

Site Name: MEDICINE HAT CENOTAPH MONUMENT

Date of Construction: 1922 Date of Dedication: Empire Day, May 24, 1922

Address: Riverside Veterans' Memorial Park, 622 1 Street S.E.

Owner: City of Medicine Hat

Architect: Albert J. Hart of Albert J. Hart Marble and Granite Works, Calgary, Alberta

Sculptor: Albert J. Hart

Neighbourhood: City Centre Development Area

Legal: Plan 47748 Block D

Description of Historic Place

The Medicine Hat Cenotaph is situated on the west side of a large public park consisting of 3.48 acres. The park boundaries are the South Saskatchewan River to the North, the Canadian Pacific Railway Bridge to the East, Finlay Bridge and Sixth Avenue to the West and First Street S.E. to the South. The park is believed to be the City's second oldest park and oldest existing park. The land was donated early on by the CPR to the City of Medicine Hat to be used for park purposes. Although the date of its construction is not clear, the park was already on a city subdivision map dated June 1902. The Cenotaph is comprised of a marble sculpture of a male Canadian soldier atop a red granite cap which is set on a three-leveled, tapered, four-sided decorated granite column on a rough-stone granite base. The Cenotaph is adorned with engravings which list the names of locals whose lives were lost overseas in the First World War, and lives lost in the Second World War and the War in Afghanistan.

Heritage Value of Historic Place

At the end of the Great War, communities across Canada felt compelled to honour the war heroes who had died overseas. Medicine Hat was no exception. Fund-raising began in 1918 for a suitable memorial that would pay tribute to the war dead and be a permanent reminder to future generations. In Medicine Hat, a war memorial committee was established, supported by various groups, such as the Great War Veterans' Association, the Great War Next of Kin Association, and the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire (I.O.D.E.)

Donations for the memorial came from citizens, local merchants, churches, and service clubs. Even school children contributed to the collection boxes set up throughout the schools. By 1922, over \$4000 in funds had been raised and a site in Riverside Park had been chosen for a war monument.

Calgary monument sculptor Albert James Hart (1878-1957) was commissioned for the project. Hart, who was born in Ontario, came west to Manitoba with his parents and seven siblings. After his father died as the result of a blizzard, Hart and his brothers dropped out of school to learn a trade to support the family and their widowed mother. Albert apprenticed and worked as a marble cutter in Brandon. In 1906, Albert, his wife and three children moved to Calgary where Hart set up his own business. Through a dealer in Hamilton, Ontario, Hart imported slabs of granite and marble from Europe from which he created his lifelike statues. As Hart's reputation for his artistic ability as a sculptor grew, so did his business.

Hart was approached by the Great War Next of Kin Association in Medicine Hat to create a Cenotaph, a monument to honour fallen soldiers whose remains were buried overseas. The landmark war memorial Hart sculpted features a 1.68 metre (5'6") statue of a lone soldier which is made of white Italian Carrera marble, placed on a three-leveled, tapered four-sided red granite column supported by a rough grey granite base. The full height of the Cenotaph is 5.7912 metres (19 feet). It is believed that the model for the white marble statue of the lone soldier was Hart's young teenage son, Reginald. Albert Hart's success with the Medicine Hat Cenotaph resulted in two other similar commissions in Alberta. Hart created the Cenotaphs at Lacombe and Nanton, each featuring a lone soldier but in different poses, with the model likely being Reg Hart.

Reg Hart became a doctor and practiced as a general practitioner in Vancouver. His cousin Stu Hart, son of Albert's brother Edward, became a famous Calgary sports figure and father to well-known wrestler Bret "Hitman" Hart.

Engraved into the red granite column are the names of 235 soldiers who died in World War I, mainly in France. Included are the names of two female nurses. There are 82 names engraved from World War II, no names from the Korean War and one name from the War in Afghanistan.

Character-Defining Elements

- Location on the west side of historic Riverside Veterans' Memorial Park, land donated to the City by the CPR by 1902.
- Landscape elements featured in the park include flower beds, water feature, mature trees, and grass.
- 1.68m (5'6") white Italian Carrera marble sculpture of a lone soldier from WWI, atop a red granite cap which is placed on a three-leveled, tapered four-sided red granite column supported by a rough grey granite base.
- Inside circular space surrounding the perimeter of the pedestal.
- Inscriptions:

Signage for **ALBERT J. HART, SCULPTOR-CALGARY**, north-east foot of column.

