

Show your creativity in sponge painting

Many of the people I've met lately have been doing a lot of sponging. Times are tough with the recession and all, but no this isn't about freeloading off your relatives. This article is about getting away from your troubles for a few hours and being a bit wild and crazy. Sponge painting actually. What a great way to escape the daily grind and get involved in something creative.

Wild and crazy is overstating this a touch. It would be more appropriate to say innovative and interesting when talking about sponge painters.

This new again painting technique is definitely catching on though, based on the number of people who want to talk about it. Sponge painting, however, has been around for a while; it just hasn't been popular lately.

A senior citizen said that during the Depression of the thirties, they used to sponge paint floors to simulate linoleum. That would make sponge painting at least 60 years old.

Another woman explained her mother sponge painting walls when

she was a young girl. That would date it back to the fifties. So while sponge painting does have a history, it is now back in style.

All the people that have talked about sponge painting are sponge painting over painted walls. Over a base coat of latex paint, one to three accent coats of thinned paint (called paint glaze) are selectively sponged on using a natural sea sponge as a paint applicator. It's artistic and fun.

You don't have to restrict sponge painting to painted walls. Sponge paint over wallpaper. Perfect candidates are papers that have a plain textured look. For glaze, use a latex paint thinned to a dilution of two parts paint to one part water. One accent color, in just the right

color to go with the room, would sure add an exciting dimension to wallpapered walls.

There is great untapped potential here for the imaginative home decorator. Don't just consider the walls. Furniture such as table legs or tops, chairs, drawer fronts or knobs and

headboards from beds, to name a few pieces, can be sponge painted.

The basic technique involves scuff sanding the surface to be painted, and then prime with the proper under coat, and you're ready for sponge painting.

If the surface durability of the painted piece is an important factor, apply three coats of Ultra Clear water born polyurethane. Allow the sponge painted surface to dry for 24 hours first.

Venetian blinds are perfectly suited for sponge painting. They look absolutely stunning when sponge painted. One color sponged on the basic blind color is a creative addition to any room.

Remove the slats from the cord ladders by prying off the buttons on the bottom of the bottom rail and untying the knots on the lift cords. You can now pull the lift cords up and slide the slats out sideways from the blind.

Put down two parallel strips of two sided carpet tape on to a piece of cardboard, and lay the slats across the tape. This will stop them from sliding around. For glaze, use oil base paint thinned one part mineral spirits to two parts paint. Soak your sponge and then ring out thoroughly before loading it with glaze. Always gently blot the sponge on newspaper after loading to avoid runs.

Article courtesy of St. Clair Paint and Wallpaper.

