

NEW LISTING



SALMON RIVER INN

Fully refurbished, licensed pub / restaurant w/ combined seating of approx 175 patrons & 16-room hotel complete w/ a developed sport-fishing charter business, situated adjacent to the estuary of the scenic Salmon River. A popular area for outdoor enthusiasts. **The only hotel in town - incredible potential!**\$525,000

NEW LISTING



MARINE INDUSTRIAL OPPORTUNITY

Unique **17.7-acre** investment opportunity in Jensen Cove, Port Hardy. **7.6 Oceanfront acres** w/ deep-water protected moorage, 2.57-acre foreshore lease, 80-ton roll on / off ramp, steel barge, concrete deck, steel frame industrial building.....\$840,000 & undeveloped, **10 upland acres**.....\$160,000
OR...buy them together for...\$925,000



PORT CLEMENTS

Bring your ideas! Mixed use commercially zoned ocean view building – ideal for residential above & store front below / as a base for a tourism / adventure business. Close to Government dock & amenities. Great location & visibility. Recent major upgrades. Incredible salt & freshwater fishing & outdoor adventure. Excellent mortgage helper.....\$198,000



PORT NEVILLE ACREAGE

Substantial Mainland Acreage! 320 acres of Riverfront property situated at the Mouth of Shoal Creek. **220 acres upland** w/ mixed topography – level to moderately sloped shoreline, merchantable timber w/ a mix of new & old growth trees & an established road network. Build your wilderness resort or private retreat today!\$820,000



KYUQUOT - WALTERS COVE

West Coast Vancouver Island 6bdrm, 2000sqft oceanfront cottage in Walter's Cove – a remote wilderness area w/ magnificent scenery, challenging hiking trails, beautiful stretches of coastline, incredible sport-fishing & wildlife viewing. Boat access only - gov't dock & public moorage facilities. Ideal choice for personal retreat / group purchase \$379,000



Ed Handja

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Francis Rattenbury

Architect of his own fate?

IT'S AMAZING TO CONSIDER that in 1965 discussions took place proposing to demolish Victoria's emblematic Fairmont Empress Hotel and replace it with a contemporary high-rise equivalent. The feeling was that it had deteriorated into an embarrassment. However, one local newspaper mirrored public opinion when stating: "Without this splendid relic of the Edwardian era, literally tens of thousands of tourists will never return. This is the Mecca, this is the heart and soul of the city." In the face of such foreshadowing opposition, the contentious plans were ditched in favour of a four-million-dollar renovation, pertly named 'Operation Teacup'.

Victoria minus the iconic Empress is unthinkable today, but even the possibility that it could have happened typifies the drama that shaped the life of its brilliant British architect. A controversial figure of bold entrepreneurial spirit, Francis Rattenbury was as ruthless as he was gifted, and magnetic to scandal. Even his death was a sensation, generating a major news story of the day.

As an architect, however, Rattenbury was a true master—his legacy to Victoria alone presenting ample evidence of his skills. In addition to the stunning Fairmont Empress Hotel (1904-1908), his other acknowledged masterpiece in the province's capital is its seat of government, the BC Parliament Buildings (1891-1898). An imposing, borderline ostentatious structure, this essential Victoria tourist attraction should be

admired both during the day and at night, when its outline is spectacularly framed by lights.

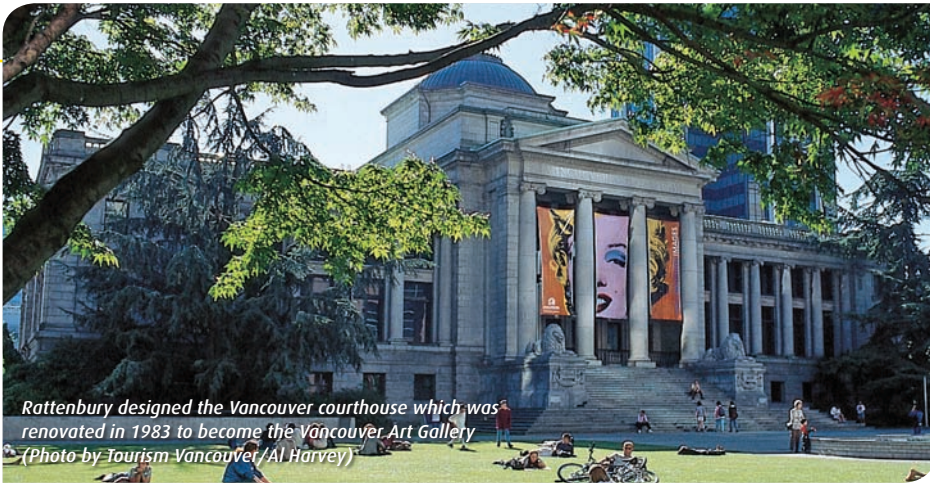
Other significant Rattenbury designs for Victoria included The Crystal Garden (1925), the original CPR Steamship Terminal (1923-1924) and the Lieutenant Governor's Residence (1901), which was unfortunately razed by fire in 1957. The chateau-style Bank of Montreal (1896) on Douglas Street is also Rattenbury's work. He designed several bank buildings during his career, including further BMO commissions in Nelson, New Westminster and Rossland, plus branches of Merchant's Bank in Victoria and Nanaimo.

