

UFFI headache pounds on

by Helen Murray
After almost a year of waiting for results of a research experiment, it has now been decided further testing would be needed to determine whether three members of the Hilton family are being affected by the urea formaldehyde foam insulation (UFFI) in their R.R. 2 Acton home.

Dr. James Day, in charge of research program last July, did however admit that respiratory problems suffered by the Hilton's young son Gordon "were likely directly related to the UFFI insulation." Ted, wife Dorothy and daughter Dawn would require further exposure before any similar finding would be made.

The family voluntarily underwent four days of intensive testing last year in a Kingston, Ontario, laboratory. In one of the tests, fresh air was pumped into a room, followed by air contaminated with UFFI, and then fresh air. Body reactions were observed by doctors, and on medical charts.

Gordon, the worst affected member of the family, has recently undergone further testing in Toronto General Hospital by specialists in the respiratory ailment field who have determined there are no medical reasons for the problems from which Gordon is suffering.

In the meantime, Hilton says, work will begin this summer to remove the insulation. Written estimates put the price tag at \$115,000 to refurbish the five-year-old home.

In an interview last summer with the Free Press, Hilton explained that when he built the house he was very conscious of energy efficiency and put in much more UFFI than needed, and

installed heat pumps, as well as angled his house on a true north-south direction. To completely remove the foam, he was told, the house would have to be levelled and rebuilt.

This summer, with the help of a

\$5,000 government grant the Hilton's plan to remove a room at the front of the house which holds the heat pumps. The walls are 10 inches thick, and filled with UFFI. Hilton speculates that gas being given off by the UFFI is being sucked into the heat pumps and spread throughout the rest of the house. By tearing down this portion of the house, and replacing it with a heat exchanger which will bring air in from outside and circulate it, the biggest of their problems will be solved.

If he gets enough funding, Hilton plans to take off the aluminum siding from the rest of the house and attempt to remove the foam from the outside.

Hilton approached Halton Hills council about making an adjustment in the assessment of his home, which he feels is worthless as long as the insulation is in it. In January, council ruled it did not have the authority to act under section 496 of the Municipal Act in regards to reducing or refunding taxes that had not been formally appealed to the assessment review board. Earlier this month, an appeal of this decision was heard in the review court, which ruled in favor of the home owner, spelling out that council did have the authority to act when dealing with UFFI homes. However, each homeowner's case must be heard separately and decisions made on individual cases.

Hilton noted that the review court also ruled that it had no authority to establish the proportionate amount of reduction and that a further appeal in regards to actual reduction would have to be heard at the Ontario Municipal Board. The Hilton's plan to

be appealing to the OMB also.

Since his nightmare began, Hilton has learned federal government information of the past has been inaccurate, and tests have shown a shrinkage factor of 1/4 inch has been found in most cases after just a few years. Not only does this represent a tremendous air loss, but it also means that air carrying the UFFI gasses can infiltrate the home at a greater ratio, thus increasing the health hazards from the gasses.

Hilton says he has also learned that these gasses will never disappear. In fact, he says, as the materials break down, the hazards from the gasses actually increases.

Gasses given off by the UFFI, Hilton says have been found within the actual wood structures of the surrounding insulations. Even after removed, the gasses are still known to be a hazard, and scientists now believe that some premature rotting of studding has been caused by these gasses.

It may take up more than four years for a lawsuit the Hilton's have filed against the federal government to be heard. About 30 families had joined together to launch a civil law suit against the government but now, under the new Constitution, such actions are non-existent. Each family must file individual law suits, and all must be heard separately.

After a five year nightmare, the Hilton's still find themselves shouting upon almost deaf ears. All they want is for their dream home to be safe, for Gordon to be able to breathe properly, and for the family's headaches to go away, both physically and mentally.



Dorothy Hilton holds a chunk of urea formaldehyde foam insulation which is causing medical problems for the family, but more particularly son Gordon. They are standing in front of a portion of the home which will be torn down to rid them of the gas.

Blood clinic June 28

With the vacation season upon us, the need for blood is greater than ever.

On Tuesday, June 28, the Acton Red Cross will hold a blood donor clinic at the Acton Legion.

Blood clinic chairperson Alice Schreiber said there is no reason why more blood can't be collected in Acton than at previous clinics.

This clinic, which runs from 2 to 3:30 p.m. and from 5 to 8:30 p.m., is being sponsored by Acton Travel.

Remember, give the gift of life; your blood is so vital... be a blood donor.

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New seniors' apartments

Rockwood up in arms over project's multi-colored siding

by Gord Murray

Rockwood residents are up in arms over the ever evolving rainbow of colors of siding being put on the new senior citizens' apartment complex.