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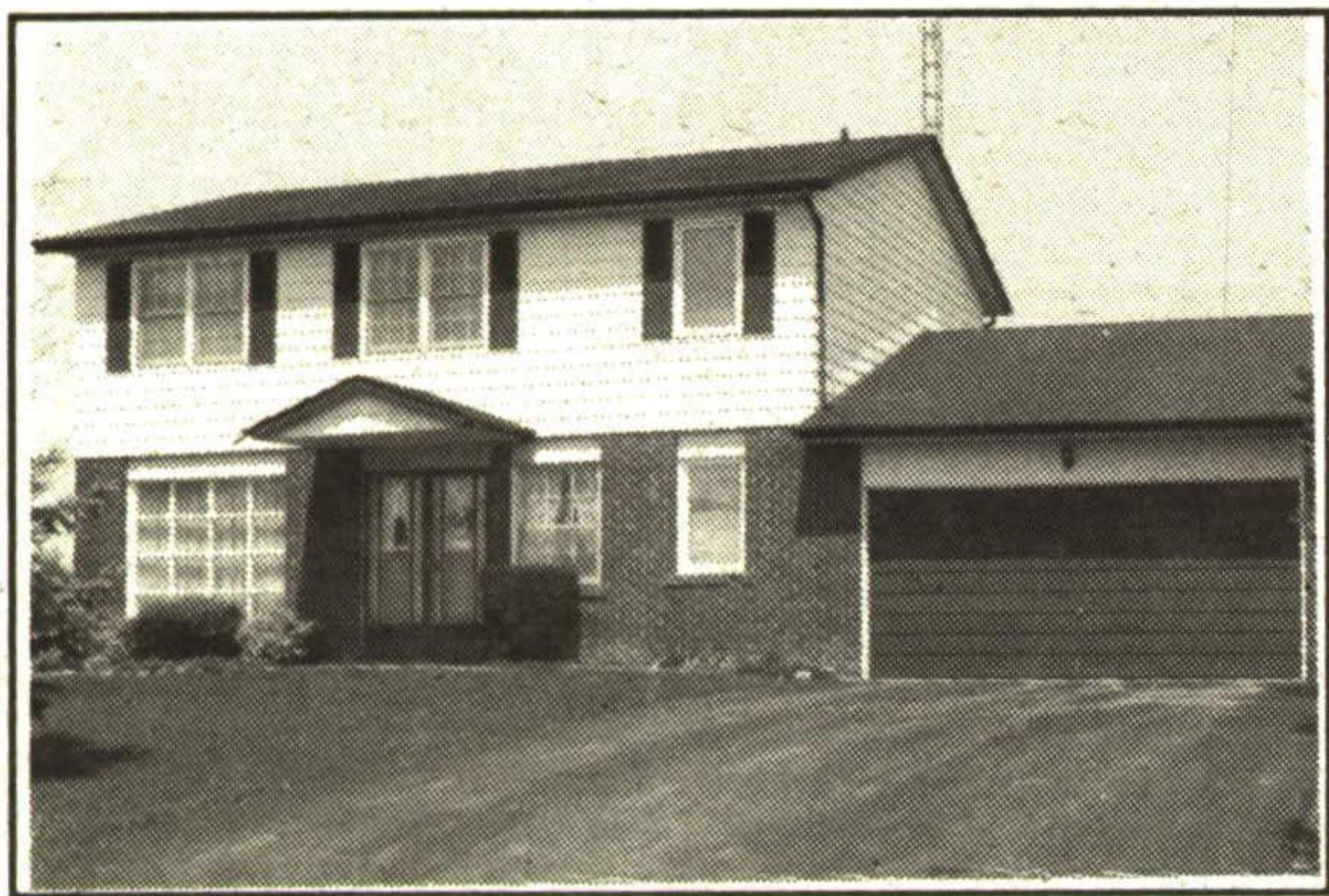
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