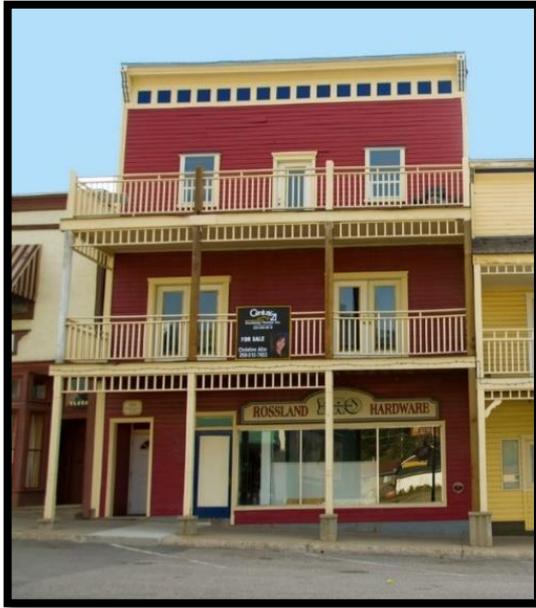


2044 WASHINGTON STREET – HOFFMAN HOUSE



Heritage Register – Building

- 1) **Historical Name:** Hoffman House
- 2) **Common Name:**
- 3) **Address:** 2044 Washington Street
- 4) **Date of Construction:** 1896
- 5) **Design, Style, Architecture, Architect:**

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Description:

The Hoffman House is located at 2044 Washington Street. It is a mid-block, wood-framed, flat-roofed, three-storey building with a full 30 foot frontage on Washington Street.

Heritage Value:

The Hoffman House is valued because it is part of the original streetscape of downtown Rossland dating back to 1896. The Washington Street buildings escaped the horrific fires of 1902, 1927,

and 1929 that destroyed so many of the early commercial buildings in other parts of the downtown.

The presence of the Hoffman House today is a visual reminder that hotels were the most prevalent type of building in the downtown during the boom years of Rossland's gold mining era. There were over 40 hotels in Rossland in 1900. With more than 30 rooms, the Hoffman House is representative of the larger hotels. It had the required kitchen and dining room facilities and met the fire regulations granting it hotel status in the eyes of the local licensing authorities. The Hoffman House bar-room was a popular spot with locals and visitors for entertainment and socializing.

The Hoffman House exemplifies the common, historical characteristic of many of Rossland's downtown buildings; the usage of this building has changed many times since construction. Amongst the most noteworthy utilizations happened in 1934 when the Hoffman House and its neighbour, the Collins Hotel, were purchased; the main floor of both buildings became one hardware store. The hardware business continued into the 1990s but under three different ownerships. Apartments in both buildings replaced the original hotel bedrooms on the second and third floors.

Improvements to the front of the Hoffman House in 2007 have replicated historical elements of the original facade, adding to the visual appeal of Washington Street, and supporting efforts to maintain the downtown's historic character.

Character Defining Elements:

- Location in the historic downtown.
- Original clapboard siding.
- Balconies on second and third floors as in the original façade.
- Wooden canopy formed by second floor balcony — an original feature of the Hoffman that extends to the curb and supported by wooden pillars.
- Plaque on building frontage identifies the Hoffman House as one of Rossland's significant heritage buildings.

HISTORY

The Hoffman House was built on Washington Street in 1896 by Harry McIntosh. There was a construction frenzy in Rossland at this time in order to meet the needs of the rapidly increasing population of this promising gold mining center. Accommodations of any sort were hard to find for the mostly male population. The Hoffman House served not only the traveling public but business people and workers who needed a place to stay until more permanent quarters could be obtained.

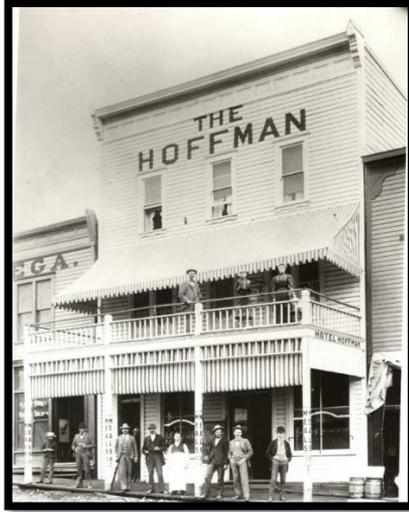
The Hoffman House was a licensed hotel which meant that it met the criteria of the city's licensing by-law (1897) — more than 30 rooms, had an operating dining room and met the Fire Escape Regulations. The hotel license cost \$100 and was valid for 6 months upon satisfactory inspection.

The licensing inspector's report of February 2, 1898 provides the following information about the Hoffman House:

- owner of property and building – McKellar & McGaughey
- Holder of Hotel License – T. D. Hayden
- Size of building – 26' x 70'
- Size of bar-room – 16' x 20'
- Two club rooms
- Dining room – 13' x 27'
- Kitchen – 13' x 17'
- 11 bedrooms on the first (second) floor
- 14 bedrooms on the second (third) floor

Remarks made in the report, say that “the dining room was not in use” and “the bedrooms, under the management of Mrs. McKellar, were neatly furnished.” It noted that there were “two water closets upstairs” and “in good order” and there was a bathroom (which very few hotels had at this time). The two water closets on the ground (main) floor were “filthy” at the time of the inspection.

By all accounts, the Hoffman House had a very good reputation in Rossland's early days. It is interesting that whitewashed remnants of Hoffman House advertising were still visible on the rocks beside the railway bed of the Columbia & Western Railway for passengers to see as they approached Rossland from Trail.



Hoffman House 1905



Advertising on Columbia and Western Railway route

The Hoffman House had four bowling alleys at the rear of the building. They were destroyed by fire in 1913 and there is no evidence that such a novel and popular attraction was ever rebuilt.

Ownership and use of the Hoffman House changed many times over the past 100 years. George Green and Alex Smith bought the Hoffman House in 1911 and also later acquired the Bodega Hotel next door. When the building stopped operating as a hotel is not clear. In 1934, Jack Hackney bought the Hoffman House and the

Collins Hotel and opened Hackney's Hardware Store in both premises. The business was purchased by Sam Wise in 1944 who changed the name to Wise's Hardware. In 1966, Jack Malchow purchased the business and buildings from Sam Wise but kept the name of Wise's Hardware and continued that business until 1988.



Hoffman House c. 1911