

Former People's Palace (north annexe)

203-205 Cuba Street



Photo: *Charles Collins, 2014*

Summary of heritage significance

- The former People's Palace (1904 north annexe) is a particularly fine representative example of an Edwardian Classical commercial building that was converted for use as a hotel. It is notable for its well-modelled, carefully articulated and well-proportioned symmetrical Cuba Street façade. The building has a relatively sensitive modern roof-top addition that is date-stamped '2003'.
- The building is associated with the Salvation Army, who first leased it between 1916 and 1928, then owned it between 1928 and 1986, first using it as their head office and then converting it as an addition to the adjoining 'People's Palace' (1908) their 'temperance' or liquor-free hotel. It was designed by prominent local architect, James O'Dea.
- The building is associated with the Salvation Army, who first leased it between 1916 and 1928, then owned it between 1928 and 1986, first using it as their head office and then converting it as an addition to the adjoining 'People's Palace' (1908) their 'temperance' or liquor-free hotel.

District Plan:	Map 16, reference 89/3 <i>Front façade</i>
Legal Description:	Pt Sec 128 Town of Wellington, (Lot 1 DP 366988)
Heritage Area:	Cuba Street Heritage Area
HPT Listed:	Category II, reference 5359
Archaeological Site:	NZAA Central City Archaeological Area R27/270
Other Names:	People's Palace
Key physical dates:	Built: 1904
Architect / Builder:	Architect: James O'Dea. Builder: Alfred Seamer
Former uses:	Commercial
Current uses:	Commercial – restaurant and hotel
Earthquake Prone Status:	Not Earthquake Prone – SR 188109

Extent: Cityview GIS 2013



1.0 Outline History

1.1 History¹

This building was designed by architect James O'Dea and built for Dr Patrick Mackin. It was constructed in 1904 by builder Alfred Seamer in load-bearing brick masonry, with timber floor joists. It was originally constructed as two shops on the ground floor, with commercial premises on the upper floors.

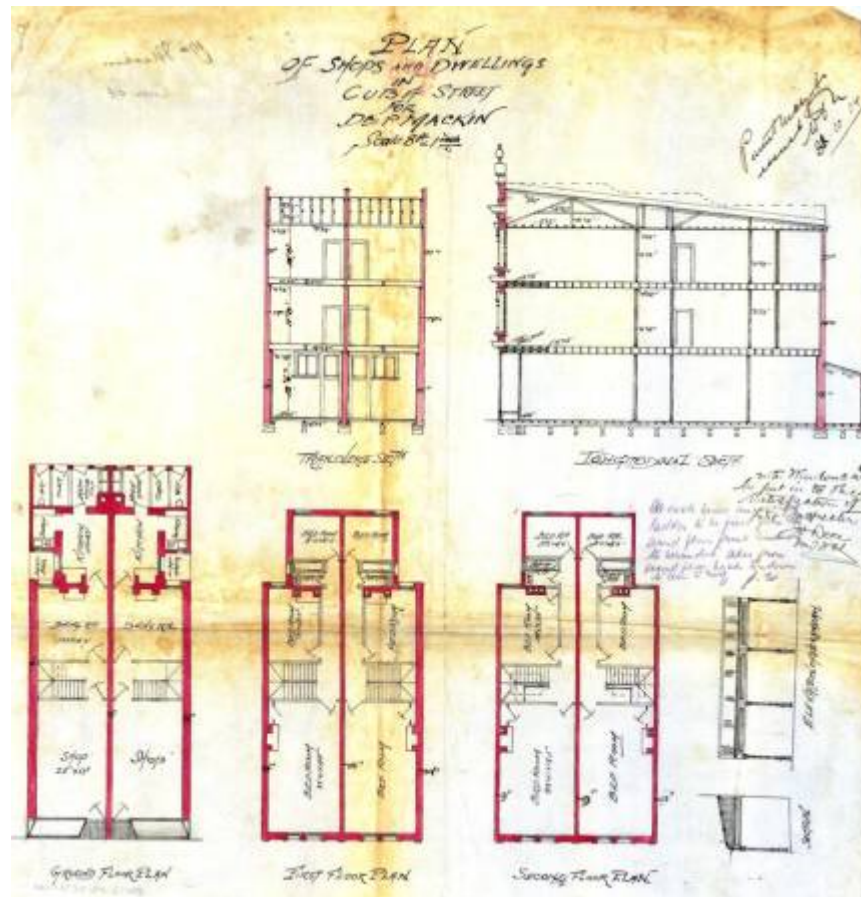
In 1916 The Salvation Army took over the lease on the property and used the building as their national headquarters. In 1928 they purchased the property and converted it to form an addition to the original People's Palace (WCC ref 16/89.4). The "People's Palace" (1904) lettering on the entablature was presumably added at this time. In 1986 following nearly 78 years of operation, the hotel was sold to the Presbyterian Church, who soon on-sold it. The building was then converted to the budget hotel "Trekkers."

