



Recycled log house of Judy and Ross McEwan is an original 150 year old residence from Woodbridge. The McEwans have rebuilt the house on their country property, north of Acton.

McEwens reassemble 150-year-old home made from red pine

by Jennifer Barr

Building your own house is not something a neophyte undertakes lightly. Ross and Judy McEwan are not only doing that but are re-assembling a dismantled log home—a job to turn the hair of an experienced builder white.

The 150 year old home of the McEwans is in its new position north of Acton and, although unfinished, cozily shelters the Hornby couple. Prior to living in Hornby, Ross spent a couple of years happily pottering around a farm off Highway 25 north, dabbling in organic gardening, chicken and pig raising.

Organic gardening and ecological conscience are still with the McEwans, who have used primarily recycled material for their home heated mainly by wood and solar energy.

The wooded ten acre site lends itself to natural log construction, the house blends with its surroundings as if it's always been there.

Glamorous skeleton

Ross first heard about the dismantled house last spring. A wrecker had removed the Woodbridge residence and had it lying in his yard. The family who owned the house prior to its demise were unaware of its glamorous skeleton, covered with siding and wallboard panelling. Actually, underneath were squared 10-inch timbers of red pine, a wood that hasn't been seen for 75 years or more.

Until he heard of the dismantled log house, Ross was considering stack wall construction for the home he planned to build in the recently cleared section of the property.

However, the logs were just what the McEwans needed. They were purchased, numbered, ready to rebuild, and erected to roof level in a day-and-a-half. Corner dovetailing dictated the width of chinking and mortar which is considerable. Rockwool and expanded metal lathe, covered on both sides by mortar supplies the log chinking bringing the R. value of the walls up to a factor of 12. The roof consists of the original rafters, new boards, shingle, and insulation constituting an insulating value of R32.

Original windows and doors have been replaced by modern wood ones, fitting in with the design. A split fieldstone hearth and wall backing forms a base for the energy conserving Lakewood stove.

A sloping roof addition to the south will allow for solar heating, catching panels on the roof, storing area inside where the water heater and house heating system will be. Ross is already installing electric baseboard heaters as auxiliary back-up.

Without basement, the two story building is erected on poured foundation with room only for water pump. Downstairs, the main room is open plan—a 550 square foot room combining kitchen, dining and living areas with an entry platform and stairwell.

Upstairs, the space is divided into a possible three bedrooms and large bathroom, all with two bright windows each. The McEwans will use one of the bedroom areas, which is also a hallway, as a weaving studio for Judy who hopes to give weaving instruction from her home. The flooring is original inch-and-a-half red pine.



Ross McEwan works on electrical connections in his unique log home.

The first and lasting impression of the house is its brightness and high ceilinged spaciousness. Light, sand-blasted wood and a large number of windows create the feeling as does the lack of interior walls.

Active pair

The house has taken nine months to grow from a pile of squared timbers to a spacious two storey residence, but the McEwans have been working in their spare time. At other times—like five days a week—Ross is a student adviser with Student Services, Sheridan College, Oakville. He has a BA in Psychology and a B Ed in education, he also teaches English at Sheridan.

Judy, the weaving expert, now teaches at Mohawk after graduating from Sheridan's crafts and design course last year.

So these energetic young people don't have a lot of time for house building. Fortunately, they've had a lot of help from friends and relatives, Ross explains. He says he married into a handy family full of carpenters. Both his brothers-in-law helped by making the beautiful stairs and kitchen cupboards.

Judy's father has been very active in the major construction and she is "very handy with a hammer", according to her husband. It was she who did the sand blasting that gave the interior of the logs their light new look.

The McEwans are an ingenious couple who have proved, with industry and ambition, it's still possible to build a sound, inexpensive house which is esthetically pleasing, an energy miser, and which doesn't put its young owners up to their ears in debt.

Town urges

2 years residency for seniors' unit

Senior citizens who have lived a minimum of two years in the town of Halton Hills will have priority in obtaining senior citizens apartments, if Ontario Housing Corporation accepts a recommendation by Halton Hills general committee this week.

The town is asking that this provision be included in the agreement covering the 52 unit complex now being built on Elizabeth Drive, Acton.

Councillor Ed Woods suggested the priority should go to residents who have lived a

minimum of ten years in town. He said he had spent a lot of time talking to the O.H.C.

