

FHBRO Number 93-23

Saint Lawrence Islands National Park

**Gordon Island Picnic Shelter (Pavilion)*****FINAL DRAFT***

Gordon Island

The pavilion on Gordon Island was constructed in 1904. It was designed by John D. Warwick, architect and contractor, of Brockville, Ontario for the Department of the Interior. The rusticated stone walls were a later addition reflecting the rustic stylistic influences of the 1920s and 1930s. Subsequently, the wood floor was replaced with poured concrete and the wood shingles with asphalt. The pavilion retains its original function as a picnic shelter for use by visitors to the Saint Lawrence Islands National Park (SLINP). Parks Canada is the custodian. See FHBRO Building Report 93-23.

### **Reasons for Designation**

The Gordon Island pavilion has been designated Classified for its environmental qualities, its historical associations and its architectural features.

The Saint Lawrence Islands, a popular holiday destination, were reserved by the Crown in response to public demand, and as a result of this public pressure the Saint Lawrence Islands National Park, eastern Canada's first national park, was created. The Gordon Island Pavilion is one of three remaining original pavilions which predate the establishment of the SLINP, and one of the oldest structures of its type within the Canadian parks system. Situated at the edge of a small cliff, the building affords a superb vista along the river and is visible to local residents and passing boats. Its architecture is rustic and picturesque, in harmony with its natural surroundings, and reinforces the park's unique character.

### **Character Defining Elements**

The heritage character of the pavilion on Gordon Island resides in its rusticated picturesque architecture and its relationship with the landscape. Its massing consists of a simple, elongated octagon with a medium pitched, octagonal hipped roof supported at the perimeter by wood columns and stone pillars. Large, dormer gables front and back denote the access points. The simple pavilion form and footprint should be respected.

Wood is the predominant material of construction for both the structure and cladding. According to historic documentation, hemlock was used for the joists, rafters and former flooring while pine was used elsewhere. Slender paired wooden Doric columns at the corners support an articulated box-beam, which in turn supports the roof structure. The exposed rafter ends provide visual interest, as do the evenly spaced pickets of the low wooden railing which provides a sense of enclosure. The gables are clad in painted horizontal clapboard with decorative trim; the interior ceiling is finished in varnished, tongue-and-groove pine. Cyclical maintenance of the wood elements, including the green and white paint scheme, is recommended.

The roof was originally clad in painted wood shingles, which would have enhanced the

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rustic and picturesque design intent of the pavilion. Reinstating wood shingles when the existing asphalt is at the end of its service life would enhance heritage character. Similarly, as opportunity arises, reconstructing the platform and steps in wood to the original design would be more appropriate to the design than the existing concrete elements. The massive rubble stone pillars, of rustic inspiration, are not original to the design, however they are an important early feature representing the influence of rustic design on park architecture, and should be retained.

The pavilion continues to function as a picnic shelter. It is well suited to this function, offering protection from weather and an open, flexible space unobstructed by interior columns. The expansive views of the natural setting should be protected.

Since the construction of the original pavilion, two other picnic shelters and a privy have been built on Gordon Island. As they do not detract from the historic character of the original structure, these relationships could be maintained.

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

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