



July 1989.



Sept 23, 2017

**Vimy Apartments, 244 Charlotte Street, Ottawa, Ontario, K1N 8L3: CCC580  
A Brief and Incomplete History.**

*Photos M. Barclay.*

Revised draft: June 2018.

c. 1918/19. Vimy Apartments was built at the end of WW1 c. 1918/1919. The building may have been constructed as subsidized housing for returning veterans of WW1. The Vimy appellation over the front entrance probably added as a tribute to the veterans of the Battle of Vimy Ridge April 1917 by Napoleon Belcourt. The original address for 244 Charlotte Street was 489 Wilbrod Street, a sizable corner lot at Wilbrod and Charlotte, where a large house belonging to Napoleon Belcourt was built in 1903. Belcourt, 1860-1932, was an MP, the Speaker in the House of Commons 1903/4 and in due course a senator. The 244 Charlotte Street brick multi-unit walk-up was constructed at the behest of Napoleon Belcourt. He was last known to live at 489 Wilbrod in 1918 when he to nearby 27 Goulburn Ave in 1919 while his Belcourt relatives Beatrice and Jeanne stayed at 489 Wilbrod.

It is not known who the builder of Vimy Apartments was; however, there were several developers active in the Sandy Hill area and in the downtown core of Ottawa in the early 1900s such as Wolf Shenkman, Holbrook and Sons, Ernest and George Barrett amongst others.

When Vimy Apartments, fronting Charlotte Street, was built in 1918/19, it was partially joined to the north-west side of the Belcourt home at 489 Wilbrod which became known as The Annex. The Annex burnt down probably in the mid to late 1960s. It is difficult to tell from the fire insurance plans just when it burnt down. Anyway, The Annex was gone by 1976. Leaving Vimy Apartments on Charlotte as a stand alone building with vacant lot.

According to the City Directories The Annex at 489 Wilbrod/Vimy Apartments at 244 Charlotte Street maintained their separate addresses with approximately 18 rental units, till The Annex burnt down and the 489 Wilbrod address was dropped. It is likely Vimy Apartments continued as a rental building until the late 1970s when the property was bought by Jansco Developments and the building was completely renovated. It stood as a single 12-unit co-operative with a parking lot where The Annex once stood.

Within the vicinity, Wallis House at the north-east corner of Charlotte and Rideau Streets was built as a hospital in 1873. It closed in 1924; subsequently serving as a seminary until 1943, when it was taken over by the military. It was left empty after the war and turned into subsidized housing for veterans. The building was re-assigned to the military in 1950 but again left empty. Some suggestions for its use were made, one being a brothel. In 1997 the building was bought by a heritage restorer and turned into condos. It was named Wallis House after Provo William Perry Wallis of Halifax Nova Scotia of the War of 1812, latterly becoming admiral of the fleet. His portrait by Robert Field hangs in the National Gallery of Canada.

Vimy Apartments is a multi-unit low rise, four level walk-up, double red brick building constructed c. 1918/19. It has a flat roof, chimneys; all but one of the units have fireplaces. The original owner, Napoleon Belcourt, apparently designed 244 Charlotte and 489 Wilbrod with underground access using a basement passage between the two buildings. This was confirmed recently when the foundations were repaired in the north-west corner of the building in 2015, revealing a series of large concrete blocks located 5-6' under the parking lot leading west from the north end of the building. During renovations to the basement unit, 1A, vestiges of concrete steps leading to the concrete blocks from the basement of Vimy Apartments were located. There had been an exterior staircase leading to the fourth floor which was removed during the renovations in the early 1980s. All records pertaining to the origins of Vimy Apartments would have been held by the owner at the time and may have been lost in the fire. To date, they have not been located.

