# CENTRAL BLOCK
## 1878

# 140 - 172 King St. W.
## 138 - 150 King St. (1880's)
# 9 Storefronts

**DIRECTORY LISTINGS::**

**1879:**: Ezra McDougall, stove Depot & Tin Shop; (172), Manhard & Booth's Flour & Feed Store (170), Beacock & Co., Trunk Facotry (164), Chartles Griffin, hatter, furrier & taxidermists (162), Wouthworth's Dental Surgery (156), Charles Best, boot and shoes (152), W.R. McRea & Co. and Wilson & co. (148), P. Browne & Co. Grocers & Spirits Merchants (144), McGlades's Billiard parlour (140)
**1883:**: Allan Cameron, grocery; others
**1890:**: McConkey Grocery, E. Clint Furniture & Undertaker, J.C. Stewart, dentist, George Young, boots & shoes, Kehoe, tailer, Norris confectioner, Fraser Grocery, Browne Grocery, McGlade Billiard
**1900:**: vacant (172), McConkey Grocery (170), E. Clint, undertaker & furniture (164), R.L. Graham dentist (162), G.A. Rudd, harness (156), M.J. Kehoe, merchant taylor (152), Morrison & Empey Stoves (148), Browne Grocery & Liquor (144), McGlade Hotel (140)
**1911:**: Starr Theatre (172) Charles Rudd, harness (170), Shaver Grocery (164), Quirmbach Furniture & Undertaker (162), Morrison Cigars & Pool Room (156), Johnston Grocery (152), Wonderland Theatre (148), Browne Grocery & Wine (144), Hoods Restaurant (140)
**1913:**: Royal Resaurant (172), Charles Rudd, harness (170), Lorimer Grocery (164), Quirmbach Furniture & Undertaker (160-162), Morrison Cigars & Pool Room (156), Johnston Grocery (152), Wonderland Theatre (148), Browne Grocery & Wine (144),Thormin Confy (140)
**1919:**: W.L. Dailey, harness (172) Charles Rudd, harness (170), Lorimer Grocery (164), Quirmbach Furniture & Undertaker (160-162), Morrison Cigars & Pool Room (156), W.R. Stitt, barber (152), New York Cafe (148), Beatty Grocery (144), Thormin Confectionery (140)
**1924:**: Grand Cafe (172), Cancilla Fruit (170), Lorimer Grocery (164), Quirmbach Furniture & Undertaker (160-162), Morrison Cigars & Pool Room (156), P.A. Kittner, barber (152), New York Cafe (148), Silas Howson (144), Mike Leras, confectionery (140)
**1929:**: White Star Cafe (172), Cancilla Fruit (170), Lorimer Grocery (164), Quirmbach Furniture & Undertaker (160-162), Morrison Cigars & Pool Room (156), Nick Apostle shoeshine (152), New York Cafe (148), Johnson Hardware (144), Diana Sweets Restaurant (140)
**1931:**: White Star Cafe (172), Cancilla Fruit (170), Lorimer Grocery (164), Quirmbach Furniture & Undertaker (160-162), Morrison Cigars & Pool Room (156), Brockville Photo Specialties (152), The Percival Store, furniture (148), Johnson Hardware (144), Diana Sweets Restaurant (140)
**1933:**: White Star Cafe (172), Pauline's Dress Shop (170), Lorimer Grocery (164), Quirmbach Furniture & Undertaker (160-162), Morrison Cigars & Pool Room (156), Brockville Photo Specialties (152), The Percival Store, furniture (148), Johnson Hardware (144), Diana Sweets Rest. (140)
**1935:**: White Star Cafe (172), George O'Hara, fish (170), S. Thormin, fruits (170), William Lorimer, grocery (164), Quirmbach Furniture & Undertaker (162, 160), George Morrison, cigars & pool room (156), R. Francis, barber / R.Bruce Drew, optometrist (152), J.H. Doyle, clothing (148), Johnson Hardware (144), Diana Sweets Restaurant (140)
**1937:**: White Star Cafe (172), Rondi Fruit Co. (170), William Lorimer, grocery (164), Quirmbach Furniture & Undertaker (162, 160), George Morrison, cigars & pool room (156), R. Francis, barber / R.B. Drew, Optom (152), J.H. Doyle, clothing (148), Johnson Hardware (144), Diana Sweets Restaurant (140)
**1941:**: White Star Cafe (172), Rondi Fruit Co. (170), N.L. Rickett, grocery (164), C.W. Paul Funeral Service (162), George Morrison, cigars & pool room (156), R. Francis, barber / R.B. Drew, Optom (152), J.H. Doyle, clothing (148), Johnson Hardware (144), Diana Sweets Restaurant (140)
**1943:**: White Star Cafe (172), Rondi Fruit Co. (170), vacant (164), Paul Funeral Service (162), David Ain, clothing (156), R. Francis, barber / R.B. Drew, Optom (152), Doyle's Department Store (148), Johnson Hardware (144), Diana Sweets Restaurant (140)
**1949:**: Canada Grill (172), B. Black, elo (170), Jenkinson Billiards & barber (164), Langsner Furniture (162), Bell Furriers (156), R. Francis, barber / R.B. Drew, Optom (152), Doyle's Department Store (148), Johnson Hardware (144), Diana Sweets Restaurant (140)
**1960:**: Canada Grill (172), Hawley's Appliance Store (170), Jenkinson Billiards (164), Langsner Furniture (162), Western Tire & Auto Supply (156), The Nursery Shop (152), Piper's Men's & Children's Wear (148), Adley's Furniture (144), Adley's Furniture (144), Diana Sweets Rest.