Just since Thursday, 223 citizens have signed a petition protesting the color scheme which consists of brown, blue and green siding. The growing size of the building is also a concern.

However, John McLeod, who was formerly on Eramosa Township council and initiated the drive for a seniors apartment building in the village, says he was shown a chart which shows at least nine different colors of siding to be used on the building when it is completed.

He and other citizens have heard there

might be as many as 13 colors of siding used. Michelle Dawe, another concerned citizen who lives near the apartment building, says she has heard the peak will have purple and yellow siding.

So far citizens have written a letter to Ontario Municipal Affairs and Housing Minister Claude Bennett, contacted MP Perrin Beatty, and sent copies of the letter to Bennett to MPP Jack Johnson and former MPP John Root.

In addition they have presented their petition to the Township and presented a brief last week to the Eramosa Non-Profit Housing Corporation board. Letters were also sent to the council.

Lorraine Root has signed the letter to Bennett and gave the brief to the board last

week, but is just one of several spokesmen for a growing group of concerned citizens.

Former chairman of the board for this project, Reta McPhedran, recently resigned and declined to comment on her reasons for quitting.

At the meeting of the board last week, the architect, Joe Somfay of Fergus was asked to explain his color scheme.

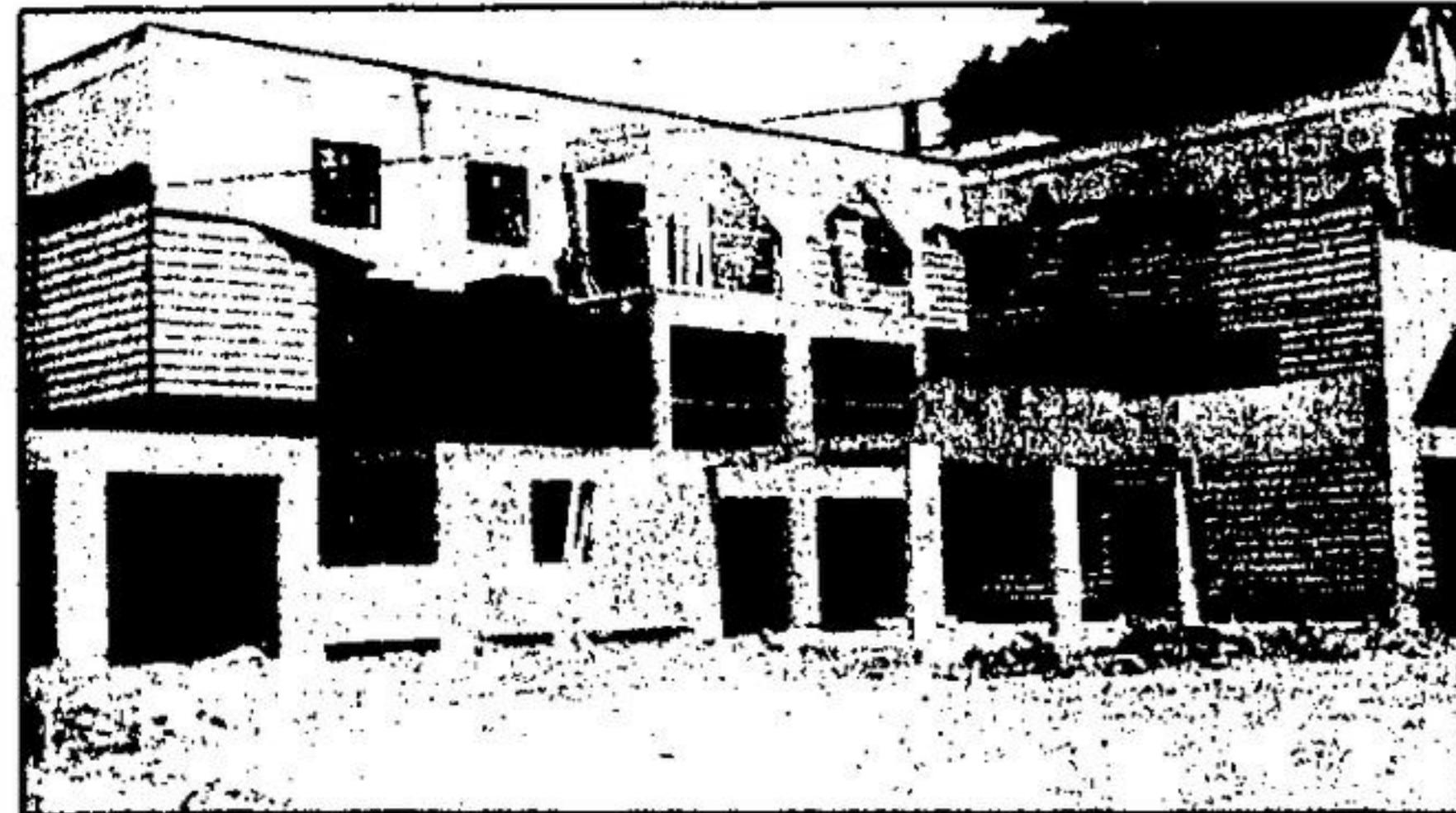
A press release from the directors of the Eramosa Non-Profit Housing Corporation said "Somfay explained that his plan was to transform the large block of the building into a series of perspective views that would create an atmosphere in keeping with Rockwood. The placement of exterior screens, colored in a soft green was to give the residents in the ground floor suites an outdoor area of privacy, similar to having a fence in front of your house.