*Circa 1980* Building bought by Jansco Developments – much of the interior was gutted/redesigned/renovated. Significant changes to the exterior; bathrooms east side on each level (little insulation). Enclosed, exterior staircase removed on North West side of building; old interior wall became an exterior wall plastered over. Exterior brown sheet metal additions, built on North West side (i.e. unit # 2, 6, 9 and 11, little insulation/no vapour barrier). Steel balconies erected, west-south section (i.e. units # 3, 5, 8 and 11); layout of units changed from original. New wiring, copper pipes, some new drainage pipes PVC? Does not appear to be any asbestos as unit #9 tested 2015. No radon, basement; tested 2016.

1982 June 2<sup>nd</sup>; Incorporated with then Ministry of Consumer and Commercial Relations, Ontario: Jansco Developments (Ontario Corporation Number 513583: Non-

profit co-operative housing), signed by Sal Khan for Vimy Apartments. The new corporation had 8,000 shares divided among the owners of the newly renovated multi-unit building. The property was managed by five members on the Board of Directors.

1983 Legal advice: Watson Farber & Segal: Barristers Solicitors Notaries, 330 Churchill Avenue, Westboro Manor, Ottawa, ON K1Z 5B9 722 9418.

1984 Chartered Accountants: Deloitte Haskins Sells, Suite 630, 99 Bank Street, Ottawa, Ontario K1P 6B9, 613 563 0321,

1985 Insurance: Beardsley Insurance Brokers Limited, 280 Metcalf Street, Suite 510, Ottawa, Ontario, K2P 1R7, 613 238 8308.

1986 The Vimy Apartments Limited By-Laws: Property repairs Paul Berthiame Building Services Limited, Ottawa, Ontario, K1S 1W8, 235.9317.

1987 First mortgage loan: Wellington Trust Company, Suite 500, 95 King Street East, Toronto, Ontario, M5C 1G4, 416 367 5870.

1987 July 1<sup>st</sup>: Management of property taken over by R. Dixon Management Inc. 301 Moodie Drive, Suite 421, Nepean, Ontario K2H 9C4, phone: 820 1801, retained by the Board of Directors to manage the property at 244 Charlotte Street, Ottawa, On K1N 8L3.

1989 Slim top most band of decorative metal wrapping around top of building failed, not re-attached or retained: see photo p.1.

1989 Unit 8 balcony installed mosquito netting without board approval; owners/subsequent owners responsible for maintenance/repairs.

1990 Fire-escapes re-painted; not scoured /sanded before painting.

1990 Roof re-done; Unfortunately, the three-metal bas-relief decorative elements, top centre and top centre sides of building, were removed by roofing company and not retained. The removal of the metal elements included the brick supports; see photo dated 1989, p.1.

1990s Unit 1A rented.

1991 Top (front) section of building re-pointed. Prevailing winds pass along front of building from north.

1992? Rental unit 1a occupied until approx. 1993, when police removed tenant due to attacks on residents' cars with tire iron. The unit was then left unoccupied for several

years till late 1990s when a special assessment of \$500.00 from each owner was levied to pay for upgrades was activated. The unit was refurbished and rented.

1996 May 4<sup>th</sup>: Declaration O-CCC # 580.

1996 June 19<sup>th</sup>: The Vimy Apartments Limited, non-profit corporation changed status to O-CCC # 580. Owners paid approx. \$4,000.00 each to R. Dixon Management Ltd. Owners hired lawyer C. Warren Stroud, Goldberg Shinder Gardner & Kronick, Ottawa through recommendation of lawyer Russel Kronick QC.

1996 Recycling bins requested/installed by City.

1997/8 New carpet laid in communal areas of condo.

1999 Ice storm: large tree on west side came down across entire north end of parking lot. Affected residents were able to remove their cars before incurring any damage. Parking a problem for a few days before fallen branches removed.

1999 August: Segregated Depreciation Study – R. Dixon, Property Management Inc. Some inconsistencies, Property Manager contract not renewed.

