian. See FHBRO Building Report 95-1 32.

### **Reasons for Designation**

The Refreshment Stand at Hog's Back Park has been designated Recognized for both its environmental and architectural significance, as well as historical associations.

The Greber Plan for Ottawa encouraged the creation of extensive parkland and corridors of green space in the national capital region. The Refreshment Stand, built in 1954-55, fulfilled the need for the traditional sheltering picnic pavillion in a park setting, and offered food and hygiene facilities to the visitor. Situated in one corner of the park beside the water and near the road, the Stand is somewhat screened by the surrounding vegetation, and the fieldstone-covered support buildings blend into the natural setting. The pavillion's sheltering view is oriented to, and overlooks, the majestic Hog's Back Falls.

The Refreshment Stand is an excellent example of festival architecture of the 1950s. Designed in the modern style, the three structures form a cohesive grouping. The main focus is the striking polygonal-roofed shelter and pinnacle inviting visitors to the park.

The Refreshment Stand is the product of a period of significant growth in Ottawa, when the Greenbelt was being assembled in response to the recommendations of the Greber Report.

### **Character Defining Elements**

The heritage value of the Refreshment Stand resides in the exuberant expression of its modernistic design, in the quality and craftsmanship of its modern construction materials and techniques, and in the relation of its functional components to each other and to the site.

The asymmetrical form and massing of the structures comprising the Refreshment Stand is of particular note. Much of the character of the grouping resides in the juxtaposition of the closed, low, rectilinear, heavy forms of the support buildings with the open, airy weightlessness of the taller, circular shelter. The light form of greater volume seems to anchor the heavy forms. The small but heavy circular form of the refreshment booth under the shelter is the transitional point between heavy-rectilinear and light-

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circular. The functions of these structures are seamlessly integrated into the forms, and these forms into the site. These design relationships, which are principles of the modern style, are integral to the character of the Refreshment Stand, and should be protected.

The materials used accentuate the lightness and heaviness of the respective forms: light steel framing supporting the expressive roof of the picnic shelter, contrasts with the fieldstone-faced concrete frames of the refreshment booth, kitchen and washroom facilities. The light steel framing system and the "folded-plate" plywood roof is an important design element. The plywood and the simple clip system which holds it in place reflect a desire for low-tech materials combined with high visual impact. The materials, which were specifically selected for the design, are integral to the Refreshment Stand's modern style and important to its heritage value. Every effort should be taken to maintain this character. The sheet metal sheathing which covers the plywood may not be an original material: an investigation to determine the intended configuration should precede any repairs to the roof.

The exuberance of the shelter's festival architecture style was enhanced by a bright polychromatic colour scheme (originally sequences of yellow-blue and yellow-rust colours, with the inside yellow, the steel supports bright red, and the interior pillars a bright blue). When the shelter is to be repainted, the importance of colour to the design should be the basis of decision-making.

The shelter, open to the site and the water, welcomes the public, while the support buildings merge into the landscape of the park. The views to the falls and the surrounding site should be respected and the natural state of the site conserved.

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

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