Between 2000 and 2004, 203 Cuba Street underwent a series of alterations and received seismic strengthening as part of a large two-hotel 'CQ' development. This development also incorporates the former People's Palace Hotel, the timber façade of 221-225 Cuba (WCC 16/89.5), and the façade of a pleasant c.1920 two-storey stripped Classical commercial building (WCC Cuba St Heritage Area – contributor). An additional floor was to 203 Cuba Street at this time. The addition is in the same architectural style as the People's Palace hotel buildings, but has been set back from the original parapet and date-stamped '2003'.

The former "Peoples Palace" (1904) is a well known feature of Cuba Street, and is part of the unique group of buildings which create the significant historic streetscape of the Cuba precinct. This building is sited in the Cuba Street Heritage Area and makes a positive contribution to this significant collection of heritage buildings. The scale, materials and style of this building all contribute to the townscape values of Cuba Street.

¹ History adapted from Wellington City Council, "203-205 Cuba Street", *Wellington Built Heritage Inventory: Non Residential Precincts 2001*, (Wellington City Council, 2001), CUBA31.

1.2 Timeline of modifications



- 1904 203 Cuba Street, two shops and dwellings (00053:113:6236)
- 1917 203-219 Cuba Street, additions to the Peoples Palace (00053:192:10544)
- 1928 203-219 Cuba Street, covered way (00056:49:B4817)
- 1932 203-219 Cuba Street, drying room (00056:132:B12032)
- 1933 203-219 Cuba Street, wall (00056:142:B12811)
- 1941 203-219 Cuba Street, office alterations (00056:260:B21307)
- 1943 203-219 Cuba Street, Verandah (00056:282:B22640)
- 1944 203-219 Cuba Street, alterations to premises (00056:289:B23127)
- 1963 203-219 Cuba Street, building additions - mezzanine floor (00058:290:C12732)
- 1965 203-219 Cuba Street, building alterations - passenger lift (00058:426:C18246)
- 1965 203-219 Cuba Street, building alterations – entrance (00058:426:C18247)
- 1966 203-219 Cuba Street, building alterations - boiler room (00058:463:C19906)
- 1971 203-219 Cuba Street, building alterations – shop (00058:720:C32687)
- 1979 203-219 Cuba Street, alterations to bakehouse etc (00058:1213:C51979)
- 1987 203-237 Cuba Street, part demolition and shop alterations (00059:110:D6793)
- 1987 203-237 Cuba Street, business additions and alterations (00059:141:D7734)
- 1990 203-237 Cuba Street, office building additions and alterations (00059:432:E21607)
- 1991 203 Cuba Street, tower installation for cellular telephone network (00059:452:E22181)
- 1991 203 Cuba Street, business additions and alterations (00059:489:E23485)
- 1991 203 Cuba Street, business additions and alterations (00059:503:E23910)

