CAMILLE HEMINGSON

camille@alpinerealty.ca



Plans are underway to restore the historic 1908 Rutherford House in Banff – the former summer cottage of Alberta's first premier Alexander Rutherford.

SARAH-JO WASYLKIW RMO PHOTO

# Historic summer cottage to be restored to former glory

**CATHY ELLIS** 

BANFF - Plans are underway to restore the historic 1908 Rutherford House in Banff - the former summer cottage of Alberta's first premier Alexander Rutherford.

Bowstrings Heritage Foundation is now the leaseholder of the riverfront cottage at 525 Buffalo Street, which has both cultural and architectural value to

Heritage preservationists say the cottage with its wrap-around verandah is, remarkably, largely unchanged since Rutherford's death in 1941.

"It is one of the last remaining examples of early

residential cottages in Banff along the riverfront lots," said Joel Piecowye, of Shugarmann Architecture and Design, during a March 17 Banff Heritage Corporation meeting.

The building has fortunately been relatively unaltered over its lifespan, although there has been one small addition done along the southern side... and we're also proposing removing that addition to bring the cottage back to its original form."

As part of the design concept to restore the Rutherford cottage to its 1908-era design, Bowstrings Heritage Foundation has also applied to the Town of Banff for a development permit to add another dwelling on the site, to be linked to the heritage home by way of connector.

We would add on a little neck to connect it to a small lower-scale new building that would serve as a residence, say for a steward or custodian of the site," said Peter Poole, president of Bowstrings Heritage Foundation.

The first premier of Alberta, Rutherford commissioned J. Luckett in the spring of 1908 to build a small cottage in Banff overlooking the Bow River.

For Rutherford, the two-storey frame cottage represented a haven far from the constant pressures of government business.

**COTTAGE** 

CONTINUED ON PAGE A42

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**Raymond Horyn** Associate Broker/Realtor® Cell: 403.760.7999 ravhorvn@telus.net www.alpinerealty.ca



Katerina Kuratkova

Associate Realtor® Cell: 403.431.0392 kuratkova@yahoo.com www.alpinerealty.ca



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Advertising Feature

### **Canmore Real Estate and First World Problems**

By Victor Henning Partner, Canmore Real Estate Group at Maxwell Capital

Everyone here at the Canmore Real Estate Group is always excited to share our experience and knowledge in this incredible place we live. We are living and working here at a time that is displaying incredible results for our clients. Nothing could make us happier!

Like most of the real estate markets in Canada, we have seen an unprecedented amount of activity in this Market. We have had to use all our skill and experience to get the best results for our Buyers and Sellers.

We have the pleasure of helping may of our clients see their dreams come true often, purchasing second homes and or investment properties. We are always happy to share this amazing place we live with those that see the great lifestyle we have here. We take immense joy in seeing a family that has lived here for years, saved for years and, looked for years to acquire their first home.

Normally in this feature we would be happy to share with you such tips as how to prepare your home for a sale in this market, what to look out for in purchasing revenue producing property, what to do in a multiple offer situation and, other helpful tips and insights.

However today, let us put that aside and think of those who had a home a month ago and today are struggling to escape the perils of war and aggression. Those who left their family home to be destroyed, with only what they could carry. I cannot imagine what they are going through and any attempt to "put myself in their shoes" would be futile.

It makes our day-to-day struggles with owning and living in this magnificent area seem minuscule and one cannot help but want to reach out and ask what we can do. It causes us to reflect on how lucky we are to live and work here.

So.. today we ask you to take a good look the incredible vistas that surround us and think of those who no longer to have a home. Ask yourself "What Can I do to Help?" www.cufoundation.ca



Victor Henning 403.803.8472 • victor@victorhenning.ca www.victorhenning.ca • Maxwell Capital Realty 201A, 306 Bow Valley Trail Canmore. AB T1W 0L1





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## Historic cottage was completed in 1908

COTTAGE

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Not only was Rutherford Alberta's first premier, he also co-founded the University of Alberta.

Piecowye said Rutherford was elected and sworn in as the first premier after the leasehold for the riverfront property was acquired in 1905, adding that the cottage was completed in 1908.

"When the cottage was not in use by the Rutherfords, he would provide the cottage for faculty of the newly established University of Alberta so faculty could use the space for education purposes," he said.

"The house itself does have history connected with the University of Alberta."

Part of the plan is to reconstruct the interior house so that it has authentic to the original form as possible.

In addition, the owners are working on energy efficiency plans for the buildings.

"Energy conservation targets for creating carbon neutral or net-zero buildings are becoming more and more of a thing, and they are going to be very difficult to attain with a lot of heritage houses," said Piecowye.

"What we've done to try to futureproof this house is bring in an energy consultant. He will be trying to work with us to make this a case study where this building will be designed to be a 2050 carbon neutral home." Included in the plans are improving insulation, along with looking at solar on the new development.

"This will hopefully be the last renovation that this house will need for the next 50 years to 100 years, so when this house is done, the goal is this house will meet all of the energy targets that Canada will need to make the country into a net-zero country," said Piecowye.

"The only thing that will be needed to make this house completely carbon neutral is eventually for the Alberta government to make the actual grid green, so by using clean energy, since the only thing in this house will need to heat it and keep it powered is electricity"

Roland Charpentier, a member of the Alberta Association of Architects who sits on the Banff Heritage Corporation, congratulated the team on the work being done.

"A lot of things are well done on this project, certainly the addition remains subservient to the historic building," he said.

"You took your cues from the historic building, but you didn't try to replicate them and I think it's a good example of how to do additions."

The goals of Bowstrings Heritage Foundation include the acquisition and restoration of heritage buildings for reuse or new purposes to build community.



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## PLEASE CONTACT:

(416) 805-3367

alpine@basecampresorts.com