

# Memory Lane

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## Treble Hall & Pagoda Building

Built in 1879, Treble Hall originally had store fronts on the first floor, offices on the second, and a 400 seat assembly hall on the third floor for concerts, public meetings and theatre. Treble Hall was designed by James Balfour, an architect whose other grand buildings included the old city hall, the Tuckett mansion (now Scottish Rite) and Ravenscliffe Castle. The building is a great example of the Renaissance Revival style architecture. It was first owned by Henry J. Larkin. Larkin was a business man who planned to have the building house retail shops and offices. The building was sold to haberdasher (a person who sells small articles for sewing, dressmaking and knitting) Samuel Treble in 1893, who installed the “Treble Hall” pressed metal name plate on the roof. Following Samuel Treble’s death in 1899, “Treble Hall” remained in the family until the mid-1940’s.

and framed by panelled stall risers and fanlights. Corinthian Order pilasters and narrow support columns are made in cast iron, and a prominent cornice above is formed in galvanized iron.

Businesses that have occupied Treble Hall in the recent past included the Moulin Rouge vintage clothing store and coffee bar on the first floor, which later evolved into the French-themed Moulin Rouge Cocktail Lounge, and Toast Wine Bar which closed in early 2020. The building now houses two shops – The Witch’s Fix and Vagabond Saints with apartments above.



Treble Hall with all ground floor retail occupied.

Treble Hall, which shares an end wall with the Pagoda (85 King St. E.) and also connected through internal doorways, was designed as a three-storey, two-part commercial block. The ground floor store fronts follow the typical Victorian pattern of large windows interspersed by recessed entries



Treble Hall as it was in the past, located on John Street between King and King William Streets.

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# Treble Hall & Pagoda Building ...continued



Interior view of the former Moulin Rouge.

The ornate part of Treble Hall faces John Street, but it also includes another 1850s-era building on King Street that was the home of the famous Pagoda Restaurant.

The Pagoda building, 85 King St. East, began as a three-storey brick rowhouse constructed in 1842, and was originally owned by John Erwin, who is also believed to be the architect/builder. In 1852, John Erwin sold the property to Henry J. Larkin, who commissioned “Larkin Hall” in 1879. The Treble

family retained 85 King Street East until 1945. The Pagoda Restaurant was established in this location in 1942, where it remains on the second floor.

The property accommodated some of Hamilton’s primary businesses. In the early 20th Century, Samuel Treble re-established his business there (Treble’s Ltd., Gents’ Furnishings), demonstrating the building’s importance for business ventures. Other uses throughout the late 19th, early 20th Century included Robert Campbell and Son, dry goods, from 1871-1882, and Sanders Connell Ltd., Men’s Wear, from 1924-1935.

The Pagoda building at 85 King St. is reflective of early commercial development in downtown Hamilton’s core. The simplicity of Georgian style is reflected in its design. Despite alterations in the late 20th century, its modest Georgian massing and composition —achieved through symmetrical fenestration and hipped roof— survives largely intact. For decades it has been a local landmark, not only for its historic appearance and location on the corner of two main streets, but also for its association with the Pagoda Chop Suey House, a long-running Chinese restaurant in the City and one advertised through a prominent neon sign.



In this picture you can see the Pagoda sign on the corner of King St. as well as the Royal Connaught looming over the building.



Several businesses have occupied the ground floor of 85 King St. E. but the Pagoda Restaurant was a mainstay upstairs for decades.