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- 1992 203 Cuba Street, business additions and alterations (00059:563:E25787)
 - 1992 203 Cuba Street, Trekkers Hotel - business additions and alterations (00059:576:E26236)
 - 1993 203 Cuba Street, plumbing alteration (00060:90:3330)
 - 1994 203 Cuba Street, entries (00060:116:4231)
 - 1995 203 Cuba Street, restaurant alterations (00061:82:12527)
 - 1995 203 Cuba Street, bar alterations (00061:111:13644)
 - 1997 203 Cuba Street, Trekkers Hotel - Conservatory Bar - additional toilets and storage areas (00078:509:30965)
 - 1997 203 Cuba Street, conversion of dairy to hair salon (00078:510:36930)
 - 1998 203 Cuba Street, installation of new grease trap for cafe bar (00078:141:41417)
 - 1999 203 Cuba Street, new fire exit door (00078:2476:52493)
 - 2000 203 Cuba Street, seismic strengthening and fitout of new restaurant (00078:523:67781)
 - 2001 203 Cuba Street, seismic upgrade to ground floor, alterations to WC (00078:1065:81917)
 - 2002 203 Cuba Street, seismic upgrade to levels 1 and 2, additions to level 3, new interior levels 1 and 2, upgrade of office/reception and stairs (00078:1070:86099)
 - 2004 203 Cuba Street, removal of AFA monitoring of alarms and replacement with private monitoring (00078:1409:123029)
 - 2006 203 Cuba Street, hotel alterations (00078:2224:145340)
 - 2007 203 Cuba Street, new flats (00078:1988:163646 Pt 1)
 - 2007 203 Cuba Street, new flats (00078:1989:163646 Pt 2)
 - 2010 203 Cuba Street, fit-out of retail store for a hair salon on the ground floor, including plumbing works (00078:3220:209220)

1.3 Occupation history²

- 1910-11 John Innes, restaurateur (203) (Stones1910-1911),
- 1915-16 Matthew Younger, restaurateur (203) (Stones1915-16),
- 1915-51 Salvation Army Headquarters (205) (Stones1915-16, 1920, 1925, 1930, 1935, 1940, 1945, Wisers1950-51)

Various retail tenants include hand-bag manufacturer, army surplus store, photographers (Rainbow Photographic studio Wisers1971-72, 1975, 1980, 1985) & a cake kitchen

1986-present Trekkers Hotel

² Ibid

1.4 Architect

O'Dea, James

James O'Dea was established his architectural practice in New Zealand in 1882.³ He worked in Auckland and Hawera before arriving in Wellington in 1888.⁴ He had premises on the corner of Willis and Willeston Streets (then Harbour Street) and later on Grey Street. O'Dea enjoyed the patronage of the Catholic Church and wealthy Catholic laymen such as Robert O'Connor, T.G. McCarthy and Martin Kennedy. However, O'Dea, an enthusiastic litigant, ended up in legal disputes with both McCarthy and Kennedy later in his career.⁵

O'Dea designed a considerable number of houses and commercial buildings in Wellington in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, particularly around the turn of the century. His work included significant building such as the main block at the Home of Compassion, Island Bay (1907) and the Royal Oak Hotel (1899), along with a number of buildings on and around Cuba Street. Together with a number of houses, those buildings still standing include 58-60 Cuba Street for T.G. McCarthy (1897), the Tramway Hotel, Adelaide Road (1899), the People's Palace, 203 Cuba Street (1904), 175-170 Cuba Street (1905) and the Kennedy Building, 33-39 Cuba Street (1905)

O'Dea was a keen advocate for reinforced concrete buildings in an earthquake prone environment and wrote on the subject many times in letters to local newspapers.⁶

2.0 Physical description

2.1 Architecture⁷

The building has a simplified Edwardian Classical façade, symmetrical about the centre, and almost identical in detailing over both upper floors. There are pilasters at the corners and in the centre of each storey. A cornice divides the first and second floors. The double hung windows are paired on a double arched system with fluted pilasters and heavy voissiors. Another cornice caps the building with heavy consoles at either end. The stepped pediment has a sunrise motif and the date "1904" at the centre.

There is a modern rooftop addition completed in a similar style to the original building. It steps back from the parapet line and is date stamped '2003'.

2.2 Materials⁸

- Load bearing brick masonry
- Timber floor joists

³ Cyclopedia Co. Ltd, "Other Architects, Civil Engineers, etc.," in *The Cyclopedia of New Zealand: Wellington Provincial District* (Wellington: The Cyclopedia Company Limited, 1897), accessed September 19, 2012, <http://nzetc.victoria.ac.nz/tm/scholarly/tei-Cyc01Cycl-t1-body-d4-d33-d10.html>

⁴ *Evening Post*, Volume XXXV, Issue 123, 26 May 1888, Page 3

⁵ *Evening Post*, Volume LXXXII, Issue 18, 21 July 1911, Page 4; and *Evening Post*, Volume LXXXIII, Issue 39, 15 February 1912, Page 8

⁶ *Evening Post*, Volume LXXXI, Issue 117, 19 May 1911, Page 2

⁷ Michael Kelly, and Russell Murray, *Cuba Street Heritage Area Report*, (Wellington City Council: Unpublished report, prepared for Plan Change 48, 2006), 21.