2000 New property manager David Duncan, Deerpark Management Limited, 52-5450 Canotek Road, Ottawa, Ontario, K1J 9G5, 613 745 2389. R. Dixon, Property Management Inc did not hand over records pertaining to 244 Charlotte Street, CCC 580 at discharge of contract and when requested by David Duncan, Property Manager, Deerpark Management Ltd.

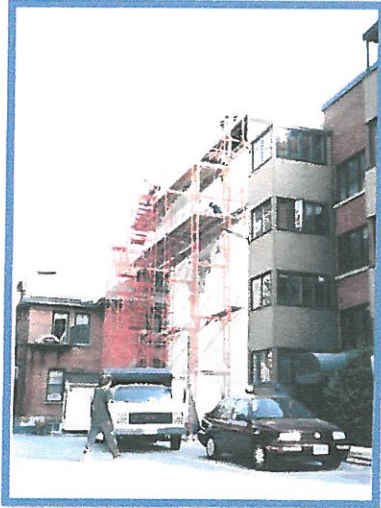
2000 At suggestion of David Duncan, Property Manager, Board of Directors decreased from five to three.

2000? Parking lot electrical outlets ungraded.

2001 May 5<sup>th</sup>: New Condominium Act, 1998 in effect.

2002 August, CCC 580 – Condo by-laws updated – Naneed Bardai, Nelligan, O'Brien, Payne LLP, Condominium Law Group.

2002 The deteriorating plaster on north-west section of wall was, in part, separating from under lying bricks. Planned repairs of vinyl siding to the back wall once attached to The Annex was inspected and found to be in critical condition. Engineers noted the brick wall was on the point of collapse and recommended the unsafe section of wall be replaced within the year. Scaffolding already erected for inspection was left in place till following year when work began to demolish the unsafe plastered single brick wall (old interior wall).



*Scaffolding a back wall to be restored 2003.  
Photo 2003.*

2002-3        Loan for work to replace back wall secured from Bank of Nova Scotia (approx. \$145K) by David Duncan, Deerpark Management, for de/re-construction work to commence spring 2003. Final installment of bank loan due October 2010. Work began to demolish back (old interior) wall and replace with steel struts/insulation/synthetic 4x8 panels; repair work severely impinged units # 12, 9, 6, 2 and 1A. Repairs took 3-4 months; owners/residents of above units lost use of living/dining and north-west corner bedrooms – basement unit 1A unoccupied during this period.

2003/4        Installation of new windows began Jan. 2004: phase 1 – Nu View Renovations Inc. 2664 Priscilla St, Britannia Plaza, Ottawa ON K2B 7C9 cell: 613 799 7355, tel: 613 828 8512, fax 613 828 7530 contact Dennis Walker (no longer in business MB 2018). Each unit owner paid for their individual windows.

2003        New light fixtures in common area. Basement unit 1A cleaned, painted & floor re-carpeted.

2003        Vic Provost & Company: contracted to remove surplus snow from parking lot and move it to space nr. Wilbrod prior to removal by truck.

2003        Split wall air conditioners installed by Francis Fuels in four units, # 3,4,7 and 9: paid for by individual owners.

2004 Communal stairwell walls painted: Home Depot, Jersey Cream CIL: white unit doors, base boards etc.; CIL white door and trim: touch ups continued to at least 2016.

2004 Buildings brick exterior walls re-pointed on north, west and south sides of building.

2004/5 Window replacement, phase II – Speedy Glass balcony doors last to be installed.

2004 Reserve Fund Study. Keller Engineering.

2005 May 24<sup>th</sup>, Condominium Rules updated/approved by all owners.

2005 Horticare Landscaping: contracted to maintain property grounds.

2005 Cherry tree and “Yellow Bird” magnolia trees planted + ongoing planting of shrubs such as Dogwood etc. begun + flowering plant containers (magnolia + three shrubs donated by M. B.). Flowering baskets hung from this year on.