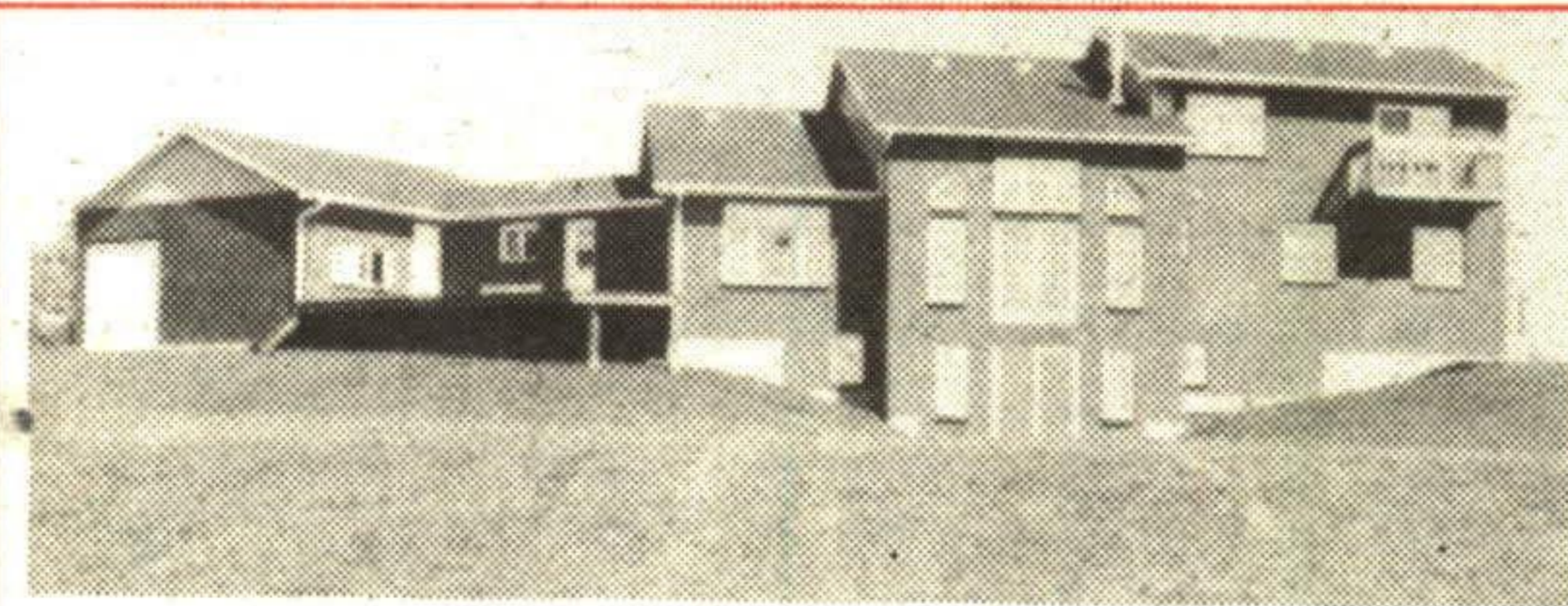
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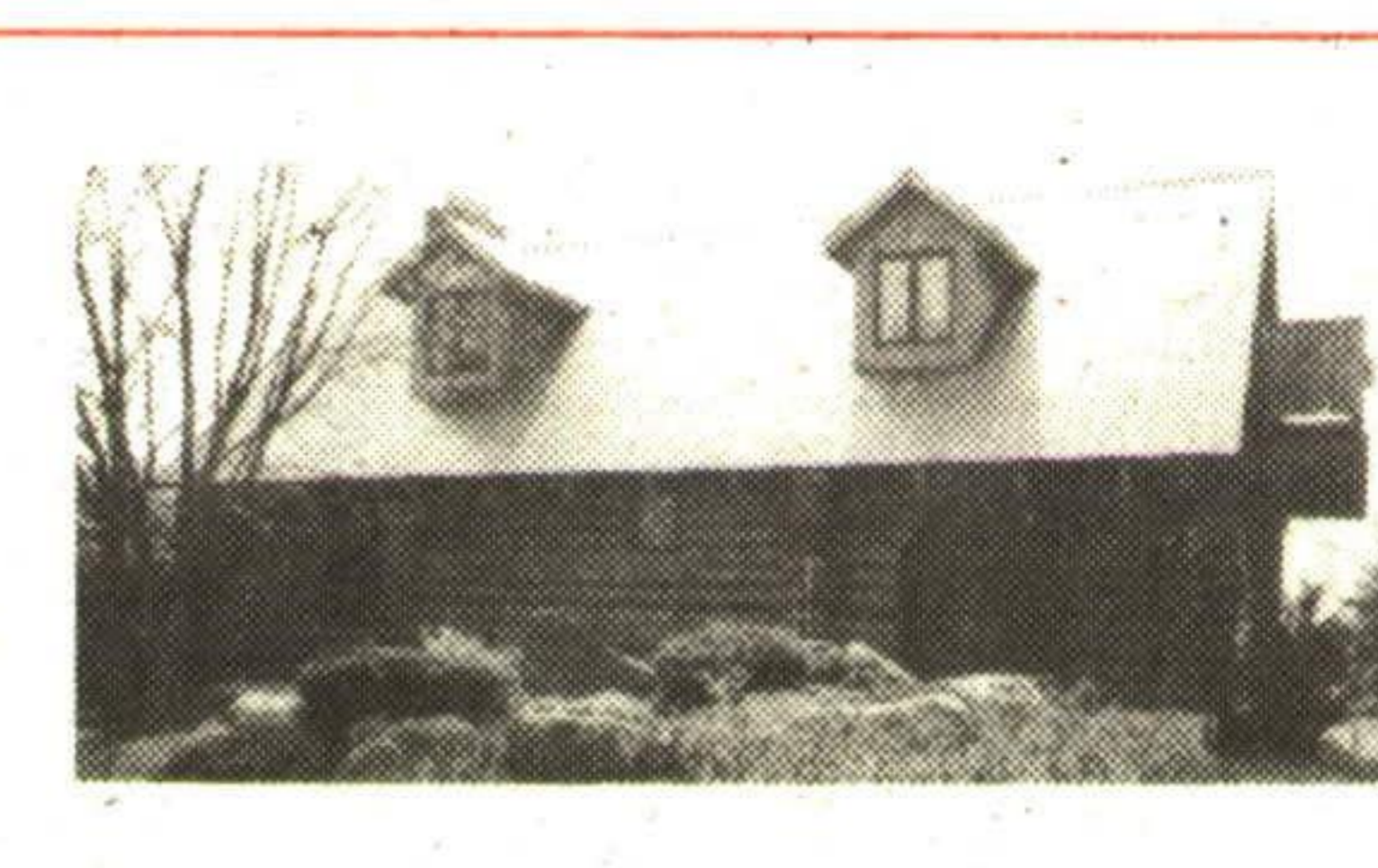
