



BV CENTRAL



GO 4 ROCK

"COMSTOCK-SMART" BLOCK

c1950

175-210 King St. West

4 Storefronts



DIRECTORY LISTINGS:

1951: no listing (181), R.H. Smith, Ltd (183), Ford's Credit Jewellers (189), Marie Duggan Shoppe (191)
1954/1956: LCBO, liquor (181), Smart's Hardware (183), Ford's Credit Jewellers (189), Betty's Style Shop (191)
1959/1963: LCBO, liquor (181), Smart's Hardware (183), Adams Family Jewellers (189), Betty's Style Shop (191)
1966: LCBO, liquor (181), Smart's Hardware (183), Sutherland & Parkins, opticians (189), Central Canada Coal (191)
1969: LCBO, liquor (181), Smart's Pro Hardware (183), vacant (189), Central Canada Coal (191)
1971/1975: LCBO, liquor (181), Smart's Pro Hardware / Toyland & Hobby Spis (183), Manufacturers Mart (189), Central Canada Coal (191)
1976: LCBO, liquor (181), Smart's Pro Hardware / Kedco Products (183), vacant (189), vacant (191)
1978/1980: LCBO, liquor (179), Smart's Pro Hardware / Hobby Shop (183), Boers Delicatessen (189), Arcade (191)
1982: LCBO, liquor (179), Smart's Pro Hardware / Hobby Shop (183), Boers Delicatessen (189), Pharma Natural Foods (191)
1984/1986: LCBO, liquor (179), Leeds County Books (181), Smart's Pro Hardware / Hobby Shop (183), Boers Delicatessen (189), 1000 Islands Seafood (191)
1988/1990: LCBO, liquor (179), Leeds County Books (181), The Video Place (185), Boers Delicatessen (189), 1000 Islands Seafood (191)
1992: LCBO, liquor (179), Leeds County Books (181), The Video Place (185), (no return) (189), 1000 Islands Seafood (191)
1994/2007: LCBO, liquor (179), Rainbow Video (185), Salvation Army Thrift Store (189), 1000 Islands Seafood (191)
2009/2013: LCBO, liquor (179), Salvation Army Thrift Store (185), Interesting Things, antiques (189), Domino's Pizza (191)
2015: LCBO, liquor (179), Salvation Army Thrift Store (185), vacant (189), Domino's Pizza (191)
2018: LCBO, liquor (179), Salvation Army Thrift Store (185/189), vacant (191)
2019: LCBO, liquor (179), Salvation Army Thrift Store (185), Completely Cannabis (189), Pizza Unlimited (191)
2020: LCBO, liquor (179), Salvation Army Thrift Store (185), Completely Cannabis (189), Loven Pizza (191)
2021/2022: LCBO, liquor (179), Salvation Army Thrift Store (185), Completely Cannabis (189), Peter's Oven (191)
2023+: LCBO, liquor (179), Salvation Army Thrift Store (185), Thousand Islands Billiards & Arcade (189), Papa's Pizzaland (191)

The two thirds of the Halladay Block that was for the most part destroyed was replaced by a new building. Early directories called it the Comstock Building. That name, however is more associated to William H. Comstock's structure on Court House Ave, now demolished. The upper floor is now known as King West Apartments. This building replaced the two thirds of the Halladay Block.

By the time of the 1951 directory, the two end stores were rented out, but there is no listing at all for 181, and R.H. Smith, Ltd in 183. 183 is the spot where Smart's Hardware was to return to, so I assume that end of the block was still being worked on, and possibly Smith was the builder's temporary location until the work was done.

Ford's Credit Jewellers was the first business to open at #189 in the new building about 1950. It was opened by Harry Herz, who lived in Cornwall and seems to be a Cornwall based chain. Around 1958, it was replaced by **Adams Family Jewellers** run by W. Stanley Adams, who lived with his wife Angela at [28 Hubbell St.](#). Adams closed about 1964.

Marie Duggan Shoppe was in Brockville briefly at this location, #191, from c1950 to c1953. The Ladies' Ready-to-Wear shop was run by Vincent Waters, who resided upstairs with his wife Anna. Since it was run by Waters and there was no Marie Duggan living anywhere in Brockville, this indicates it was a satellite shop to another one, in another town. Whatever the case, it could not have been successful, lasting just a couple of years.

Betty's Style Shoppe, Ladies' Ready-to-Wear, replaced Marie's around 1953 and was initially managed first by Mrs Rae Godell. As with Marie's, there seems to be no Betty in sight and it is possibly attached to another store in another location. It lasted quite a bit longer, up until about 1964.

The **Liquor Control Board of Ontario (LCBO)** moved here to its second and current location about 1953, the first tenant in this new building, in this spot at #179. It had previously been in the Ross Block at #101.

Smart's Hardware returned to business c1952. It occupied 3 floors plus the basement. By the 1960's it is listed as Smart's Pro Hardware. It joined the Pro Hardware group, which was a retailers' cooperative. Also, Smart's opened up Toyland & Hobby Spis in the basement of the store, later just the Hobby Shop. Smart's finally closed in 1986.

Sutherland & Parkins Optical Co. Ltd., opticians, based out of Toronto, was incorporated on March 1, 1952. The Brockville location opened about 1964 and was managed by Edward G. Arthur. Around 1970, Sutherland & Parkins moved to the other end of town, in the Manitou Hotel at 5 King St. E.. It lasted until about 1979, Arthur still in charge, shortly before the entire company dissolved December 16, 1980.