Born in the city of Leeds, England in 1867, Rattenbury arrived in BC in 1892 as a fully qualified architect. Within a couple of months of landing in Vancouver, the precocious talent won a competition to design the BC Parliament Buildings, securing his immediate future. His professional reputation naturally soared.

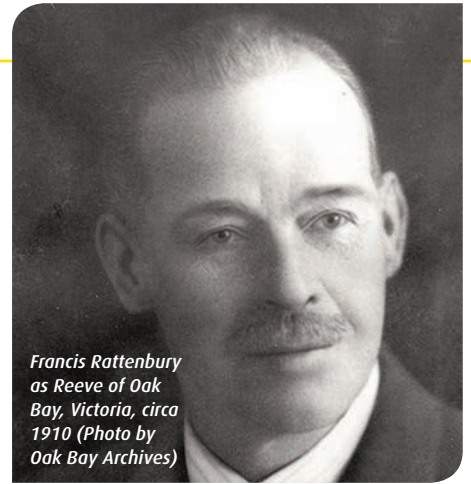
Commissions then came in thick and fast, some from the provincial government, offering Rattenbury a varied palette of projects. His many clients included the Canadian Pacific Railway, for whom he drew up plans for several hotels to be sited at important stops along their route.

Courthouses were another Rattenbury specialty. He built them in Nanaimo, Chilliwack and Nelson, but his most famous was one of neoclassical style for Vancouver (1905-1913). At a cost of 20 million dollars, Architect Arthur Erickson transformed it into the Vancouver Art Gallery in 1983. Situated on Hornby Street, the breathtaking building





Rattenbury designed the Vancouver courthouse which was renovated in 1983 to become the Vancouver Art Gallery (Photo by Tourism Vancouver / Al Harvey)



Francis Rattenbury as Reeve of Oak Bay, Victoria, circa 1910 (Photo by Oak Bay Archives)

is, at over 41,000 square feet and housing in excess of 9,000 works, the largest gallery in Western Canada.

Besides being an architectural genius, Rattenbury enjoyed dabbling in other areas of opportunity. Almost immediately after arriving in BC he became involved in numerous business ventures. Some of these brought him success, but some did not. The latter instances led to serious problems for Rattenbury, including conflicts with financial partners. His reputation suffered as a result, many people disillusioned with not only his business failings, but also his emotional unpredictability. Rattenbury began to find himself shunned by friends and business associates alike, a situation that ultimately forced him to flee Victoria.

In 1923, Rattenbury left Florence Nunn—his wife of 25 years—and their two children, for Alma Pakenham, 29 years his junior. His subsequent cruelty towards his wife and carefree public appearances with his mistress caused outrage enough that his standing never truly recovered. Rattenbury married Pakenham in 1925, the pair and their new son, John, eventually leaving Canada for good in 1929. The heartbroken Nunn passed away the same year.

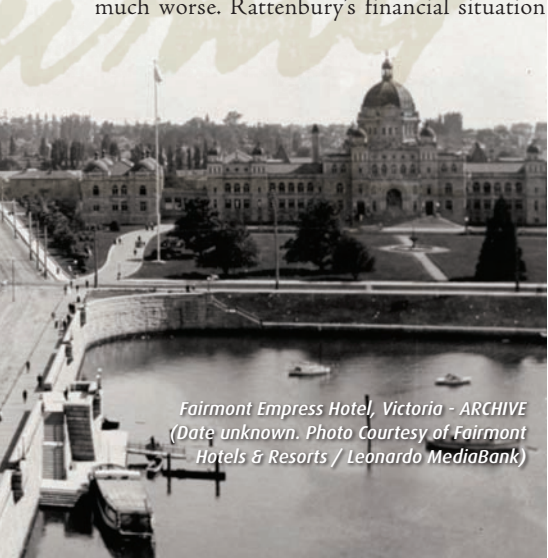
In Bournemouth, England, things got much worse. Rattenbury's financial situation

collapsed, in reflection of what was occurring in his marriage. His wife began a passionate affair with her teenage chauffeur, George Percy Stoner. Then in 1935, the illicit couple were charged with the murder of 68-year-old Rattenbury, who'd been bludgeoned to death with a mallet. Stoner was sentenced to hang, though served just seven years of a commuted life sentence, while Pakenham committed suicide just days after charges against her were dropped.

The circumstances surrounding Rattenbury's grisly end fascinate to this day. Playwright

Terence Rattigan's final work, *Cause Célèbre* (1977), was based on the case. It is said that Stoner was spotted amongst the audience at one staging. In 1987 it was made into a TV movie starring Dame Helen Mirren as Pakenham and the late Harry Andrews portraying the architect.

Francis Rattenbury was undoubtedly a flawed genius. That he sometimes acted in objectionable ways is unfortunately clear, but that he also made a massive contribution to the face of our developing province is unquestionable. —David Morrison



Fairmont Empress Hotel, Victoria - ARCHIVE (Date unknown. Photo Courtesy of Fairmont Hotels & Resorts / Leonardo MediaBank)

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