(140)
**1970:**: Happy Garden's Restaurant (172), Aurea's Smoke Shop (170), Adorn Flowers (164), Langsner's Furniture (162), Doyle's Clothing Store (156) , Al's Paint Store (152), Piper's Men's & Children's Wear (148), Billing's Home Hardware (144), Diana Sweets Restaurant (140)
**1980:**: Golden Gate Restaurant (172), Aurea's Smoke Gift & Stationary (170), (No Return) (164), Langsner's Furniture (162), Doyle's Men's Wear and Ski Shop (156), Tott's & Teens (152), Piper's Men's & Children's Wear (148), Billing's Home Hardware (144), Diana Sweets Restaurant (140)
**1986:**: Golden Gate Restaurant (172), The Camera Centre (170), Bahai Community Brockville (164), Billing's Home Hardware (162), Brockville Part Mart (156), Army Surplus Store (152), Senior R Services (148), Berry's Discount Pet Foods (144), Diana Sweets Restaurant (140)
**1988/1995:**: Golden Gate Restaurant (172), Olympic One Hour Photo (170), Capricorn Classics (164), Billing's Home Hardware (162), Pauline's Lingerie (156), Army Surplus Store (152), R. Senior Services locksmith's (148), Berry's Discount Pet Foods (144), Diana Sweets Restaurant (140)
**2000:**: Golden Gate Restaurant (172), R. Senior Services locksmith's (170), Dangerous Curves (164), Billing's Home Hardware (162), Pauline's Lingerie (156), Army Surplus Store (152), R. Senior Services locksmith's (148), vacant (144), Diana Sweets Restaurant (140)
**2003:**: Golden Gate Restaurant (172), vacant (170), vacant (164), Billing's Home Hardware (162), Pauline's Lingerie (156), Army Surplus Store (152), R. Senior Services locksmith's (148), Berry's Pet Foods (144), Diana Sweets Restaurant (140)
**2006:**: Golden Gate Restaurant (172), C Ranks Bicycle Shop (170), Creative Goldsmith & Diamond Merchant (164), Billing's Home Hardware (162), Pauline's Lingerie (156), Army Surplus Store (152), R. Senior Services locksmith's (148), Berry's Pet Foods (144), Diana Sweets Rest. (140)
**2009:**: Golden Gate Restaurant (172), Ace Hardware (170), Creative Goldsmith (164), Billing's Home Hardware (162), Pauline's Lingerie (156), The Army Surplus (152), R. Senior Services locksmith's (148), Healthy Pets Botique (144), Island Delight Restaurant (140)
**2012:**: Golden Gate Restaurant (172), Seaway Kitchen & Bath (170), Creative Goldsmith (164), Billing's Home Hardware (162), Pauline's Lingerie (156), The Army Surplus (152), The Many Things Store (148), Healthy Pets Botique (144), Island Delight Restaurant (140)
**2018:**: Golden Gate Restaurant (172), Seaway Kitchen & Bath (170), Creative Goldsmith (164), Billing's Home Hardware (162), Pauline's Lingerie (156), Book Trader (152), MK II Outdoors & Surplus (148), Healthy Pets Botique (144), Island Delight Restaurant (140)
**2020:**: Golden Gate Restaurant (172), Seaway Kitchen & Bath (170), Creative Goldsmith (164), vacant (162), Pauline's Lingerie (156), Book Trader (152), vacant (148), Healthy Pets Botique (144),Island Delight Restaurant (140)
**2022:**: Golden Gate Restaurant (172), Sassy Yarns (170), The Bohode Abode, specialty furniture (164), Medium Effort Fine Art Supplies (162), Pauline's Lingerie (156), Book Trader (152), H & T Nails (148), Healthy Pets Botique (144), Island Delight Restaurant (140)
**2022:**: Golden Gate Restaurant (172), Sassy Yarns (170), Studio Even, design studio 7 gift shop (164), Medium Effort Fine Art Supplies (162), Pauline's Lingerie (156), Book Trader (152), H & T Nails (148), Healthy Pets Botique (144), Island Delight Restaurant (140)

