

## 1999 Second Avenue - Munn's Bakery



Munn's Bakery 2019

### Heritage Register - Building

- 1) **Historical Name:** Munn's Bakery
- 2) **Common Names:** Munn's Store/The Handy Store/Idgie's
- 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 commercial building attached to the front of a two-storey gable-roofed residential home, situated on a sloped lot at the southwest corner of Second Avenue and Washington Street in Rossland, BC. The commercial building is characterized by a corner entrance facing the intersection, and two garage-like structures on its western façade.

#### 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, 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. At different times labeled as a grocery, fruit and tobacconist, or stationery and confectionery store during the 22 years the business was operated by Mr. Munn, 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 only 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. 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 success of Munn's 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, the historic place continues to function as a neighbourhood commercial business (currently Idgie's restaurant since 1999), which due to its enduring presence (over 120 years) and its prominent corner location now mostly surrounded by residences, has evolved into somewhat of 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.

### Historical Information – chronology

Year	Event
1881	Census shows Alex Munn with his wife and family in Queen’s County, PEI. He is the proprietor of the Union Hotel.
1891	Census shows that Munn is no longer with his family in PEI.

1897	Insurance map shows corner of 2 <sup>nd</sup> and Washington as bare.
1898	City Directory shows Alex Munn fruits and tobacconist at this location
1898? - 1908	Alexander Munn initially owned just the corner lot (lot 25), but constructed buildings on lots 26 and 27 during these years. Lots 26 and 27 were owned by Michael Sullivan and Ida May Dunn, and then by J.S. Fraser before Alex Munn purchased them in 1908.
1899	Alex Munn, grocer
1900 - c. 1915	Alex Munn, fruits & tobacconist
1912	Insurance map shows "grocery" at this corner.
1918-1920	Alex Munn stationery, grocery, confectionery
1920	Alex Munn passes away, March 18 <sup>th</sup> .
1921	City Directory – Heath Munn, Alex's son, listed as baker. Address unknown. Sadie Munn, Heath's wife, is listed as "confectionery".
1921 – 1927	Sadie May Munn is listed as the owner of the three lots.
1921	Census shows Heath and Sadie as living in Rossland and owners of a home on Washington Street. Heath is listed as a "baker", and working on own account in a bakery. Sadie has no occupation listed.
1922 – 1927	Heath Munn is listed as "baker". Address unknown.
1922 – 1926	Robina Eliza Baillie is listed as "confectionery". Address unknown.
c. 1928	Heath Munn and family move to Washington State.
1928 – 1931	Catherine Kirby (Keily?) is listed as the owner of all three lots.

1931	William James Jamieson is listed as the owner of all three lots. Local history indicates that Jamieson leased the building to the Lefevre brothers, who ran a store there.
1936	City Directory – Ernest Lefevre listed as confectioner. This may be at this location given the history in the Commercial building inventory.
1937	City Directory – Ernest and Harry W. Lefevre of Lefevre’s Store – grocers and confectioners.
1940	City Directory listing for the Handy Store, owned by Elmer Thompson and Firmin J. Bousquet. Bousquet was Thompson’s brother-in-law (he was married to Elmer’s sister, Eva.)
1944 -1957	The Handy Store is listed as “grocery and confectionery”.
c. 1958	Firmin Bousquet leaves Rossland, and Thompson become sole owner of the Handy Store.
Early 1970s	The Handy Store ceases operations.
197?-197?	Rob Simm operated the corner store for approximately a year before vacating.
197? – 1998	The building was vacant and/or used for storage for a plumbing business.
1999- present	Building was purchased by Rose Garbutt and Idgie’s restaurant opened in this location.