

1999 Second Avenue - Munn's Bakery



Munn's Bakery 2019

Heritage Register – Building

- 1) **Historical Name:** Munn's Bakery
- 2) **Common Name:** Munn's Store; The Handy Store, Idgies
- 3) **Address:** 1999 Second Avenue
- 4) **Date of Construction:** 1898
- 5) **Design, Style, Architecture, Architect:** Vernacular commercial

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Description:

Munn's Bakery comprises a one-storey wood framed commercial building attached to the front of a two-storey gable-roofed residential home. The building is situated on a sloped lot at the southwest corner of Second Avenue and Washington Street in Rossland, BC. The long rectangular commercial building is characterized by an angled entrance facing the intersection and display windows along with two garage-like structures on its western façade. The railway was previously located near the railway making it convenient for the delivery and receiving of goods.

Heritage Value:

Munn's Bakery, the quintessential 'corner store', is valued as an early example of a modest commercial building representing Rossland's establishment era and earliest boom days. It is also important for its associations with the Munn and Thompson families, both long-time owners and business operators at this location.

Constructed in 1898 on lot 25, Munn's Bakery is representative of the spirit of entrepreneurship that made Rossland a thriving mining town at the end of the nineteenth century. Owned and operated by Alexander Munn, who came to Rossland from Prince Edward Island in 1898, this modest corner store stands as a reminder of the supply-and-demand nature of mining boomtowns in the West Kootenay at that time. Alex Munn subsequently purchased lots 26 and 27 and expanded the building. During the 22 years the business was owned by Mr. Munn, it was a grocery store, a fruit and tobacconist shop, or stationery and confectionery store. This historic place is distinctive for enduring the booms and busts in early Rossland's economy; while dozens of similar businesses opened when Rossland was first established in 1898, by 1920 there were approximately 11 left.

Heritage value is also evident in the ongoing ownership of this place by the Munn family (first by Alex, and then by his son, Heath) for almost thirty years (1898 to 1927). The Munn's moved to Washington State in 1927. The Munn family legacy speaks to the important role of family-run, small businesses through the history of Rossland, and is evident in the physical expansion of the store building during this time. The contiguous relationship of the business with the attached Munn house at the rear is another important indicator of traditional live-work configurations that made family-owned businesses sustainable and successful over the years.

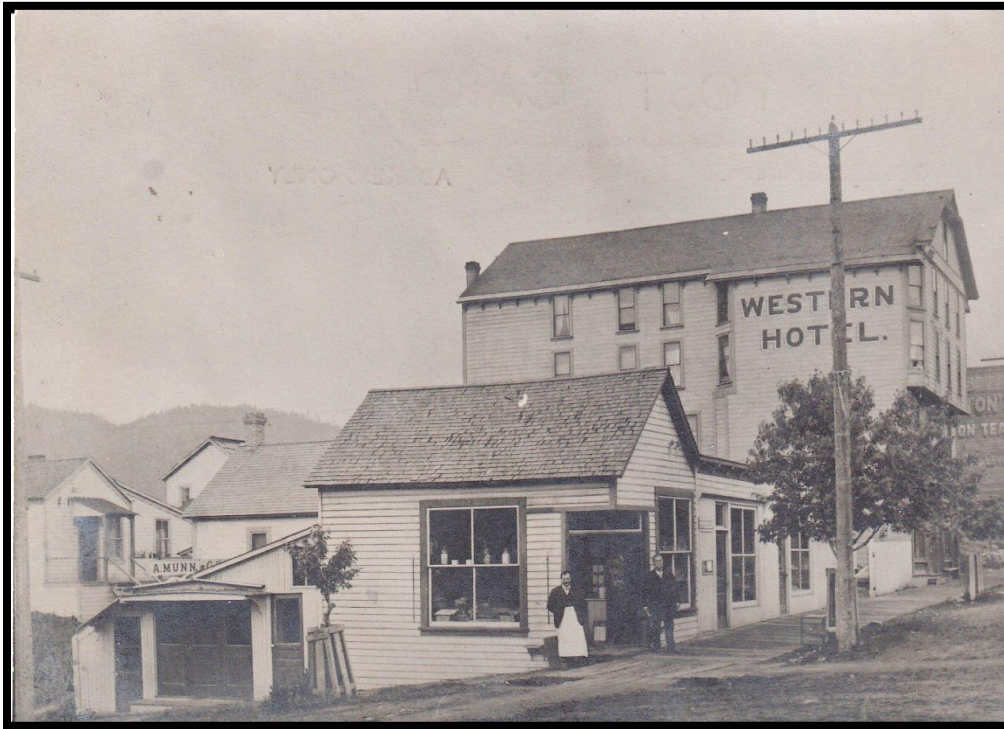
The consistent use of this place as a grocery and confectionery from its opening in 1898 until well into the 1970s is a core aspect of its heritage values. The business was carried forward by additional operators over the years: Robina Eliza Baillie operated the confectionery from 1922 until 1927, and Ernest and Harry W. Lefevre (who later became mayor of Rossland) operated the Lefevre Grocery here in 1936/37. Thereafter, the store became known as the Handy Store, a grocery and confectionery, owned by Elmer Thompson and Firmin J. Bousquet. While Bousquet quit the business in 1958, Thompson continued to operate it until the 1970s, making it one of the longest operating confectioneries in Rossland at that time.

Although no longer a confectionery, this building continues to function as a neighbourhood commercial business. Rose Garbutt purchased the building in 1999 and started a restaurant called Idgies that still operates today. Due to its enduring presence (over 120 years) and its prominent corner location, this building has evolved into a local landmark, cherished and familiar in the streetscape.

Character-Defining Elements:

- Original corner location on Second Avenue at Washington Street.
- Continuous commercial use since 1898
- Vernacular commercial design as expressed in its single-storey form, its angled commercial corner entrance and its commercial display windows
- The store's long, rectangular form extending across two city lots

- The contiguous relationship between the historic Munn House and the commercial building.
- Wood-frame construction.
- Evidence of wood cladding and former gable roof form on the corner store.
- Evidence of historical entrances, loading doors and windows at street level, and different areas of the store intended to carry different types of goods.
- Evidence of street-level display windows on the Second Avenue and Washington Street façades.
- Evidence of the evolution and growth of the building over time.



Munn's Bakery (store on the corner)

The building has three storefronts, potentially indicative of ongoing success and diversification of the types of goods being sold. Note the "A. Munn" sign on shed roof at rear.