The Central Block has 9 storefronts. It was built in 1878 and the architect may have been O.E. Liston. Originally there were many small houses and stores, which had to be demiolished or moved out to built this massive structure.

**Allan Cameron**'s grocery store got its start in the Central Block in 1883 (according to Ad below). He wouldn't stay long here tho, as he moved down the street to the Easton Block by 1886.

**George S. Young** had a store in the Central Block selling boots, shoes and rubbers. He may have succeeded Charles Best, who had the same type of store in 1879. Young was here from at least the early 1880s until c1993. In the 1884-1885 directory the address was 146 King St., with no E. or W. (as per the ad below). Shortly after, in the 1886-87 directory, he was listed as 283 King St. W., in the Central Block. This reflects the ever changing address systems on King/Main St. in the 1800s. This would not stabelize until c1910. George had apparently retired early/mid 1890's as he is showing not in business but living at 94 Bethune St. in the 1895-96 directory.

**E. Clint** furniture and undertaking was in this block as far back as 1884 and before. He advertised furniture, Undertaker, cabinet making, upholsterer, picture frames & mouldings. Edward Clint lived in the Central Block, where his business was. The business went to George E. Quirmbach, who had been working for him in the first decade of the 1900s. The business itself would continue in the city through the Quirmbach and Paul eras right up to about 1979. The closing of Pauls Funeral Home on James St. ended about a full century of the undertaking business ... starting with Clint's.

**Quirmbach Furniture & Undertaker** appeared at #162 in the first decade of the 20th century. George E. Quirmbach came to Brockville from Berlin (London, ON) around 1891. He began working for E. Clint's undertaker & furniture business in 1899 before taking it over in that first decade. "The motto of the house is furniture or household goods of elaborate taste at moderate prices and entire satisfaction assured" "In stock is carried a full supply of metallic , cloth covered and polished wood caskets, also cement and steal vaults and everything else pertaining to the business". He sold the business to C.W. Paul in c1938. **Paul Funeral Service** operated here until c1947 when it moved to 33 James St.E.

#172 marks over a century of continuous use as a restaurant. First appearing was **Grand Cafe** shortly after 1920, then White **Star Cafe**, **Canada Grill** and **Happy Garden**'s. Finaly the **Golden Gate Restaurant**, a chinese restaurant, opened here in the 1970's and continues to this day.

At the other end of the block, #140 has also been a restaurant for well over a century, starting with **Hoods Restaurant** (c1910's) and with **Diana Sweets** there for many decades. Now, **Island Delight**.

The large block has also had a hotel (**McGlade's**), undertaker's (**E. Clint Furniture & Undertaker**, **Quirmbach Furniture & Undertaker**) and many grocery stores over the years.

