

2116, 2118, 2132 and 2140 Columbia Avenue - Lalonde & Rodier Block



Lalonde & Rodier Block 2020

Heritage Register - Building

- 1) **Historical Name:** Lalonde & Rodier Block
- 2) **Common Name:**
- 3) **Address:** 2116, 2118, 2132 and 2140 Columbia Avenue
- 4) **Date of Construction:** 1896/1897
- 5) **Design, Style, Architecture, Architect:** Commercial Vernacular

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Description:

The Lalonde & Rodier Block is a two-storey wood-frame commercial building situated over two city lots on the north side and at the eastern end of Columbia Avenue, in historic downtown Rossland, BC. The flat-roofed building is divided into four commercial storefronts.

Heritage Value:

Constructed in 1896/1897, the Lalonde & Rodier Block is valued as a surviving first-generation commercial building, dating to the time of Rossland's early boom period and named for Charles Octave Lalonde and Mary B. Rodier, who were the joint owners when it was

constructed. Lalonde operated his boot and shoe business (its second location) in two of the storefronts in 1898 and 1899 and Mary Rodier's husband, Peter, ran his tinsmith business from this place for several years.

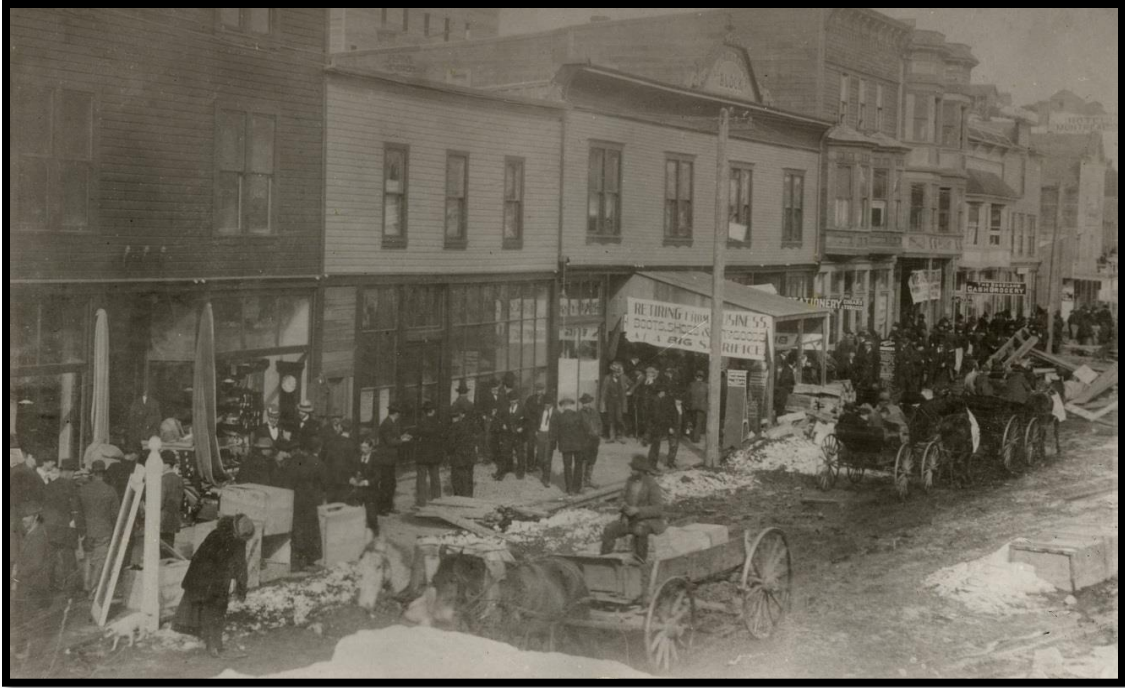
C. O. Lalonde played a significant role in the early days of Rossland's development after arriving in 1895. He was very active in local affairs and politics and spearheaded the drive to establish a school. He was the first chairman of the newly formed School Board and sought elected public office upon incorporation. He served as alderman in 1898 and became Mayor in 1901.

