

85 King Street East and 4-12 John Street North, Hamilton  
Pagoda and Treble Hall

## **STATEMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE VALUE OR INTEREST AND DESCRIPTION OF HERITAGE ATTRIBUTES**

### **Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest**

The connected commercial buildings at 85 King Street and 4-12 John Street in the City of Hamilton, are known locally as the Pagoda and Treble Hall, respectively. The Pagoda occupies the northeast corner of King Street East and John Street North, while Treble Hall fronts onto John Street North.

The combined property including the Pagoda and Treble Hall is of cultural heritage value for its design or physical value, its historic or associative value, and its contextual value. Built before 1850 the three-storey, two-part commercial block Pagoda is constructed of brick in Flemish bond and accented with a stone string course, Jack arch stone lintels on the King Street East façade, and fire wall parapets on two sides. Despite alterations in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, its modest Georgian massing and composition —achieved through symmetrical fenestration and hipped roof— survives largely intact. For the last 50 years 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.

Treble Hall, which shares an end wall with the Pagoda and also connected through internal doorways, was designed as a three-storey, two-part commercial block in ornate *palazzo* Italianate style by renowned Hamilton architect James Balfour for developer and barrister Henry Larkin. The ground floor store fronts follow the typical Victorian pattern of large windows interspersed by recessed entries 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. The windows on the exposed running-bond brick walls above are surrounded by panelled Tuscan Order columns, scrolled brackets and Baroque pediments, and the storeys visually separated by a string course moulded in galvanized iron. At the cornice of the gable roof with prominent brick parapets and carved stone skew corbels is a substantial frieze with prominent dentils, and closely spaced scrolled modillions, all formed in galvanized iron. At the centre of the roof is a wide brick chimney decorated with cogging and covered by a galvanized iron cartouche with 'TREBLE HALL' and the date of construction in relief, and this is flanked by large pedimented dormers. American bond and Jack arch door and window voussoirs have been used for the masonry on the rear façade and end wall of the building, which faces a courtyard and alley. The expert execution and structural strength of the building is evidenced on the interior through its massive stone and brick partition walls, and king post roof trusses with scissor braces that support the roof and frame the ceiling of the grand hall at the top storey.

Despite their age, both structures have a high level of heritage integrity and are historically connected to the public common space of Gore Park, the original commercial core of Hamilton, and the mid-to-late 19<sup>th</sup> century expansion of the City as Ontario's key industrial centre. Their contrasting style represents in a single property not only the City's urban growth over the 19<sup>th</sup> century, but also the changing architectural fashion for urban and commercial architecture over the same period. As its popular name suggests, the Pagoda is also associated with the Chinese business community in Hamilton, and for much of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the building was a local landmark for its restaurant with prominent neon sign. Through their history and continued use, the Pagoda and Treble Hall reflect the evolution of Hamilton's urban landscape over the past 170 years, and support and maintain the surrounding historic commercial architecture and public spaces of the downtown.

### **Description of Heritage Attributes**

The heritage attributes that support the design or physical, historical or associative, and contextual value of the Pagoda are its:

- Three-storey, two-part commercial block massing combining Flemish bond brick masonry and cut stone on two principal façades;
- Hip roof with substantial trusses and fire walls with parapet;
- Flat arch windows with Jack arch voussoirs on the John Street façade and stone arch lintels on the King Street façade;
- Connection to Treble Hall through interior doorways; and,
- Large and early neon sign advertising the Pagoda Chop Suey House

The heritage attributes that support the design or physical, historical or associative, and contextual value of Treble Hall are its:

- Three and a half storey, two part commercial block massing combining cast iron, galvanized iron, and brick masonry in running bond;
- Victorian store fronts with prominent cornice with roll brackets and dentils, cast iron Corinthian Order pilasters and narrow pillars, dressed stone and ceramic steps, and variety of panelled stall risers, large windows with mullions, recessed entrances with panelled doors, and fanlights;
- A central recessed entrance with large transoms and sidelights framed with Corinthian Order pilasters;
- Galvanized iron Tuscan Order and Baroque window architraves and string course and decorative tie-rod ends on the second and third level of the John Street North façade;
- Substantial galvanized iron cornice at the eaves, with closely spaced scrolled modillions and dentils, framed with carved stone skew corbels on the fire walls;
- Large central chimney on the street side façade with cogging and galvanized iron cartouche, and flanked by large pedimented dormers; and,
- Substantial construction involving course rubble foundations, coursed rubble interior partitions, brick interior partitions extended to the second level, end fire walls with tall chimneys and parapets, and thick timber roof trusses with king and queen posts and scissor braces.