With a short exception, #144 was a long time hardware store location from the 1920's with **Johnson Hardware** to later **Billings Home Hardware**. With rumours of Billing's impending closing, **Ace Hardware** opened a couple of spots down at #170 around 2008. They didn't last long as Billings ended up staying open another decade.

**Billings Home Hardware** was opened around 1965, by Bob Billings. Unlike most stores, Bob kept a large inventory of old outdated fixtures, parts, etc. and if you couldn't find it anywhere else, you always found it here. The store closed in May, 2016 after over a half century in business.

The **Sleepless Monkey Cafe** opened by Christine Holditch-Kilpatrick in the 1000 Islands Mall, 2013 (date webside started) or earlier. The business moved to the Central Block, #170, in 2016 with a Grand opening Feb. 12. They offered live entertainment and karaoke. In Dec. 2018 there was a flood at the downtown location. They planned to re-open but never did downtown. A Feb 2020 opening in the Brockville Shopping Centre at Stingers Indoor Paintball & Rec Center. Unsure if it happened or cancelled because the Pandemic.

**Seaway Kitchen & Bath** was a specialized hardware store at #170 from c2010 - c2021. It was part of an eastern ontario chain that originated in Cornwall. Other stores were in Ingleside, Hawkesbury, Alexandria, Long Sault, Morrisburg, Casselman, Lancaster and Ottawa. The pandemic may have played a roll in its 2021 closing.

The **Boho Abode** was a specialty furniture store. It was originally in Ottawa from 2020 and moved to Brockville February, 2021. They described themselves as "Vintage shop filled with uniquely curated pre-loved + specialty furniture & home items!". It closed in 2022.

There has been a restaurant at #172 continuously since around 1920. Previously the **Royal Restaurant** was here briefly around 1913. Then beginning about 1920 the **Grand Cafe** had a short run until c1927. It was followed by the **White Star Cafe**, with a lengthy 20-year run from c1927 to c1947. Its proprietor was Shue Law. Next was **Canada Grill** with proprietor Henry Jo Lam, c1947 to c1963., It was followed by the **Lucky Star Restaurant** with a short run c1963 to c1967. Next up was **Happy Gardens Restaurant**, with proprietor Samuel Wong, c1967 to c1974. At long last, the current one, **Golden Gate Restaurant**, was opened by John Yip around 1974. Future owners were Mike Wong & Siu Tam, Andrew Cheng, Sam Steve & June Chang, Leon Ng and Kok Fung Lam. They advertise "Chinese and Canadian cuisine, seating for 80 people. All you can eat lunch buffet."

Pauline Marshall retired from Walkers Dept Store at age 59 and after a two week vacation, decided to open her own business. Expanding on what she did at Walkers she opened **Pauline's Lingerie** on Buell St. in 1975. A few more locations and a couple of fires later, she moved here to the Central Block, around 1987. They deal in " lingerie, loungewear and fine fabrics", and "specialize in professional bra fittings, mastectomy fittings, fine lingerie, women's clothing, swimwear, resort wear, sleepwear, loungewear, casuals and accessories.". Pauline was active in the business until she turned 100, and passed away at 103. Grandaughter Cathy Howley had taken over the management of the store as time went on.

**Book Trader** moved to this location in Jan. 2017 from the Buell Block at 93 King St. W. and is run by Charmaine Hache. *(See Buell Block for more)*

**Healthy Pets Boutique** was opened here in 2006 by Ralph Schuh and Debra Blimkie. "We stock products for Cats, Dogs, birds and small animals such as rabbits and hamsters." A second location opened in Kemptville in June 2011. As of 2023, the business was put up for sale.

**Medium Effort Fine Art Supplies** opened on Sept. 4, 2019.

**Island Delight** replaced Diana Sweets and opened about 2008 by Wing Hum. "The primary goal at Island Delight, is to serve you high-quality and delicious chinese food. Our ribs, created by passionate chefs daily are sure to please. Experience the friendly atmosphere and join us in Brockville to find out what all the buzz is about, or call"

**H & T Nails** moved to the Central Block from the Gellena Block at #204 in July 2021 and is owned by Jenny (last name please). There is also an H & T Nails in Gananoque (181 King St. E.) where it is described as a "family run husband and wife team."