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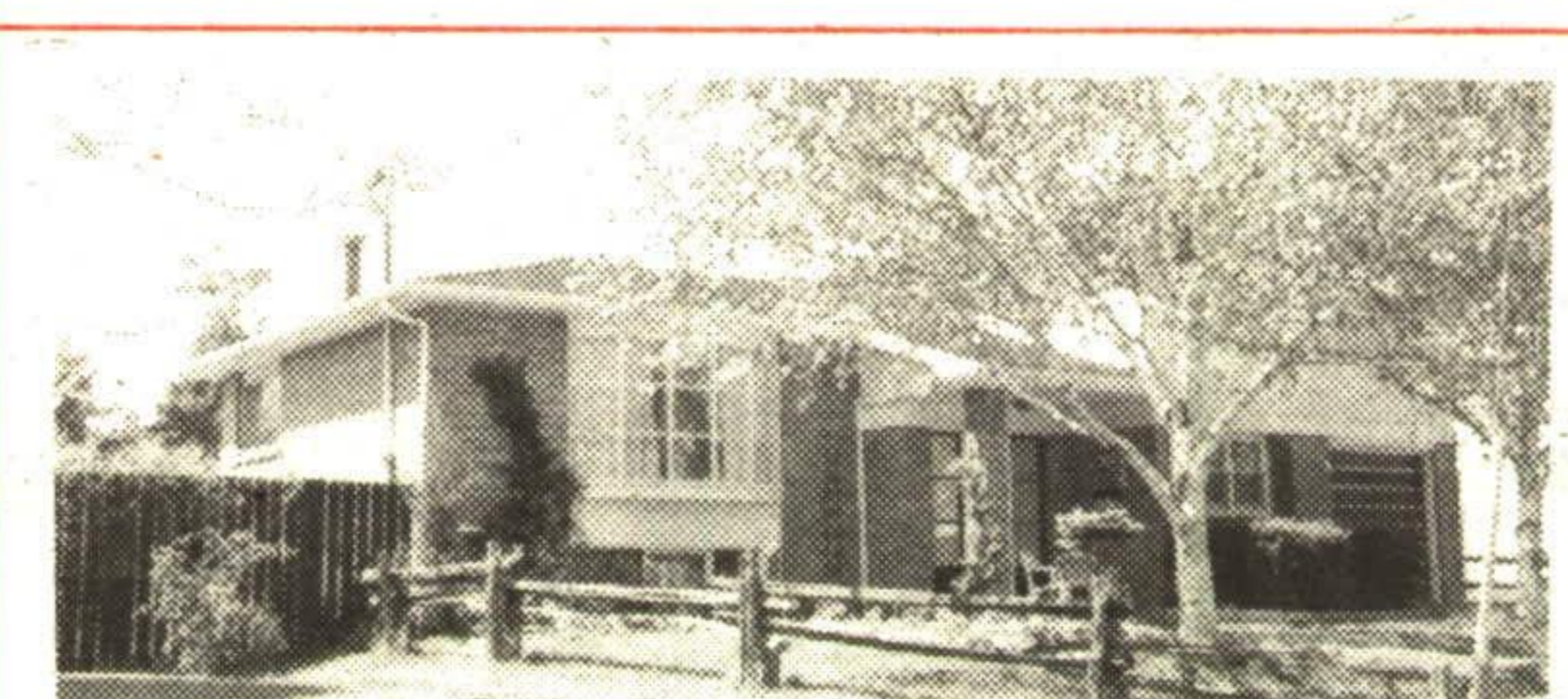
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