"If the senior citizens have as much trouble as I did getting answers I'm sorry for them." He said people don't know whether they will obtain apartments in Georgetown or Acton when they fill out the applications. He said being considered eligible means only the person is on the list, and contended there are 450 people on the waiting list for the 52 units now being built in Acton. He said some people applied four or five years ago and

have heard nothing. Councillor Walter Riehn suggested the two year residency recommendation also be included in the Georgetown agreements, but said he recognized there is no guarantee the O.H.C. will accept

METRIC TEMPERATURES
Agriculture Canada offers the following temperature guides to aid you in converting to metric cooking: heat frozen pies in a 220 degree C, keep the refrigerator at 4 degrees C and the freezer at -18 degrees C.

Board plans to spend \$93 million

Halton Board of Education proposes to spend \$93,782,938 this year, or slightly more than eight per cent over last year's budget.

The board's finance committee presented its proposals during a special meeting Thursday at Burlington. If a dollar could be stretched a mile, the budget would reach the sun from earth. Put another way, the school board would spend \$256,938 each day.

Last year Halton board spent \$86,703,562.

The 8.16 per cent hike in this year's possible expenses could represent a \$35 increase in public school taxes. That figure is based on a five mill on the average Halton home assessment of \$7,000.

The revenue side of the school board budget is scheduled to be presented next week.

Plant operation and instruction, mainly teacher wages, eat up slightly more than 83 per cent of proposed expenses. Other large items are debt charges at \$6-million and transportation at \$2,197,251. The least costly items are attendance, health and food services which total \$65,370.

The cost of one pupil in elementary school this year is estimated to be 11.43 per cent more than last year or \$1,663.98. The high school student is slightly lower on the per-

centage, 8.07, but still will cost \$2,314.05.

For the first time Halton's high school budget exceeded provincial ceilings on expenditures per student. Finance committee chairman Gary Morton said the group was disappointed it could not keep the cost under the limit—which was surpassed by \$28.

Expenditures per pupil at the elementary school level are \$58 below the ceiling, said Mr. Morton.

In preparing the budget Mr. Morton said the committee kept in mind inflation, rising cost of services and the decrease in provincial grants.

Trustees and committee honorariums are the

only items to remain at the same cost as last year—\$137,820—Mr. Morton pointed out.

Retirement gratuities which Burlington trustee William Priestner described as becoming fairly significant will grow by about \$60,000 to \$266,000 this year. The gratuities are offered to plant staff and teachers.

On a question from Milton separate school trustee John Bradley, Superintendent of Instruction John Boich said the staff does not see, on cost, an advantage in encouraging early retirements, though the board has, examined the idea and may take it up again. For about two years the board has hired

mainly newer teachers, said Mr. Boich, to balance the age of the staff and keep the average salary in line. Trustee Bradley observed the board is top heavy with experienced teachers.

There are items under professional development which do not, strictly speaking, belong there, revealed Mr. Priestner. "Three items are not legitimately professional development." There is a \$37,575 price tag on the program division, office personnel association and leadership programs.

Usually the term professional development refers to the time taken by teachers during the week to upgrade their skills. Elementary teachers have \$130,000 while the secondary teachers have \$100,000 for professional development.

The \$37,000 is for "professional development" of principals, vice-principals, and generally non-classroom staff, according to Mr. Boich. The cost of this form of professional development goes up and down, said the superintendent, Friday.

About \$33,000 was to be the saving incurred by the board when it persuaded high school teachers to take a \$100,000 lump sum payment rather than a formula to determine professional development fund.

Spied in the elementary school budget was a proposed \$7,000 study on the value of middle schools. Acton-Esqueving trustee Betty Fisher asked why. Program superintendent Robert Dixon said the staff would like to look at the "pay-off" of the present

middle schools. The study is marked subject to board approval.

"So you're looking at it under the assumption middle schools are beneficial—just how beneficial," said Mrs. Fisher. "The combined elementary school cost of psychological services this year is up by more than \$100,000. Most of the money \$52,026 is earmarked for the elementary schools.

Insurance of the public schools and contests is estimated to be \$101,540 and for high schools \$113,370. Last year's price tag for insurance was \$93,883 and \$104,955 respectively.

While Oakville trustee Jackie Cutmore informed trustees there is complete surveillance equipment in the schools there is a total of about \$43,000 set aside for it this year.

Milton trustee Bradley also questioned the staff concerning W.I. Dick School and Sixteen-Mile Creek. There is some money pending, according to the trustee.

Superintendent of Finance Bruce Lindley said that in 1977 an appraiser indicated the conservation authority would straighten out the creek. A figure was established, but nothing more has been heard from the inatter from the conservation authority, said Mr. Lindley.

Why have some homeowners settled, and the school board not, asked Mr. Bradley.

Mr. Lindley indicated he heard a rumor to the effect the conservation authority might want to get the land for \$1.

"They certainly didn't get it for a buck from the homeowners," replied the trustee.