The Lalonde & Rodier Block is a good example of the type of real estate speculation that the first city builders could bank on as solid investments. The varied and eclectic mixture of uses in its early years is an important part of the heritage of this place, as it reflects the ever-changing and evolving nature of the boom town. Used for professional offices, trades, retail and residences in its early years, this is a good example of the revenue generation that real estate speculators such as Lalonde and Rodier sought in constructing buildings like this as Rossland prospered from the local mining industry.

This building also has value for its association with some long-term businesses that were institutions in Rossland in the second half of the twentieth century. The Sunshine Coffee Shop and Café, and Delich's Jewellery and Gifts were located here for over 45 years. The building was owned by the Delich family for seven decades until 2007.

Character-Defining Elements:

- Original location on Columbia Avenue in Rossland's historic downtown core.
- Continuous commercial and residential use since 1897.
- Its two-storey commercial form, and construction over the full width of two city lots.
- Its flat roof and wood-frame construction.
- Original window and door openings on its south, east, and north façades.
- Four distinctive storefronts at street level.
- Rear additions that speak to the varied and changing uses of the building over time.
- Surviving evidence of the building's use for both commercial and residential purposes at different times in its history.
- Evidence of its original wood cladding.



Lalonde & Rodier Block (3rd building on left) c.1897



Lalonde & Rodier Block (3rd building on left) c. 1907

HISTORY

In 1897 the Rossland City insurance maps list the building as “Lalonde & Rodier Block”. Businesses listed at that time are; Peter Rodier, tinsmith; A.F. Herring, druggist; H.R. Dunlop, dry goods; W.H. Young, stenographer and J.A. Kirk, surveyor.

Lot 3 was owned by Charles Octave Lalonde who came from Quebec in 1895 and operated a boot and shoe store in this and various other locations over the early years of the city. Lot 4 was owned by Mary B. Rodier until 1917.

In 1899, Thomas B. Linton of Linton Brothers opened for business in the portion previously occupied by C.O. Lalonde. Mr. Linton’s business was stationery. In 1900, Lot 3 was purchased by Captain Alfred Budd who had fought in the Queen’s army for 20 years, and rose to the rank of Major in 1901. After coming to the Kootenays, and having spent some time in Rossland, he settled in Queen’s Bay on Kootenay Lake, where he was a rancher until his death in 1928. Budd owned this lot until 1916.

In 1916/17, James Matthew Jordan purchased Lot 3. He also owned lots 1 and 2 adjacent to the west of this property which he had purchased in 1911. Jordan was the proprietor of Lockhart and Jordan Furniture & Undertakers, a business which had a few different locations on Columbia Avenue.

Meanwhile Lot 4 was under the ownership of the Dominion Permanent Loan Co. of Toronto in 1918-19. It was then purchased by Lewis McPherson Roberts in 1923. In 1924 J.M. Jordan bought Lot 4 and added it to the rest of his holdings.

In 1938, Marvel Frances Simcock is listed as the owner of Lot 4. The insurance map shows three vacant stores, and one space occupied by the undertaker. The second floor is listed as apartments.

The Delich family purchased the building in 1940. By 1953 there were five business listed as tenants; Sunshine Coffee Shop, D.F. Hanes, Delich Jewellery & Gifts, Booty’s Ski Shop and Mrs J. Altomare. The Delich’s Jewellery & Gifts remained in the building until the Delich family sold it in 2007. The Sunshine Coffee Shop was still operating in the building in 2008.

In 2019, the building was home to a variety of businesses, including Century 21 Realty, E.F van der Ham and Associates accounting, Aka Dake Sushi, and the Kootenay Gateway shop. The eastern elevation received new stucco panel cladding. A mural commissioned by the Rossland Council for Arts and Culture was installed on the eastern wall in honour of Rossland’s veterans. It is next to the Cenotaph. The mural’s theme is Peace and Remembrance and was painted by local mural artist Tyler Toews.



Peace and Remembrance Mural 2020