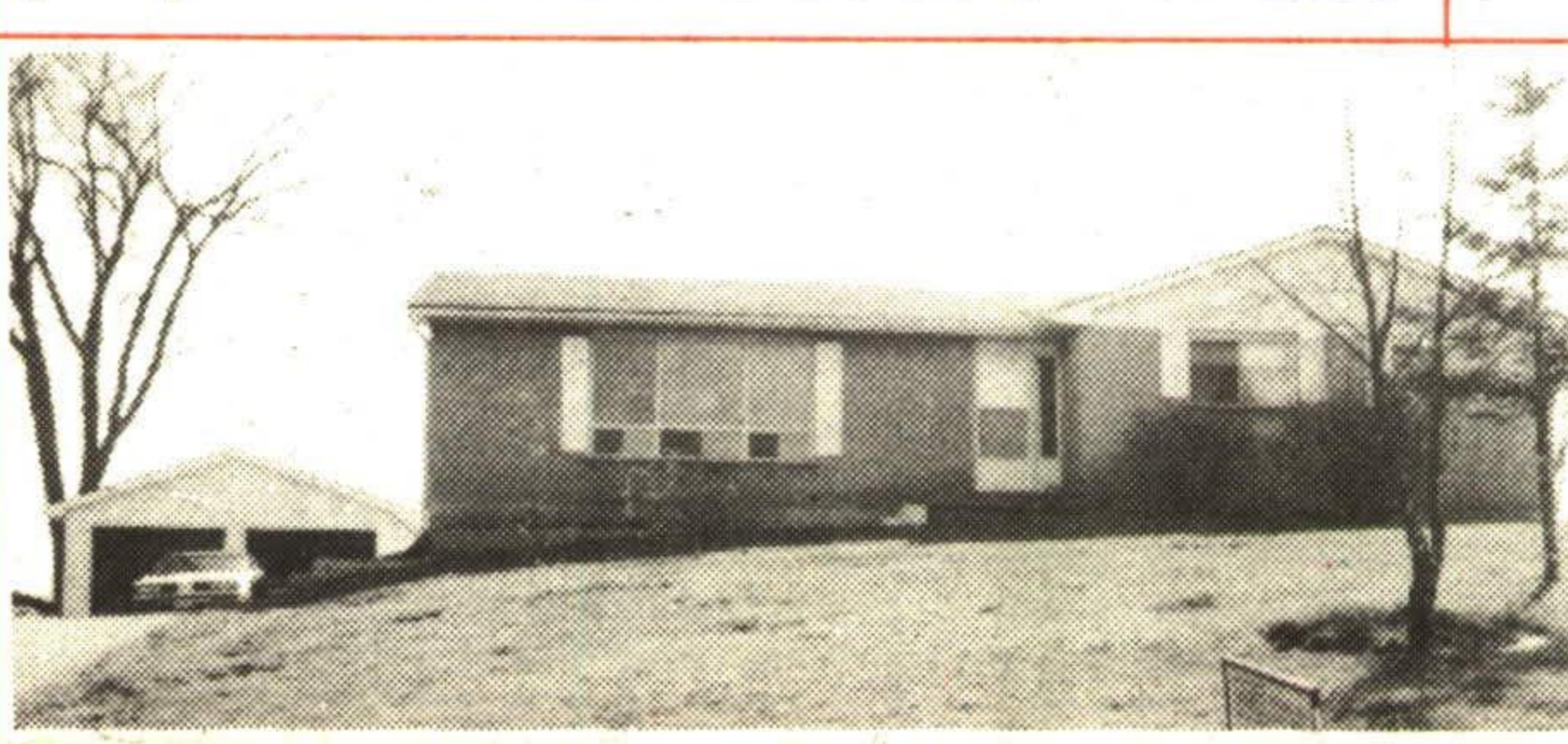
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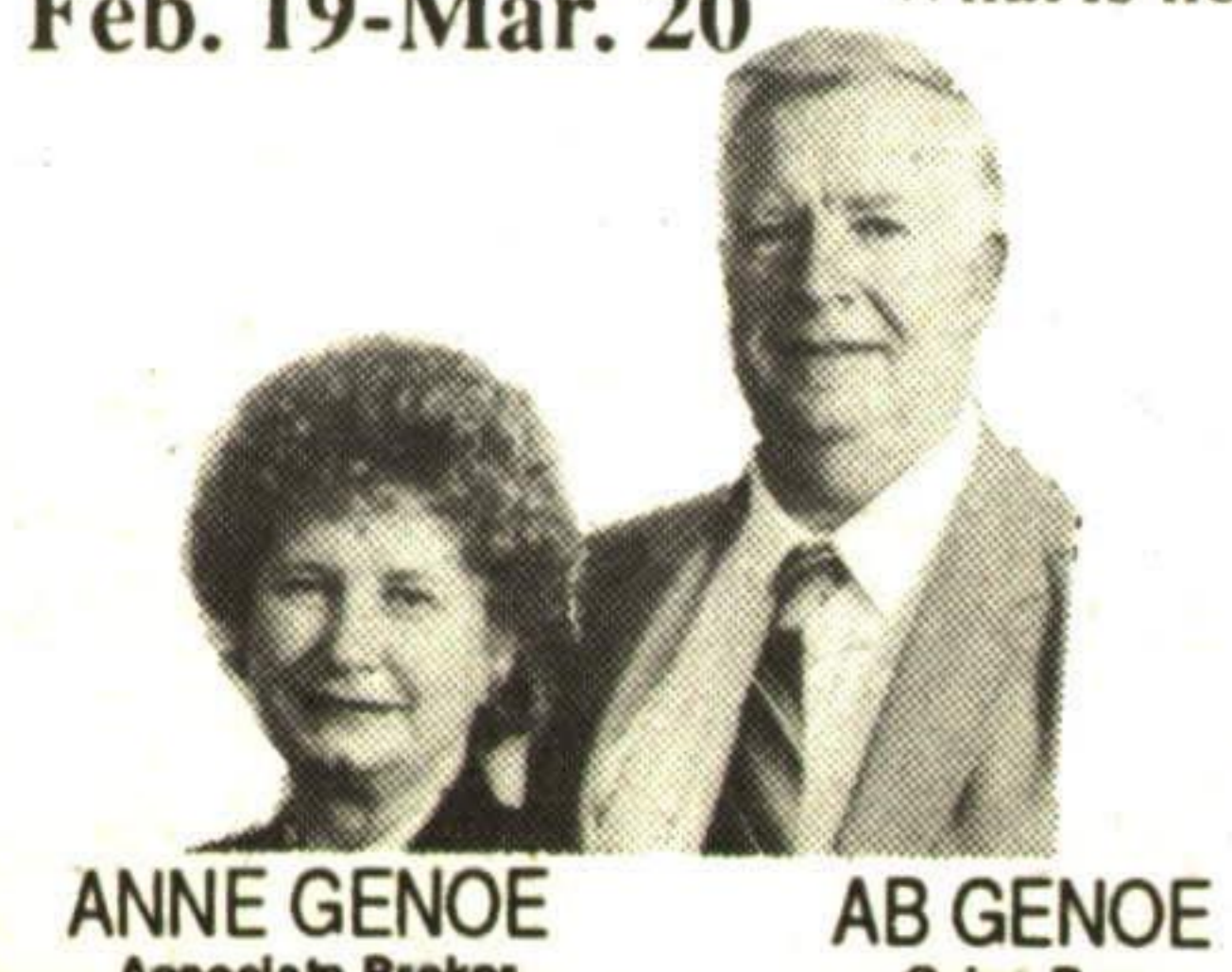