*Yellow Bird magnolia tree,  
244 Charlotte Street; planted  
c. 2005. Photo 2011.*

2005 The one drain pipe from roof, leaked badly in ceiling of unit # 6: all four units on north side of building affected. Cast iron/plastic pipe – section of original cast iron pipe (c1918/9) at ceiling level of unit # 9 patched on advice of engineer. Work coordinated by Keith McIntosh & Co.

2006 Two gas fired rented hot water tanks replaced by Enbridge due to water leaks; venting ducts (white) from water tanks to north side of building brought up to code at same time. Involved construction work in unit 1A.

2009? Black metal garbage huts designed/constructed by Keith McIntosh & Company, Ottawa. Located on south side of building, parallel with Wilbrod St.

2009 Reserve Fund Study. Keller Engineering Associates Ltd.

2010 Standard Unit Description for Insurance Purposes of CCC # 580, 244 Charlotte Street, Ottawa ON K1N 8L3.

2010 Nova Scotia Bank loan for repairs to back wall repaid.

2010 Major water leak from bathroom unit # 10 down through all floors to basement. Contractor Great Outdoors.

2011 Major repairs to southeast corner of the buildings foundations (Unit # 1) completed in spring. Contractor Great Outdoors.

2011 Consideration given to converting unit 1A (common element) for possible sale – no joy – see report by lawyers Nelligan O'Brien Payne, June 16.

2012 City of Ottawa replaced all water/sewer services and fire hydrants along Charlotte Street – took all summer.

2012/3 Reserve Fund Study: Keller Engineering Associates Inc.

2012 Major repairs to north brick wall between levels 3 & 4 corner west side of building at shared laneway (\$10,000.00).

2012 Declaration, By-Laws, Standard Unit Description and Condo Rules posted on Deerpark Management web site. City of Ottawa's by-law regarding dogs added 2015.

2012 Reserve Fund Study: Keller Engineering Associates Inc.

2013 Hydro Ottawa replaced hydro cables to building: replacement of poles and cables along many of the local streets in Sandy hill area.

2013 Change from weekly to bi-weekly garbage collection by City; black metal garbage huts extended by one hut – installed by Great Outdoors Enterprises, Ottawa.

2013 Unit # 6 completely renovated 2011?

2014 March: replacement of two gas fired water tanks by Enbridge due to water leakage of previous tanks.

2014 Parking lot: asphalt patched; work by Vic Provost, Paving and Construction Ltd.

2014 Water damage from top floor unit # 12 washing machine down through unit # 9, unit # 6, unit #.2 to basement unit 1A, contract work arranged by Grey Power Insurance Brokers Inc. i.e. Intact Insurance. Three months to repair.

Unit # 7 blocked toilet leaked water into units # 4 and 2. Contract work by Great Outdoors.

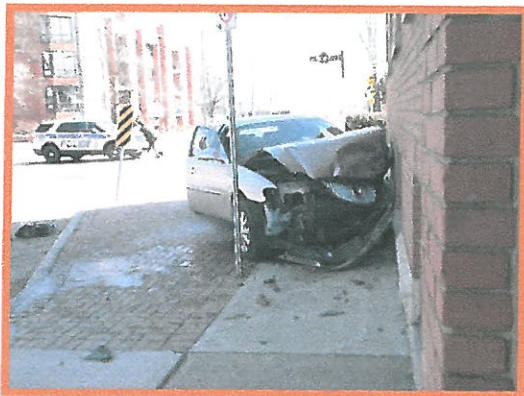
2015 Estimates re proposed repairs to north-west basement foundations corner of building due to persistent water leakage into unit 1A, awarded to Ironwood Renovations.

2015 As every year since becoming a condominium, AGM held every year in early summer.

2015 October, only drain pipe from roof leaking water, again, into unit # 2 – sections of corroded cast iron pipe replaced with 6" diam. ABS pipe: all four units' – 2, 6, 9 & 12, walls opened to complete project. Top three units' walls were opened in kitchen. All remaining sections of original to building cast iron roof drain pipe removed in its entirety and replaced with synthetic. Work completed by Great Outdoors Construction Co.