"These screens will be planted with ivy to cover them. Closer to the building are balcony screens which will be colored red-brown to approximate the color of brick used in many homes. The building will be predominately medium brown with a band of leaf green at the second floor level, blending into lighter colors at the top of the building to reduce the height perspective. At the entrance corners, toward Guelph St. and toward Alma St. (Highway 7) there is a band of slate blue extending to the top of the building and around the corner, intended to carry through the color effect of limestone buildings. The overall intention of the various colors is to avoid large expanses of dull building color and attempt to differentiate the various features of the building.

"The original plan was to have a two storey building, but when the directors decided an elevator would be necessary and when it was decided to plan for a three floor building with elevator, the cost factors dictated the use of aluminum siding rather than masonry. The budgeted cost of the building at \$40,000 per suite is at the maximum allowed by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing."

In her letter to Bennett, Mrs. Root said citizens signing petitions, and others who because of time haven't signed yet, want the

(Continued on page 10)



The brown, blue and green siding on the new seniors apartment building in Rockwood has residents up in arms. Over 200 have signed a protest petition in the last few days, demanding work be halted.

Town to fix Y's lights

Halton Hills will try and have four vandalized light fixtures on the front of the Acton Y building fixed. There are two lantern style lights on either side of the Town office and police office at the front of the Mill St. building.

Councillor Rick Bonnette told Halton Hills council Monday night the damaged light fixtures have been brought to his attention by a few citizens and noted they have been broken for over a year. The glass around the bulbs is either missing completely or is hanging in the lantern type fixtures in jagged pieces.

Bonnette said he realized the Town doesn't own the building, the municipality leases space from the Y and in turn sublets space to the regional police. The Acton councillor pointed out the only identification for the building is a sign saying Town of Halton Hills and coats of arms on the door for the municipality and police.

He said these lights reflect poorly on the image of Halton Hills and must not look very good to outsiders. The vandalized light fixtures give the appearance that there is so much crime in Acton the police can't even

protect their own office. Thousands of tourists are expected to flock to Acton at the end of August for the Leathertown Market and Ciderfest downtown, Bonnette said, so while fixing the lights wasn't a pressing matter, something should be done before then.

He called for a staff report on what can be done about fixing the lights, pointing out it is common knowledge around Acton, because of reports in this newspaper, that the Y is having financial difficulties. Bonnette suggested while the lights may not belong to Halton Hills, because of the Y's financial problems the Town may have to fix the lights itself if the problem is to be rectified. He said if the lights can't be fixed, at least the broken glass should be removed. He added that to most people it is a public building and when it is in disrepair it doesn't help the municipality's image.

Mayor Peter Pomeroy agreed, saying the Town will look into getting the lights fixed. The mayor turned and directed staff to see about having works department employees fix the lights.



The mayor says broken light fixtures on the Y building where the town office is located will be removed.



It's strawberry time

Hot, sunny days have produced a succulent strawberry crop this year and pickers at various pick-your-own places start this week. Some of the best strawberry patches are right in Halton Hills. Here Ingrid Hauk of Limehouse picks some along 15 Sideroad in another strawberry season.

inside today's Free Press

There's lots of photos from the Nassagaweya fair held in Brookville Sunday on page 3.

GO fares are going up. See how much on page 5.

Rev. Andy King gives his last sermon here Sunday. Turn to page 5.

Milton has rejected the International Peace Camp. More on page 6.

Police beat is on page 8.

After many, many years at Ebenezer church, Rev. Finley is retiring. Turn to page 7.

Acton raised \$16,000 for cancer. Details on funds raised and the names of the people who worked so hard on page 8.

Acton has a new rock band, White Summer. Story and photo on page 8.

