



Spacious living areas, award-winning craftsmanship and luxurious amenities will be hallmarks of Lépine's Howard Grant Terrace apartments. *SUPPLIED IMAGES*

Lépine family carries on another family legacy with Howard Grant Terrace in Barrhaven

Born in 1909, Melvin "Mel" Barr learned from a very young age the meaning of hard work. He was taught that nothing in life comes easy and taking shortcuts or cutting corners would not bring success.

His father instilled two life lessons in his five sons. He reminded them that family always comes first. He also told them that every once in a while an opportunity will present itself, and when it does, you seize it, build upon it and with a little luck, that opportunity will grow into something that will define you.

Mel's dad wanted the boys to stay and work the family homestead on the Barr Line just outside of Renfrew, but Mel wanted more. Barely a man, he said goodbye to his family and moved on to bigger cities like Kingston and Ottawa, but he never forgot his family roots. In 1959 he remembered his father's words when he purchased a 200-acre farm, about 20 minutes south of Ottawa.

He wanted to build a race-track, but the Rideau-Carleton Raceway won that race. That was the best race he never won. Mel's property was jokingly referred to as Far Haven, because of its distance from Ottawa and a perception nobody wanted to live there.

The naysayers said it was too far. Too isolated. Nothing to do. Too far for civil servants.

He heard all the excuses, but he didn't listen to them. He called on his nephew Harry and brother Ken to remove all the hay fields, and then he brought in water and sewer services. In the mid-1960s Mel started to build houses, a lot of them.

Street names were named after family members, close family friends and other ties to the Barr family. The farm boy who grew up on the Barr Line, a popular road named after his ancestors, had a vision.

Barrhaven was born. Francis Lépine comes

from a family that believes in hard work built on the ability to follow a vision despite the naysayers. Growing up in Montreal, he watched his late father, Rene Lépine who formed Group Lépine in 1952, develop more than 20,000 apartments, condos, houses and several prominent Quebec landmarks including the Olympic Village.

Francis Lépine also learned two valuable lessons from his father: Always follow your vision and never compromise the quality of a project when the Lépine name is on the building. Since he branded Lépine Apartments in 2011, he didn't challenge the status quo among local developers. He created his own path, confident that others would follow in his direction.

He insisted each apartment community reflect their individual community within Ottawa. Never settling for second best, each unit in the community would not only meet but exceed the minimal standards in the areas of safety, energy efficiency and quality. His buildings would allow a person with light physical disabilities a place to live in dignity and comfort.

The Lépine way means there is no compromise on quality. No corners will be cut to reduce cost.

At first, the established developers only shook their heads when they heard the news. They said the high cost of construction on apartment buildings would only drive up the rent, leaving many empty units. Francis Lépine proved them wrong.

In 1960, the naysayers saw an empty field south of Ottawa. Mel Barr envisioned a sprawling community that people would want to call home.

In 2010, developers looked at Kanata's non-existent town centre and didn't see much to excite them. Francis Lépine looked across the same field. He envisioned William's Court at Kanata Lakes, a five-building community with 742 luxury

apartments. He envisioned open living space that focused on the needs of the occupants, not what the architects or planners thought they should have.

He saw luxury suites that offered everything a condo had, but more service and without condo fees. They were move-in ready with six appliances, bright hardwood floors and no added utility costs. He saw a vibrant and active community where members had access to a modern fitness centre, a pool and sauna, underground parking and landscaped trails and paths where they could stroll, sometimes with their grandchildren in tow. Those members would gather in a lounge for a social drink over a game of cards. He saw a generation of homeowners ready to downsize but nervous and unsure of how to make one of the biggest transitions of their adult lives. But he also saw in his team a group of professional and caring members ready to assist them.

His vision did not include building apartments for them. The Lépine team built them a home.

They built the new members a community. The Lépine team repeated its formula when they unveiled Les Terrasses Francesca, a block away from Ottawa's Riverain Park along the Rideau River. It is Lépine's grandest and most distinct apartment community to date.

However, Francis Lépine and his team never rest on their laurels. They believe there is always room for improvement on their next project, and that project will bring them to one of Ottawa's most desirable neighbourhoods.

The planned opening of Howard Grant Terrace, located on McGarry Terrace next to Chapman Mills Marketplace in Barrhaven, will link a visionary of the past with a visionary of today who sees the potential of tomorrow.

For more information, visit www.lepineapartments.com.



Located near the vibrant Chapman Mills Marketplace, Howard Grant Terrace will be just a short walk from many stores and services.

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