1914-1918 235 names from the First World War

1939-1945 82 names from the Second World War

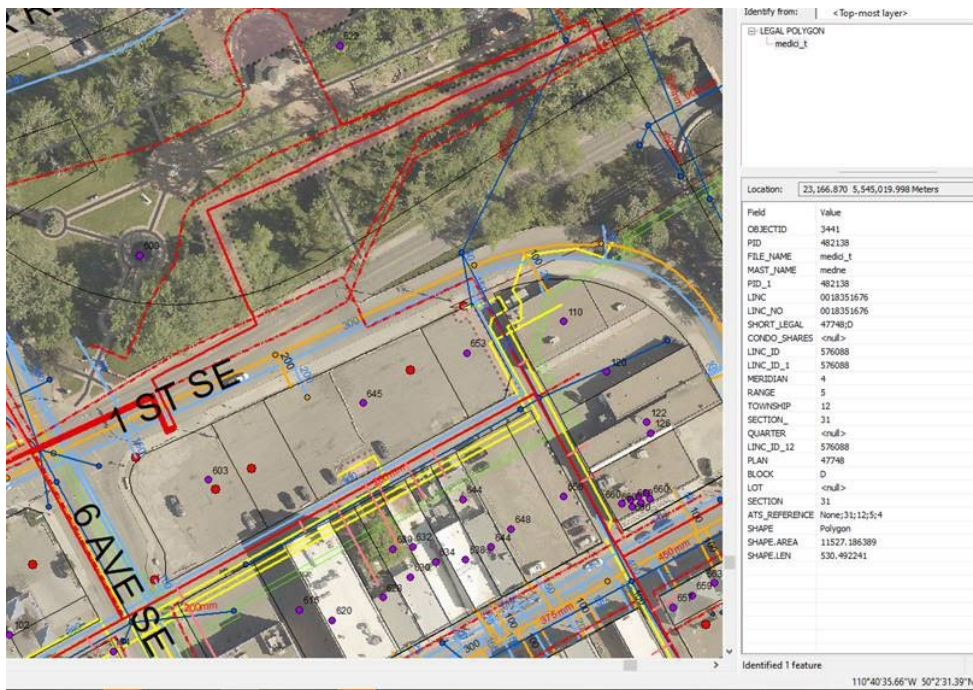
Korea 1950-1953 (no names)

United Nations and NATO Nations – 1 name Afghanistan 2008

- Dimensions: Per historic Albert J. Hart Catalogue

					In Metric:	Cm	Cm	Cm	
Italian White Marble Statue				5'6"	Italian White Marble Statue			168	
Red Granite Cap	2'3"	x	2'3"	x 1'2"	Red Granite Cap	68.6	x	68.6	x 35.6
Red Granite Die	1'7"	x	1'7"	x 3'10"	Red Granite Die	48.3	x	48.3	x 117
Red Granite Plinth	2'7"	x	2'7"	x 0'10"	Red Granite Plinth	78.7	x	78.7	x 25.4
Red Granite Die	1'10"	x	1'10"	x 1'10"	Red Granite Die	55.9	x	55.9	x 55.9
Red Granite Plinth	3'0"	x	3'0"	x 1'0"	Red Granite Plinth	91.4	x	91.4	x 30.5
Red Granite Die	2'2"	x	2'2"	x 1'10"	Red Granite Die	66.0	x	66.0	x 55.9
Red Granite Base	3'2"	x	3'2"	x 1'0"	Red Granite Base	96.5	x	96.5	x 30.5
Gray Granite Base	4'4"	x	4'4"	x 0'8"	Gray Granite Base	132	x	132	x 20.3
Gray Granite Base	5'8"	x	5'8"	x 0'8"	Gray Granite Base	173	x	173	x 20.3
Gray Granite Base	7'4"	x	7'4"	x 0'8"	Gray Granite Base	224	x	224	x 20.3
				19'0"					5.7912 m

Location



Street Address: 622 1 St SE
Community: Medicine Hat
Boundaries: Lot NA, Block 3, Plan 47748
Contributing Resources: Structures: 1

ATS Legal Description

Mer	Rge	Twp	Sec	LSD
4	5	12	31	

PBL Legal Description (Cadastral Reference):

Plan	Block	Lot	Parcel
47748	3	N/A	

Latitude/Longitude:

Latitude	Longitude	CDT	Datum Type
50.04205	110.67660	GIS	NAD83

UTM Reference:

Northing	Easting	Zone	CDT	Datum Type
5543356mN	523159mE	12	GIS	NAD83

Additional Images



Drone photo (Marco Jansen)



Damage to field service cap of soldier (Sally Sehn)



Cenotaph with North-East Crescent Heights background Mar. 18, 2021 (Sally Sehn)



One of the WWI engraved red granite panels (Sally Sehn)