2015 October 19, Discharge papers from Nova Scotia bank for back-wall loan signed by M. Barclay: bank was late in sending the papers to be signed off!

2015 Unit # 2: Seven residents + next door neighbour at 242 Charlotte Street + real estate agent for unit 6 + tenant unit 1A complained about loud music, disruptive behaviour and use of cannabis in on-going problem for one year. Times of loud music logged/documentated emailed to Deerpark Management; tenant in unit 1 left letter with Deerpark explaining reason for departure. Expensive to have cleaned before owner could move back in.



*SUV crashed into front of Vimy Apartments.  
Photo 2016*



2016 March: small silver SUV crashed into front of building (driver had a cardiac event).

2016 Unit # 6 sold: took longer than expected due in large part to the noise problems with the tenants in unit # 2 located immediately below unit 6. Tenant in unit 1A left due to same problem (Unit 1A immediately below unit # 2). Basement Unit 1A unoccupied till early 2017: due in part to loss of tenant and to persistent ingress of moisture at north/west corner. After documenting several sources of complaint concerning disruptive behaviour by tenants in unit 2 owner eventually moved in himself.

2016 Units 2, 6, 9, & 12 living room window areas added in 1982: no vapour barrier installed with little insulation. Unit 9 upgraded area with vapour barriers, thicker insulation new double glazing (previous windows had fogged), work by Great Outdoors Enterprises; windows by Ener-tight Window and Doors.

2016 Reserve Fund Study: Keller Engineering Associates Inc.

2016 Ironwood Renovations contracted to repair north-west foundations due to persistent water ingress and renovate apartment 1A at same time. The board approved Ironwood Renovations to repair basement foundations and renovate unit 1A without expanding the interior of the unit as had been recommended. Ironwood Renovations completed the work Dec. 2016.



*2015 November, Unit #1A before renovation along with vestiges of stone stairs that lead to old exterior staircase and since bricked over door to the one-time Annex and below showing after renovations. Photos 2015.*



2016 December, Unit # 1A, renovated living area.



2016 December, Unit # 1A, renovated kitchen.

2016 AGM – attending two directors, (one director on vacation) one-part owner, one owner and wife + property manager + rep. from accounting firm hired by Deerpark Management on behalf of condo owners. AGM's held every year generally in June.

2016 May, owner unit # 2 volunteered to upgrade small garden edging; installed wooden planks and moved largish stones to west edge – replacing red bricks.

2016 Fire inspection of each units' fire alarms. Several units' alarms obsolete and replaced.

2016 May, Unit # 10 for sale: owner moved out Sept. 25: unit re-possessed by bank.

2016 June? Unit # 2 posted for sale: six weeks later rented unit, owner remains same.

2016 New cedar hedge installed end of June – required watering 2hrs daily due to dry summer conditions: property fence at patio area re-painted: exterior front and rear doors re-painted chestnut brown and caulked by Ken? who also replaced/painted wooden window coverings at front and side of building.