OPC reports on problems

Halton Police: still divided

Frustration, lack of leadership and poor records are the chief problems hampering Halton Regional Police, according to a report from the Ontario Police Commission.

The Commission prepared the report at the request of the Halton Police Commission following several complaints about the operations of the force and a report on morale problems prepared by the Police Association.

The 80-page document said five years after the regional police force was created there is still a lack of integration among the component parts.

"The extra effort required to achieve integration was apparently not forthcoming in Hal-

ton Region. Almost five years after it was formed the force is still divided in Burlington, Oakville and Georgetown."

The major source of frustration, the report said, is the force's lack of a cohesive promotion policy.

"One of the most obvious internal benefits arising from the integration of a number of police forces is the increased opportunity for advancement."

"However, this career path must be plainly visible and officers who intend to take the route must be under a misapprehension as to the traits and characteristics required."

The report also cites problems with buildings and record-keeping systems.

"It suggested that the

chief make more frequent visits to the districts as one means of strengthening the attitude of integration."

"A common complaint from the majority of the force who were interviewed was the failure—or inability—of the Headquarters support services... to provide a fast, efficient service to field operations," says the OPC report.

Each district, it noted, has developed its own records and filing system in the absence of any regional system. Attempts were made to start a regional Position and Procedures Manual in January, 1977, but the first steps were never followed up.

Generally, the reception of the report was good by officials of the force.

Ken Skerrett, Chief of Police, said "I think it's pretty well on. These areas have been a concern to us before."

Skerrett estimated it would take about six months to implement all of the recommendations made by the province, but he hoped the final effect would be to streamline the operations of the force.

Oakville Mayor Harry

Vacations unaffected by weakening dollar

Florida still seems to be the favorite winter vacation spot, according to Acton's two travel agencies, Tyler Travel and Acton Travel Ltd.

Second in line, both agencies say is the Caribbean. Hick Bonnette of Acton Travel says the Barbados rank

first in that area closely followed by the Bahamas.

Top spots in Florida, experience shows is the Clearwater, Tampa area. Travel to these places is down slightly according to Shirley Lashley of Tyler Travel. The devaluation of the Canadian

dollar has not had too much effect on the tourist industry, but it has touched it.

Mr. Bonnette, however, feels that most people do not care what they have to spend. "Travellers are going to travel no matter what the price," he said.

Most people take one week vacations and most choose the more economic package tours rather than fly or drive down themselves and get a motel or hotel.

Acton Travel, according to Mr. Bonnette, has booked many people in motels who wish to drive down, but this is fairly rare.

Another favorite for Acton people, Mr. Bonnette noticed, is Los Angeles. Even before Air Canada came out with extremely inexpensive flights to that, and other cities, many people were heading to Movieland.

February and March are the favorite traveling months says Mrs. Lashley. Both agencies agree that most travellers are couples rather than families, mainly because children are in school during the winter months and people are hesitant to pull them out for a week or two.

So, in spite of the falling dollar and Jean Chretien's plea for Canadians to stay home and see their own country many are still seeking the sun.

Snow removal problem settled

Halton Hills library board has worked out a solution to the snow removal problem with town engineer Bob Austin.

Chairman Dick Howitt told board members, at their meeting last Wednesday in Acton, that he had spoken with Mr. Austin about lack of snow removal in the Acton library parking lot, for employees.

Mr. Austin told Mr. Howitt there were two

alternatives, the first being the town could regularly plow the lot whenever they did other lots in town, usually two or three days after the snow fall. Costs of removal would be \$15 to \$20. The other alternative would be on a demand basis with the library staff notifying the works department whenever they wanted the snow removed.

Board members opted for the second alternative.

Fire damage up

Damages resulting from fires in Halton Hills in January are almost \$39,000 more than the same period last year.

According to figures released Monday at council by Fire Chief Mick Holmes, estimated damages in January, 1979, were \$127,717, compared with \$89,000 in 1978.

Negligence was blamed for six fires, maintenance for two fires and six fires were classified as other.

The volunteer fire-fighting force answered 23 calls in January, 1979 and 14 in the same month last year. Fifteen of the calls were in the Georgetown area, eight in the Acton area.

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DOWNTOWN ACTON

Oakville lawyer seeks NDP seat

A 32-year-old Oakville lawyer is seeking the federal New Democrat Party nomination for the Halton riding.

Doug Black, of Queens Ave. announced his intentions for the federal seat Tuesday.

Mr. Black ran in two previous provincial elections in 1975 and 1977.

He was defeated in both instances by the present transportation minister, James Snow.

Mr. Black said in an interview he will run on a party platform and will concern himself with three major issues.



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