**Sassy Yarns** started their website in April 2022 and opened the store in the Central Block in August 2022.

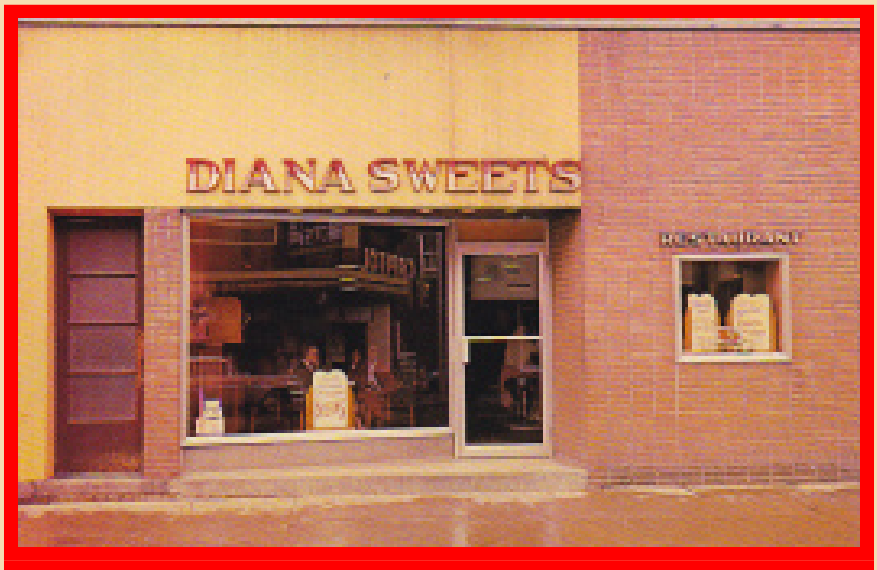
**Studio Even** was opened in 2023 by Eve Moir. They describe themselves as "Female owned design studio and gift shop specializing in concrete furniture and home goods. We showcase material, colour and objects. The studio's primary focus is to bring individuality to your space while delivering high-end quality. Grab a coffee while you shop skincare, homeware and clothing from over 25 Canadian makers and artists. ".

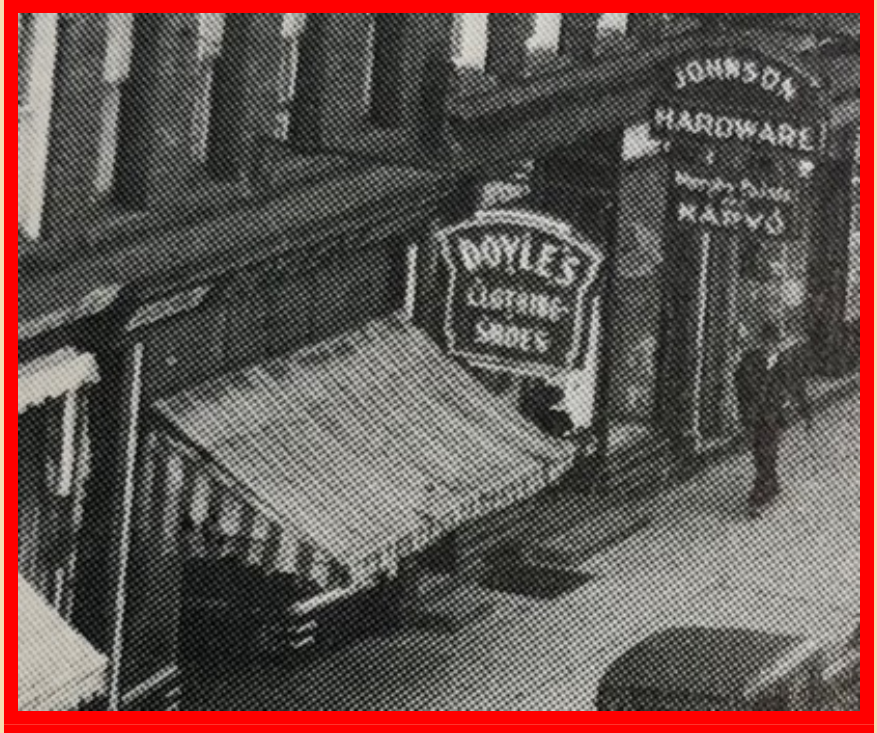
*(Because the Central Block is so massive with its 9 stores, it will be updated over time with addional information on more stores. Information gathered from the various directories, Kimball's, Foster's, Vernon's and also from various business websites.)*