2016 Summer Newsletter distributed to owners.

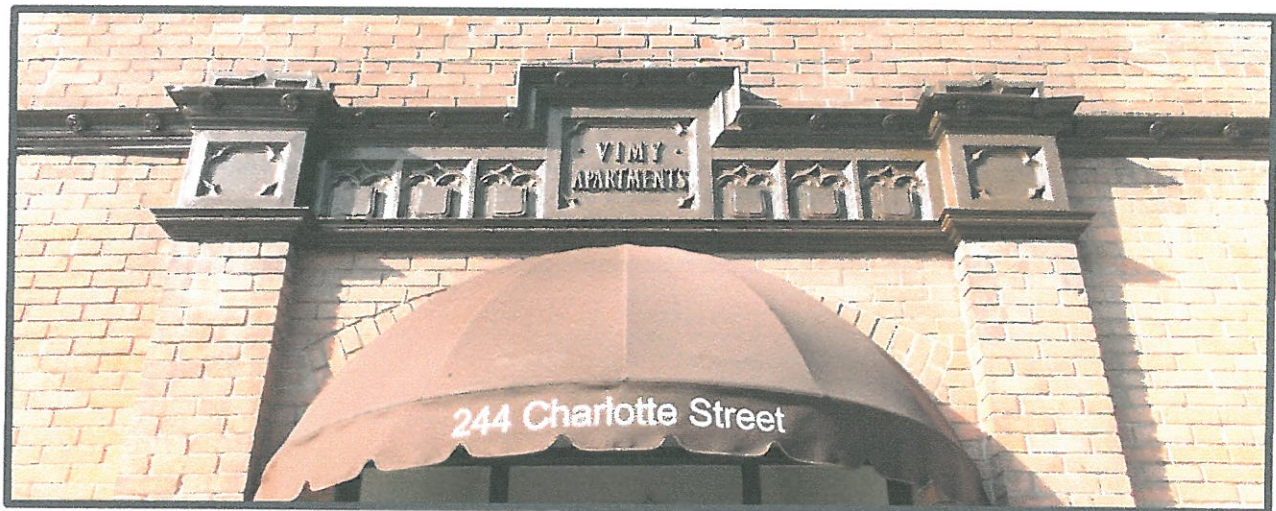
2016 Unit # 1 gutted & renovated by owner.

2016 July, Reserve Fund Study, Keller Engineering.

2016 Replaced all six communal area ceiling lights with integrated LED fixtures



*Before renovations to Vimy Apartments painted metal bas-relief plaque above front entrance approx. 12' lx3' h. Old green awning removed showing white keystone; keystones also top of third level windows. Photo May 2017.*



*After renovations to "Vimy Apartments" plaque over front entrance of building showing top of new brown awning. Photo Sept. 2017*

2016 October, roof replaced by Green Shield Ltd: managed by Keller Engineering: issue with brown drip marks on back wall + Go Hut truck hit small brick extension at rear of building; pulled down and replaced by Ironwood Renovations.

2016 Nov. sump areas in parking lot repaired Dec, by Vic Provost Paving and Construction. New yellow parking lines. All parking spots now same width.

2016 Nov/Dec. Unit 1A exterior work on basement west/north wall. Approx. 6' down basement wall on west side concert slabs found approx. 5' wide leading west, did not dig to see how far the slabs went. This is where the old underground passage between the two buildings (Vimy Apartments and Annex) was constructed. Repair work completed by Ironwood Renovations, Ottawa.

2018 Spring/Summer Newsletter distributed to owners.

2018 June: AGM. Copy of this updated *Brief & Incomplete History of Vimy Apartments* to be posted on Deerpark Management Ltd, web site at [www.deerpark.ca](http://www.deerpark.ca) portfolio CCC 580, on removal of previous version.

#### Notes.

Brief History should be updated on an on-going basis as feasible.

Working draft compiled by M. Barclay in part from material provided by Ottawa Library, Main Branch [sophie.filgner@BiblioOttawaLibrary.ca](mailto:sophie.filgner@BiblioOttawaLibrary.ca) and; <http://www.historicplaces.ca> listed under;

Sandy Hill West Heritage Conservation District and the City of Ottawa Archives [CityArchives@ottawa.ca](mailto:CityArchives@ottawa.ca) and archives assistant Signe Jeppesen;

The Ottawa Journal March 10, 1904 re Napoleon Belcourt;

Fire Insurance Plans and City Directories;

Library and Archives Canada;

A small number of on site documentation from the 1980s onward plus

Board of Directors minutes;

Heritage Ottawa. Ottawa's Historic Apartment Buildings *from Walk-Up to High Rise*. 2017.

Additional research required as report is incomplete (MB 2018, June 10).