⁸ Wellington City Council, "203-205 Cuba Street", *Wellington Built Heritage Inventory: Non Residential Precincts 2001*, (Wellington City Council, 2001), CUBA31

2.3 Setting

The northern annexe of the former People's Palace at 203 Cuba Street is part of a large two-hotel 'CQ' development that also incorporates the former Railton/People's Palace Hotel (WCC 16/89.4), the timber façade of 221-225 Cuba (WCC 16/89.5), and the façade of a pleasant c.1920 two-storey stripped Classical commercial building (WCC Cuba St Heritage Area – contributor). The two retained facades form part of the street-edge of the southernmost hotel in this development. The bulk of the hotel is set back from the street in the form of two, tall, towers that are somewhat taller than their neighbours. The jumbled grey modern shop-fronts to the south complete the hotel development and are, along with the functional Ellmers building (with its distinctive concrete 'shod' verandah posts), non-contributors to the Heritage Area.

The 'CQ' hotel development is set in the Cuba Street Heritage Area on a section of Cuba Street between Vivian and Abel Smith streets. This stretch of Cuba Street has a startling entrance at the southern end of great architectural and cultural contrast. It sets the extremely dignified former National Bank building (now up-market restaurant Logan Brown) opposite the simple, if dignified, Morgan's building. The remainder of the block has undergone considerable change in the last 20 years which has impacted on the overall integrity of the heritage streetscape. The scale of the block is predominantly two and three storeys, with the notable exception of the current and future hotel complex and Booth House. The street edge line is fragmented in this block with many gaps and breaks and the heritage character of the street is undermined with many poorly-considered modern buildings. There are, however, some individual buildings that have high heritage value and remain a strong presence in the streetscape.⁹

The building makes a positive contribution to the Cuba Street Heritage Area.

⁹ Adapted from Kelly, 2006

3.0 Sources

Cyclopedia Co. Ltd, "Other Architects, Civil Engineers, etc," in *The Cyclopedia of New Zealand: Wellington Provincial District* (Wellington: The Cyclopedia Company Limited, 1897), accessed September 19, 2012,
<http://nzetc.victoria.ac.nz/tm/scholarly/tei-Cyc01Cycl-t1-body-d4-d33-d10.html>

Kelly, Michael, and Russell Murray. *Cuba Street Heritage Area Report*. Wellington City Council: Unpublished report, prepared for Plan Change 48, 2006.

Wellington City Council. *Cuba Street Heritage Area spreadsheet (blocks 1-3)*. Wellington City Council: Unpublished report, prepared for Plan Change 48, 2006.

Wellington City Council. *Wellington Heritage Building Inventory 2001: Non-Residential Buildings*. Wellington City Council, 2001.

Papers Past

Evening Post, Volume XXXV, Issue 123, 26 May 1888, Page 3

Evening Post, Volume LXXXII, Issue 18, 21 July 1911, Page 4; and *Evening Post*, Volume LXXXIII, Issue 39, 15 February 1912, Page 8

Evening Post, Volume LXXXI, Issue 117, 19 May 1911, Page 2

Wellington City Archive

00053:113:6236
00053:192:10544
00056:49:B4817
00056:132:B12032
00056:142:B12811
00056:260:B21307
00056:282:B22640
00056:289:B23127
00058:290:C12732
00058:426:C18246
00058:426:C18247
00058:463:C19906
00058:720:C32687
00058:1213:C51979
00059:110:D6793
00059:141:D7734
00059:432:E21607
00059:452:E22181
00059:489:E23485
00059:503:E23910
00059:563:E25787
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00078:1070:86099
00078:1409:123029
00078:2224:145340
00078:1988:163646 Pt 1
00078:1989:163646 Pt 2
00078:3220:209220

Criteria for assessing cultural heritage significance

Cultural heritage values

Aesthetic Value:

Architectural: *Does the item have architectural or artistic value for characteristics that may include its design, style, era, form, scale, materials, colour, texture, patina of age, quality of space, craftsmanship, smells, and sounds?*

The former People's Palace (1904 north annexe) is a particularly fine representative example of an Edwardian Classical commercial building that was converted for use as a hotel. It is notable for its well-modelled, carefully articulated and well-proportioned symmetrical Cuba Street façade. The building has a relatively sensitive modern roof-top addition that is date-stamped '2003'.

