

# Memory Lane

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## The Wentworth Building (Lulu's Shawarma)

The current building at 32 John St. N housing Lulu's Shawarma is a single-detached one-storey commercial building constructed in 1992. Prior to The Wentworth Building stood at this northeast corner of John and King William.



The Wentworth Building in the 1960s. CKOC has left the building but Hamilton Traffic Court remained at the time.

Originally, CKOC radio station broadcast from the corner of King William and John Streets and was an offshoot of the Wentworth Radio and Supply Company owned by Herb Slack. CKOC was launched principally to offer a radio program service which, together with other stations would help to provide an incentive for people to buy radio receivers from Wentworth Radio and Supply. For \$500 Slack received a licence on April 26, 1922 to operate a radio station in Hamilton. Slack and partner George Crawford purchased the needed equipment to put a five watt station on the air and in the spring of 1922 the station became only

the third radio station in all of Canada. Studios were set up in the Windsor Hotel on the north-west corner of King William and John Streets across the street from Wentworth Auto. In 1933 CKOC purchased room in the Wentworth Building (above Wentworth Radio).

Other broadcast locations over the years for CKOC include, the 11th floor of the Royal Connaught Hotel, the Lister Block building on James & King Williams Streets and a studio on Garfield Avenue near King & Sherman Avenue North. By 1960, CKOC was Canada's oldest continuously operating radio station and made the decision to switch from comedy and drama to a Top-40 music format. In 2015 parent company Bell Media made the announcement that CKOC was going all-sports. Now known as TSN 1150, it remains the oldest continuously operating station in the country.

The Wentworth building was one of the remaining remnants of the E.C. Gurney Company complex that occupied the entire block bounded by John, Rebecca, Catharine and King William Streets in the late 1800s. By the mid-20th century, the main office and buildings fronting into John Street North housed a variety of new businesses, including Victoria Leather and Hamilton Chewing Gum Limited, while Canada Coach Lines Limited operated their garage and repairs shop out of the central plant buildings. More information on E.C. Gurney can be found down the block at 77 King William, the only remaining building that was part of the foundry.

David Rosenberg was born and raised in Bobroisk, Russia. In 1913, he and wife Eshka came to Canada, settling initially in Hamilton, Ontario, where David set up a garment manufacturing company called the Victoria Leather Jacket Co. Ltd.