Central Canada Coal Co., Ltd., based out of the Castle Block, #165, about 1964. It was managed by J. Percy MacNaughton was President, with Malcolm O.P. MacNaughton as Vice-President and Secretary-Treasurer. Its products included coal, oil, gas heating units, air conditioning equipment, excavating, tinsmithing, plumbing, heating and scaffolding, and fuel oils. Around 1974, they will move to their next location, across the street, to the Central Block at 164 King St. W.

Manufacturers Mart moved into the vacant 189 around 1970. They were a small Montreal chain, owned by M. Kahn. A second location opened in the Brockville Shopping Centre around 1972. Betty Crooke, who resided in Cardinal, managed both locations. By 1975, it was managed by Ann Edgley. After the devastating fire (see below) in March 1975, the store never re-opened and the chain left the city. Anne moved on to become a sales clerk at Wark's Pharmacy.

Dharma Natural Foods, run by Merck Purganas, had a short run in this building from c1981 to 1983.

About 1983, Smart's Hardware reduced it's size and the location was divided into two stores, #181 and #185. The division lasted until about 2014 when the Salvation Army Thrift Store moved over here taking over the double spot.

Leeds County Books were, for many years, at several locations. Moving here c1983 from the Jones Harding Block at 41 King St. W., it was managed by Murray McGregor while here. After its stay here, it then moved c1994 to the Woolworth's Block, at 42 King St. W. This was the second of five locations for this bookstore.

Boer's Delicatessen moved here from the Gellena Block, #208, about 1977. Owned by Albert D. and Anna H. Boer, it closed about 1991.

The **Video Place** moved here around 1987 from the Thompkins Block (#139). Around 1985, Gene D. Chymyex had replaced his tape/recorder store, going into the emerging video business. Tom L. Duffy acquired the business around 1995, renaming it **Rainbow Video**. By 2008, video stores were facing increased competition from cable TV rentals (later on Netflix), and the store closed.

1000 Islands Seafood was opened about 1983 by Jim Gill. Robert Trought acquired the business about 1989. It closed about 2008.

Salvation Army Thrift Store first appeared in this building around 1993 at #189, moving over to 185 about 2008. Prior to moving here, they were located at the "Derbyshire Building" just down the street at #211. The manager after moving was Don Neil, later Glen Fraser and currently Sheri Carr.

Interesting Things advertised themselves as "antique dealers, antiques, collectibles, furnishings, furniture, used furniture dealers" and were in #189 from c2008 to c2014.

Domino's Pizza, the large American chain, opened it's first Brockville location at #191 about 2008. Their information at the time stated "Domino's Pizza offers a variety of menu options ranging from fresh hand tossed pizza to savory chicken sides, breadsticks, refreshments and dessert. You can build your own pizza from crust (classic hand tossed, handmade pan or crunchy thin crust) to toppings. We also offer a full variety of other menu items to choose from including Chicken Wings, Breadsticks, and Cheesy Bread." This franchise location closed around 2017.

Pizza Unlimited opened in the old Domino's location in 2018. It was gone by 2020.

Peter's Oven started out in Saturday, August 20, 2020 as **Loven Pizza** by Pious Sebastian and Sachin Peter who are originally from Kerala, India. They advertised "Our home made dough and specialty sauce is a must try. Wide ranges of pizza with unlimited toppings. Authentic Butter chicken and beef vindaloo available". In January 5, 2021, it was rebranded as **Peter's Oven**. They had trademark issues with the old name and were able to trademark the new one. The establishment closed in July, 2022, suppose to be temporary due to "telecom outages and internal issues", but never re-opened.

Completely Cannabis first opened to the public by Tom Scott in 2020. Originally it was only licensed by Health Canada to sell medical cannabis to customers with a doctor's prescription. It was the city's first cannabis store. When it opened it was the only one in Ontario and only one of three in Canada. He got his products from small licensed producers and also set up to grow it's own at another location. The store closed in 2023.

Thousand Islands Billiards and Arcade (#186) was opened by Will Dewey on Oct 1, 2023.

Papa's Pizzaland opened on Oct. 10, 2023 and is managed by Brandon Selleck.

THE 1975 FIRE



It was at 7:30 pm on Monday, March 17, 1975 that Central Canada Coal (#191) service manager Thomas Hargreaves discovered the fire, as the furnace had quit working. The fire started in the basement of Manufacturers Mart (#189), next door. A cement block wall separated the units to prevent fire spreads, but a small opening around pipes going through walls and also from steel floor girders that became extremely hot, allowed the fire to spread next door to the Smart's Pro Hardware (#183) basement. Fertilizers in Smart's basement sent out toxic gases. Exploding paint cans were another danger. Firemen had to go into the LCBO basement (#181) and smash through the wall to get in and put out the fire. It was under control by 3 am.

The fire itself did not spread to the upper floor. In the LCBO, liquor in basement storage had all been moved to the main floor (save the liquor if nothing else!). However, dresses and fabrics on the main floor were damaged by heat, smoke and water. It was believed that damages well exceeded over \$250,000. To make matters worse, firemen were already battling another fire at McLean Woodworking Co., at 14 Downey St. With two raging fires, they got help from 15 members of the Augusta Fire Dept., making it a busy night for them. (Photos from fire dept.)

STOREFRONTS



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OFFICE: 161 KING ST. WEST 345-1414 Inc. 1874
HEATING DIVISION: WATER ST. WEST 345-5844

Smart's Hardware, 1954; Adams Family Jewellers, 1959; Central Canada Coal, 1963;

(Most information gathered from the various directories, Kimball's, Foster's, Vernon's, with some input from business websites, and The Recorder & Times.)