Townscape: *Does the item have townscape value for the part it plays in defining a space or street; providing visual interest; its role as a landmark; or the contribution it makes to the character and sense of place of Wellington?*

This building has significant townscape value for the visual interest that it adds to the Cuba Streetscape and as a part of the Cuba Street Heritage Area. The scale, materials and style of this building contribute to the townscape of Cuba Street.

Group: *Is the item part of a group of buildings, structures, or sites that taken together have coherence because of their age, history, style, scale, materials, or use?*

This building was converted in 1928 to form an addition to the adjoining original People's Palace (1908) by the Salvation Army who owned both buildings. It is a part of a group of buildings that were owned by the organisation in Cuba Street.

Historic Value:

Association: *Is the item associated with an important person, group, or organisation?*

The building is associated with the Salvation Army, who first leased it between 1916 and 1928, then owned it between 1928 and 1986, first using it as their head office and then converting it as an addition to the adjoining 'People's Palace' (1908) their 'temperance' or liquor-free hotel.

It was designed by prominent local architect, James O'Dea.

Association: *Is the item associated with an important historic event, theme, pattern, phase, or activity?*

The building also has historic value for its association with the strong growth and development of Cuba Street during the Edwardian period, which resulted in the building of many fine commercial buildings.

Scientific Value:

Archaeological: *Does the item have archaeological value for its ability to provide scientific information about past human activity?*

This building is included in the NZAA Central City Archaeological Area R2/270, is in an area known to have had pre 1900 human activity, and known to have sites of

significance to Maori. The likelihood of archaeological materials being present is likely.

Educational: *Does the item have educational value for what it can demonstrate about aspects of the past?*

Technological: *Does the item have technological value for its innovative or important construction methods or use of materials?*

Social Value:

Public esteem: *Is the item held in high public esteem?*

Symbolic, commemorative, traditional, spiritual: *Does the item have symbolic, commemorative, traditional, spiritual or other cultural value for the community who has used and continues to use it?*

Identity/Sense of place/Continuity:

*Is the item a focus of community, regional, or national identity?
Does the item contribute to sense of place or continuity?*

This building is part of a group of Edwardian commercial buildings on Cuba Street which contribute to the sense of place and continuity of the Cuba Street Heritage Area.

Sentiment/Connection: *Is the item a focus of community sentiment and connection?*

Level of cultural heritage significance

Rare: *Is the item rare, unique, unusual, seminal, influential, or outstanding?*

Representative: *Is the item a good example of the class it represents?*

The building is representative of the architecture and history found on Cuba Street. It has a distinctive character and adds significantly to the lively streetscape of Cuba Street.

Authentic: *Does the item have authenticity or integrity because it retains significant fabric from the time of its construction or from later periods when important additions or modifications were carried out?*

The exterior of this building retains significant amounts of original material, including some of the original shop fronts, and has had few modifications that impact upon it negatively. Despite the additional storey, this building has authenticity and integrity, of materials, design, workmanship, and setting.

Local/Regional/National/International

Is the item important for any of the above characteristics at a local, regional, national, or international level?

This building is of local importance for its contribution to the Cuba Street Heritage Area. It is a representative building, designed by a prominent architect. It retains economic and functional uses as well as retaining a significant amount of original material and authenticity.

4.0 Appendix

Research checklist (desktop)

Source	Y/N	Comments
1995 Heritage Inventory		
2001 Non-Residential heritage Inventory		
WCC Records – building file		
WCC Records – grant files (earthquake strengthening, enhancement of heritage values)		
Research notes from 2001 Non-Residential heritage Inventory		
Plan change?		
Heritage Area Report		
Heritage Area Spreadsheet		
Heritage items folder (electronic)		
HPT website		
HPT files		
Conservation Plan		
Searched Heritage Library (CAB 2)		

Background research

Insert any relevant background information into this section. This may include:

- *Additional plans, such as those for alterations*
- *Chunks of text from other sources such as Cyclopedia of NZ, Papers Past*
- *Additional images*