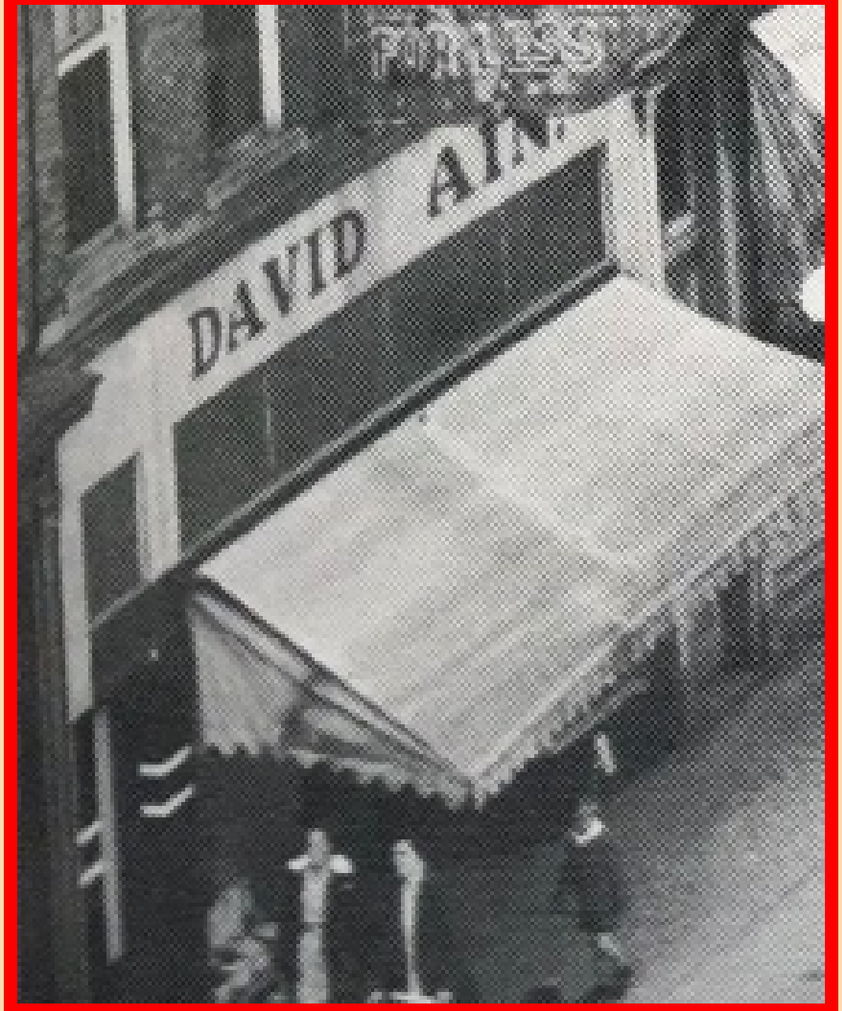
# THE 1990 FIRE

The December 1990 Central Block fire was contained to the top floor, above where R. Senior Services, locksmith's, was (where H & T Nails is today). Even the cornice survived intact and today there is no evidence that a fire ever took place. Photo's from the Brockville Fire Dept.