Historic Images



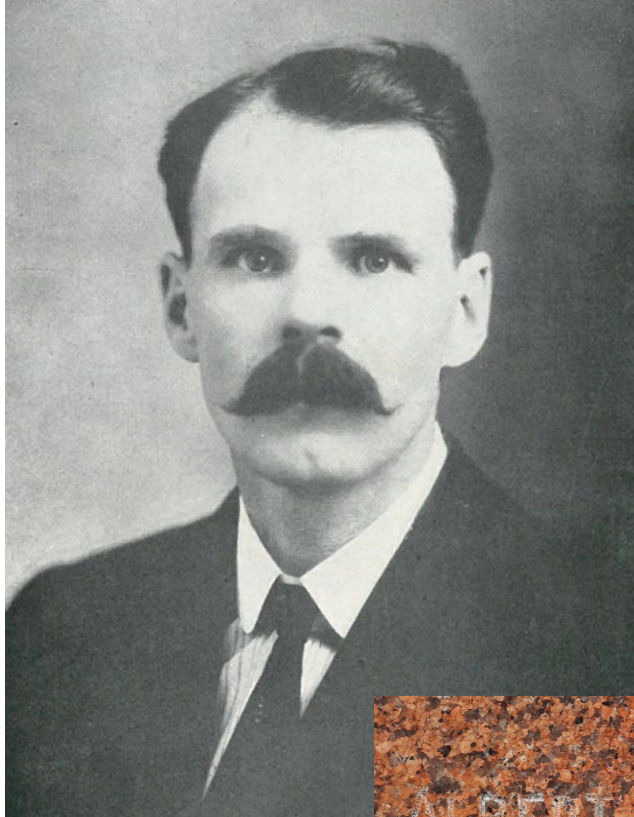
Left: Cenotaph c 1920s (Esplanade HR 0064.0069)

Below: Finlay Bridge, St. Patrick's Church in background (Esplanade 0453.006)



Above: Governor General Vincent Massey laying wreath at the Cenotaph, 1953 (Esplanade 0099.0022)





Sculptor Albert J. Hart, 1924 (Carol Ritchie)

Artist's signage, foot of column, northeast
(Sally Sehn)



Below: Albert J. Hart's Calgary business (Carol Ritchie)



The marble statue of the lone soldier in Albert J. Hart's workshop. Later this was placed on top of the red granite cap. The model for the soldier is believed to be Hart's teenage son, Reginald Hart.



The 1.6764m (5'6") carved marble soldier c1922
(Esplanade 0899.0039)



Local veterans reunite on the golden anniversary of the 175th Canadian Expeditionary Forces
(Esplanade 0099.0002)

Statement of Integrity

Property Name & Address	Cenotaph Monument 622 First Street S.E.
Value Summary	<p>This site is significant because.....</p> <p>Theme/Activity/Cultural Practice/Event Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>The Cenotaph monument, erected in 1922, is greatly valued as a memorial to the war dead from World War I to the present. Since its erection, members of the community ritually pay their respects every November 11, the date of the WWI armistice.</p> <p>Institution/Person Yes No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Design/Style/Construction Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>The Cenotaph is further significant for its excellent artwork by historical monuments sculptor, Albert J. Hart, from Calgary.</p> <p>Information Potential Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Landmark/Symbolic Value Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>The Cenotaph's highly visible downtown location has made the Cenotaph a significant local landmark which provides a constant reminder of past wars.</p>
Period of Significance	1922 - present
Chronology of Alterations	Original concrete posts and pipe railing surrounding the monument has been altered.
Aspects of Integrity	<p>Location Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Not Applicable The location of the Cenotaph has not changed.</p> <p>Design Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Not Applicable Form, scale, and massing has remained the same.</p> <p>Environment Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Not Applicable Associated with Riverside Veterans' Memorial Park</p> <p>Materials Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Not Applicable Made of imported Italian white Carrara marble, red and gray granite.</p>

	Workmanship Yes ✓ No Not Applicable
	The workmanship of the Cenotaph monument is excellent.
	Feeling Yes ✓ No Not Applicable
The Cenotaph monument portrays a strong feeling of patriotism, recognition, respect, and honour for the sacrifice made by service members. As a work of art, it reflects the skill of the sculptor who successfully captured the emotion of this significant time in history.	
Association Yes ✓ No Not Applicable	
The monument is associated with historical Riverside Veterans' Memorial Park.	

Statement of Integrity	<p>The <u>Medicine Hat Cenotaph</u> maintains all the aspects of integrity necessary for it to convey its significance/heritage value.</p> <p>The Cenotaph has retained its original form. The statue is artistically sculpted, and the etched names are engraved by hand.</p> <p>The Cenotaph monument is maintained by Parks and Recreation, City of Medicine Hat.</p> <p>It is pressure washed every other year.</p> <p>There is a chip and crack in the field service cap of the soldier.</p> <p>The surface of the statue's white Italian Carrera marble shows evidence of deterioration resulting from exposure to weather, moisture and possible environmental pollutants but is in very good condition for its age and location.</p>
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Based on the above criteria, does the place merit inclusion on the Inventory? (at least 1 'High' or 4 'Moderate')

No: Yes: ✓

Does the place possess **exceptional/outstanding** qualities for any of the criteria listed above? If yes, explain:

No: Yes: ✓

The Cenotaph is a work of art. Etched names on modern memorials such as the Viet Nam Memorial Wall are produced by photoemulsion and machine.

Does the place retain sufficient integrity to convey significance? If not, the place will **not** qualify.

No: Yes: ✓

FINAL EVALUATION

Grade 2: Grade 1: ✓

Date Evaluated by HRWG: _____

Date Approved by HRWG: _____

Consultant(s):

Heritage Planner:

Heritage Resources: Sally Sehn, Patrick O'Brien