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Your Week Ahead Horoscope

- ARIES** Mar. 21-Apr. 19 Advice from others should be disregarded. You know what you want, now go for it.
- TAURUS** Apr. 20-May 20 Be tactful when discussing personalities. Take care not to step on anyone's toes. Remember, no one is perfect.
- GEMINI** May 21-June 20 Exciting possibilities may open up for you financially but working alone may net you more in the long run.
- CANCER** June 21-July 22 You deserve a night away from responsibilities. Kick up your heels and let your hair down. Live it up.
- LEO** July 23-Aug. 22 Tempers are likely to fly at unexpected times. Control your own and mediate arguments. Do not over-react.
- VIRGO** Aug. 23-Sept. 22 Preparation is the key. Nothing will slip by you if you stay on your toes. Watch for hidden dilemmas.
- LIBRA** Sept. 23-Oct. 22 Romance is possible. You are on the right track. Continue to be as honest and forthright as in the past.
- SCORPIO** Oct. 23-Nov. 21 One who was once a nemesis is now an ally. Don't be afraid to accept their help. Old injuries are best forgotten.
- SAGITTARIUS** Nov. 22-Dec. 21 Don't get bogged down in the past. Times have changed and so has everyone else. Go forward.
- CAPRICORN** Dec. 22-Jan. 19 Career opportunities open up. Promotion or raise is inevitable. You may have to carry more responsibilities.
- AQUARIUS** Jan. 20-Feb. 18 Be impulsive. Don't think too hard on any decision; use your intuitions and you'll come out on top.
- PISCES** Feb. 19-Mar. 20 Creative abilities can bring in that needed extras income. What is now a hobby could become big business.



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