# STOREFRONTS

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The ARMY SURPLUS Store
Outdoor Outfitters
Camping Equipment
Hunting Supplies
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The Many Things Store
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148
150
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PICTURES & MORE
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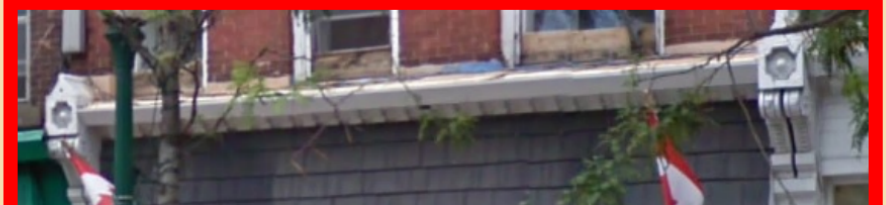
STATIONERY FOR THE
OFFICE or HOME



ACE Hardware
HARDWARE
STORE

CASH FOR GOLD
CASH FOR GOLD
CREATIVE GOLDSMITH
SALES & SERVICE
CASH FOR GOLD

the BOHO ABODE

Golden Gate Restaurant
CHINESE & CANADIAN FOOD
342-0408
金門酒家
CHINESE BUFFET
OPEN

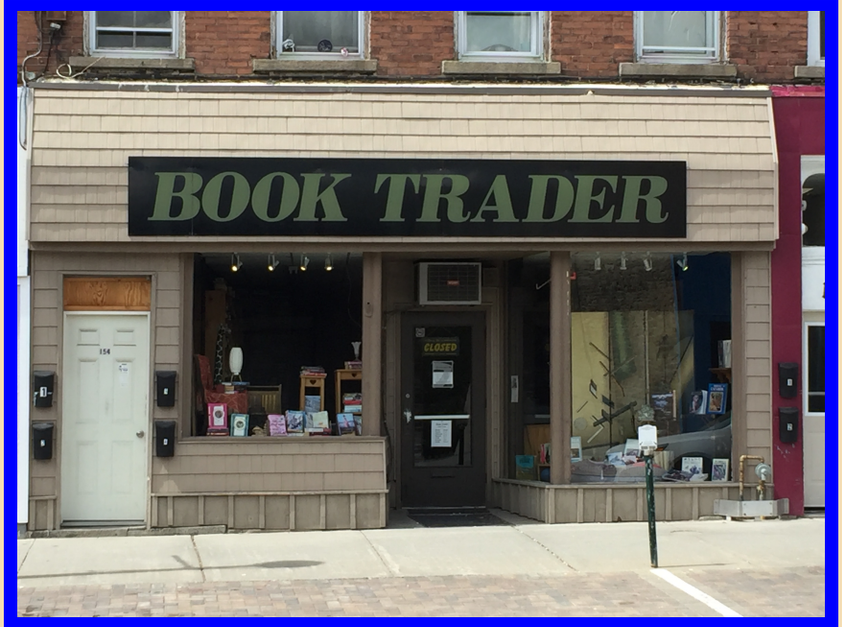
Sassy Yarns

STUDDEMEN

medium effort
fine art supplies

162
160

Pauline's
Lingerie
1975


BOOK TRADER
154
CLOSED

H&T Nails
613·865·7771
150
OPEN
WAXING

# ADVERTISING

1883. Sign of the Big Tea Pot. 1883.

ALLAN CAMERON,

CENTRAL BLOCK, has JUST OPENED OUT a large and well selected stock of

FINE GROCERIES,

Consisting in part of TEAS, COFFEES, PURE SPICES, SYRUPS, MOLASSES, and all other Staple Goods. Canned Goods, Extracts, Starch, Baking Powders, Chocolates, Cocoa Essence, Canned Meats, Canned Fruits, Cream Cheese, Canned Mackerel, Lard, Crackers, Cakes, Soaps, Soda, Blueings,

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SPECIALTIES: FINE FLAVORED TEAS, FINE FLAVORED COFFEES, STRICTLY PURE SPICES, FINE TABLE BUTTER, Do not Fail to Try them.

SIGN OF THE BIG TEA POT.

☞ All Goods Delivered to any part of the Town Free of Charge.

Brockville, Sept. 18th, 1883.

ALLAN CAMERON,
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# GEORGE S. YOUNG,

(CENTRAL BLOCK)

## Boots, Shoes and Rubbers

**FOR EVERYBODY AND THEIR CHILDREN.**

I Sell them at the Lowest Living Rates.

Special Bargains in Hand Made Goods. Call and be convinced at

No. 146 King St., Brockville, Ont.

