

# Memory Lane

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## 58 – 64 King St. East (Gore Park)

58 King Street East was constructed as a three-storey brick commercial building circa 1850 for merchant Russell Prentiss and was originally occupied by hardware merchants Harvey and Young. A fourth storey was added to the building circa 1876 under the ownership of Edward Browne. 58 King Street East was occupied by wholesale jewellery manufacturers Levy Brothers Company Limited from 1877 to 1945. The wholesale jewellery company was founded in 1857 by Herman Abraham Levy and continued to prosper in Hamilton for 100 years. The company sold jewellery, jewellers' materials and clocks coast to coast and it was the leading wholesale house in the Dominion. The warehouse was located at 58-60 King Street East for 68 years before moving to 25 Main Street West.

The front façade was renovated circa 1920 based on designs by architects Stewart & Witton. 58 King Street East was occupied by a series of men's wear companies in the 20th century including Lou Davidson Limited (1954-1968), Robert Ward Limited (1969-1980).

In 1982, Elias Robis and his business partner son, Mike, opened Chester's Beers of the World in the former men's clothing store beside the family's Granada Restaurant on King Street East. Chester's featured more than 300 imported and domestic beers. Hamilton beer drinkers were introduced to exotic beers of other nations, adding much more variety than the local beer on tap in every restaurant at the time.



In this photo of a 1960s Remembrance day service from Gary Evan's book *The Prints of King* we can see the building to the left of the Royal Trust Company with the Lou Davidson store on the ground floor. The Russell Williams restaurant can also be seen next door which would later become Granada Restaurant.



Chester's pictured before its closure.

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## 58 – 64 King St. East ...continued

The building next door at 62 King St. E. housed Granada Restaurant, also owned by Robis. Elias Robis was born in Greece and came to Hamilton in 1956. He married his wife, Vasiliki (Bessie), the next year. In 1972, Robis opened the Granada Restaurant at the downtown site of the former Russell Williams Family Restaurant, which had been damaged in a fire. The Granada was once one of Hamilton's top eateries and was mentioned in the same breath as The Sirloin Cellar and The Golden Garter. In 1980, it offered 31 main courses, from steaks and prime rib to chicken dishes and liver Venetian. Upstairs for a time, father and son operated Bumpers disco. The Granada lasted until 1991. It was called Chester's Chophouse for one year and then became Finger's Bar and Grill in 1993.

62 King Street East was constructed as a three-storey brick commercial building circa 1850 for silver smith Edward Magill and was originally occupied by H.N. Titus and Company's wholesale dry goods business. A fourth storey was added to the building circa 1876 under the ownership of William Hendrie. 62 King Street East has been occupied by a variety of businesses including James Walker's wholesale wools and fancy goods (1870-1906), Robert Junor's China Palace (1909-1921), Aikine's Billiards (1935-1956), Murphy's Restaurant (1939-1950), Bright Spot/Williams' Restaurant (1950-1972) and Granada Restaurant and Tavern (1978-1980s).

The Buntin & Gillies wholesale paper and stationary business, founded in Hamilton in 1848 by Alexander Buntin, was also once located here. As the business expanded it outgrew its location at 62 King Street East and moved into larger facilities at the corner of John and Jackson Streets. The building was occupied by Finger's Bar and Grill from the 1990's onward.



62 King St. E. when it was Finger's Restaurant.

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## 58 – 64 King St. East ...continued

64 King Street East was constructed as part of a three-storey brick commercial row circa 1845 for cabinet maker Hiram Clarke and was originally occupied by grocers T. and D. Murphy. 64 King Street East has been occupied by a variety of businesses including merchandise brokers Alfred Powis & Son (1883-1935), Trade Chambers (1903-1948), John R. and Frederick G. Thompson's Art Store (1918-1965), James Tasker's Men's Wear (1939-1956), Paulusberger's Ski and Sports Centre (1968-1980s) and K.D. Findlay's Men's Wear (1990s).



64 King St. E. was most recently an office for Frontline Focus.



64 King St. E. was one time home to Paton's Men's Shop pictured here in 1960.