

1973 Columbia Avenue – Burns Block



Burns Block 2009

### **Heritage Register - Building**

- 1) **Historical Name:** Burns Block
- 2) **Common Name:**
- 3) **Address:** 1973 Columbia Avenue
- 4) **Date of Construction:** 1905
- 5) **Design, Style, Architecture, Architect:**



Burns Block (right of Hotel Allan)



P. Burns Butcher Shop interior c.1910

## HISTORY

The Burns Block, on the south side of Columbia Avenue was built in 1905. It is a two storey building of brick construction. Today it stands alone, as fire has destroyed the once fine Allan Hotel on its east side and the buildings on its west side and this explains the unrelieved

side walls we see today. The owner of the lot and building was the P. Burns & Co., Ltd., owned by Pat Burns, a very successful businessman in the Kootenays with interests in the distribution and sale of meat.

Pat Burns' first business outlet in Rossland (1896) was on Spokane Street between Columbia Avenue and First Avenue - where the concentration of businesses was densest in the early days of the mining camp. On August 25, 1902 a huge fire destroyed all the buildings on either side of this portion of Spokane Street and the businesses affected either relocated to new premises or went out of business. The manager of the Kootenay operations of the firm of P. Burns & Co., came to Rossland in September of 1902 and stated that they intended to build, but on a more centrally located site. The City by-law said that all new construction had to be of brick and the firm's representative said that this would be done but construction would wait until the spring of 1903 to optimize building conditions.

Burns & Co., continued to operate its wholesale and retail meat business in Rossland after the 1902 fire - advertising frequently in the Rossland Miner newspaper. The Tax and Assessment Rolls indicate that the present location of the Burns Block was purchased in 1905 and a building constructed in that year. The building was assessed at \$3500 (half of its value for taxation purposes) and the property at \$3080.

The Burns & Co. butcher shop employed different butcher/managers over the years of its operation. The last one, Jim Wright eventually established his own business across the street and down a block from the Burns Block and at this time (1944) the Burns building and business was sold to the then owner of the next door Allan Hotel - Joe Bielli. In that year Bielli went into business with Harold Elmes and the name of the business became the Butcheteria. The Elmes family lived upstairs in the building. (Mr. Elmes was a long time mayor of Rossland and it is said that the building also served as City Hall as Elmes both lived and worked at this address.)

In 1977, the Medical Associates Clinic bought the building and it has served as a clinic ever since, with apartments above.

## **OTHER INFORMATION**

The 1902 advertisement below, appeared regularly in the Rossland Miner newspaper and provides proof of the extent of Burns & Co. operations.

### **P. Burns & Co.**

#### **Wholesale Markets**

Rossland, Nelson, Trail, Sandon, Revelstoke  
Greenwood, Grand Forks and Vancouver

#### **Retail Markets**

Rossland, Trail, Nelson, Ymir, Kaslo, Sandon,  
New Denver, Silverton, Cascade City, Grand Forks,  
Greenwood, Phoenix, Midway, Camp McKinney,  
Revelstoke, Ferguson and Vancouver

Fish, Game and Poultry in Season,  
Sausages of all kinds  
Wm. Donald, Manager Rossland Branch