McDougall & Bigg, Carpenters' Blacksmith

# GEO. A. RUDD,

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RUDD'S PATENT

RUDD'S PATENT

## Adjustable Carriage Top.

Patented Nov. 13, 1880, and Dec. 10, 1883.

CARRIAGE TRIMMING DONE IN FIRST-CLASS STYLE.

SEND FOR PRICE LIST.

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Saddles, Bridles, Collars, Blankets, whips, Brushes, Combs, Fly Nets, Rubber Horse Covers, Circingles, Bells, Stable Brooms, Trunks, Valises, etc.

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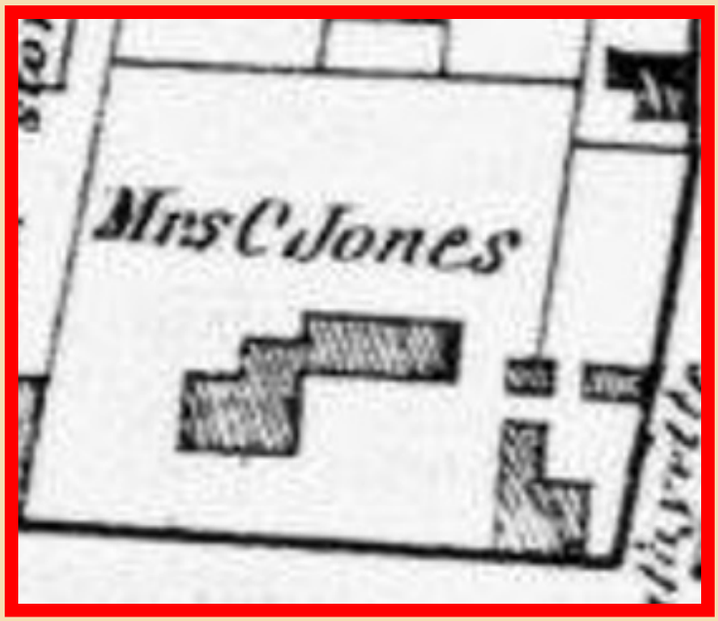
FURNITURE, STOVES, RADIOS, MAJESTIC, ELECTRIC REFRIGERATORS;
COMPLETE LINE OF FARMERS' SUPPLIES

148 KING ST. WEST - - PHONE 1410

Allan Cameron grocery, 1883; Geroge S. Young, boots & shoes, 1885; George Rudd, carriage accessories, 1887; E. Clint, undertaker & furniture, 1900; Percival Store, 1931; Diana Sweets, 1958;

# PREVIOUS BUILDINGS




The 1861 Wallings map showing the area where the Central Block was later built. It shows where the Charles Jones house was at the time. Mrs. C. Jones as Charles had passed by then. The house appears on earlier maps as far back as 1811. As you can see from this map, the Central Block basically covers the area of the large, original Charles Jones property.

A cutout from Herman Brosius's 1874 drawing map of Brockville. This is the area where the Central Block was built. This is only 4 years before it was erected. It looks like two buildings were either demolished or moved. The Charles Jones house was moved (see below), but the back section would have been demolished. Just to the left is a building that is set back in a bit from the rest. It does not appear on the 1861 map above so was built after that. Since it is set back in, it was not incorporated into the Central Block. It would have been demolished and therefore had a very short life of little more then a decade.

This is Charles Jones (wife: Florella) house that sat in the spot where the Central Block was built. Charles Jones is considered the founder of Brockville (or at least one of two). The house was built c1807 and in 1878 turned around and moved directly behind, facing George St, having a new address of 51 & 55 George. It was at this time that it probably was divided into a duplex. Empey's Diamond Taxi ran out of here in the 1960's. It was demolished in the 1980's to "put up a parking lot". Does this sound familiar? (Photo: Doug Grant)

Note: I do find it incredible that in the 1870's the people had the sense to preserve this house by moving it.....a century later we just through it away like a piece of garbage. No one noticed. And, they didn't stop there. Shortly after, they demolished the stone house of our other founder and first settler, Willima Buell. And many more historic buildings. Outrageous!

# STREET SCENE

The Central Block off to the left in a c1925 postcard.

:

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