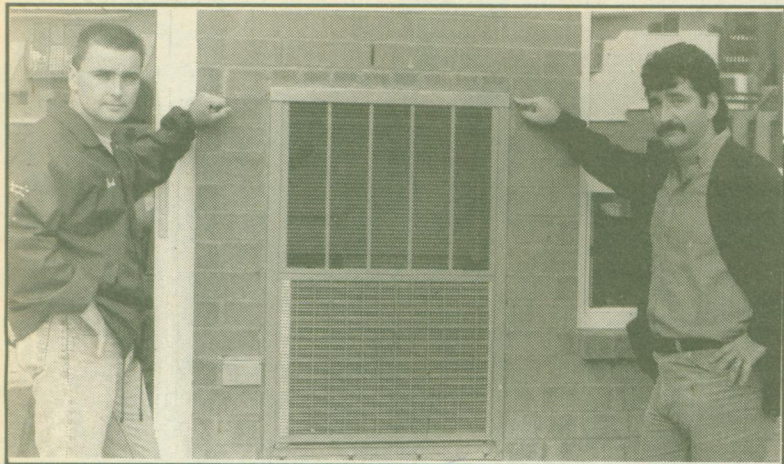


# Kingsmill repairs will be done, Law official says



**Kingsmill Development residents, Scott Walker (left) and Michael Foley, flank a furnace unit at the back of Walker's townhouse condominium. Mortar and brick around the vent is cracked and the interior of the unit remains unscreened.**

## Homeowners angry

**Continued from page 1**  
action group to grow. "Forming the group was necessary in order to be taken seriously," he said, adding that he's planning to meet with Mayor Russ Miller and could be taking his concerns to town council, if necessary.

On any given moving day, it's not uncommon to see people walking around with hitches and armoires trying to figure out how to get them inside their townhouse, Foley remarked.

Some units don't have balconies to help with the larger pieces of furniture. The owner of one end unit has his furniture piled high on the main floor.

"He's got a large bed but he has been sleeping on an air mattress for three weeks," Foley said.

Foley has a litany of complaints about his unit. Noticeable touch-up paint can be seen on the walls, as can holes that have been left uncovered. Carpeting on the stairs, instead of being folded under and secured at the corners has simply been cut off with an exacto knife. Halfway up the staircase, an uneven wall is evident. Upstairs, sitting in a cupboard, is the hot water heater — "I sure hope it never leaks," said Foley.

The unit's back yard, which is part of a common courtyard shared with other tenants, is expected to be grassed or levelled before the

end of the year, but right now it's uneven ground which has become a dump site for workmen in the area. An empty caulking gun, some discarded telephone wire and a broken brick lie on the ground near his unit.

"It's like Dodge City when it's dry or a cajun bayou when it's rainy," Foley observed.

Scott Walker, Foley's next door neighbor, said he and his wife have compiled a list of defects in their unit. "It's three pages long," he said.

Nails have popped, doors are hanging on an angle, windows are crooked, a plank can easily be detected under the drywall in the baby's room, there are holes around the sink in the bathroom, and, under the carpet in the master bedroom, there's a plum-sized hole in the floor.

The doorbell at the front door isn't at eye level like most doorbells; it's at waist level.

Foley said many of the homeowners have been frustrated from the beginning in their dealings with Law Development. Units weren't ready when promised, with the result that as many as 20 to 30 families were guests at the Georgetown Motor Inn for up to three weeks this summer while they waited to move into their townhouses.

"We felt like migrant gypsies," said Foley.

**By Dianne Cornish**

The executive vice-president of the Law Development Group said homeowners' complaints coming out of the Kingsmill development on Maple Avenue in Georgetown are the result of a communications problem.

"It's basically a matter of communicating," Eddy Li said during a telephone interview Thursday. Noting that many of the occupants in the development are first-time home buyers, "not familiar with the process" of repair work and its time frame under the Ontario New Home Warranty Program (ONHWP), Li said homeowners' complaints will be addressed.

Under the ONHWP, the builder has 12 months to correct defects in workmanship to homes or townhouse condominiums.

Li said the builder is already doing repairs in the units and other work will be staggered so that more repairs will be done in six months' time and additional work, by the end of the one-year period.

It's not unusual for homeowners, particularly first-time home buyers, to "feel lost" if they're not familiar with the process involving building repairs, he said, adding that Law Development is currently drafting a letter that will be sent to residents in both phases of the development to explain how the process works and the time frames involved.

While residents in Phase 2 of the development might feel that they don't have a group to represent their interests, Li said a condominium corporation will be formed for the home buyers after the final closing occurs.

A resident of the complex said the final closing for units in the second phase is scheduled for September 9. Residents of Phase 1 already have a corporation to represent homeowners.

Li also said that Law has directed Joe Hewitt, a former Halton Hills councillor who now works as a consultant with the development company, to talk with the residents of the subdivision and "find out what their concerns are." But, "the best

thing for home buyers in the development to do is call us," he added.

"A lot of people go through that when they're down-sizing," he said the problems associated with moving. "(The problems) have more to do with the dwellings purchased (for previous dwellings) than with the size of the (Kingsmill) units."

Now that his family has grown and moved away from home, Li said he plans to downsize and move into a townhouse and he knows that some of his furniture will be too large to be accommodated in a smaller dwelling.

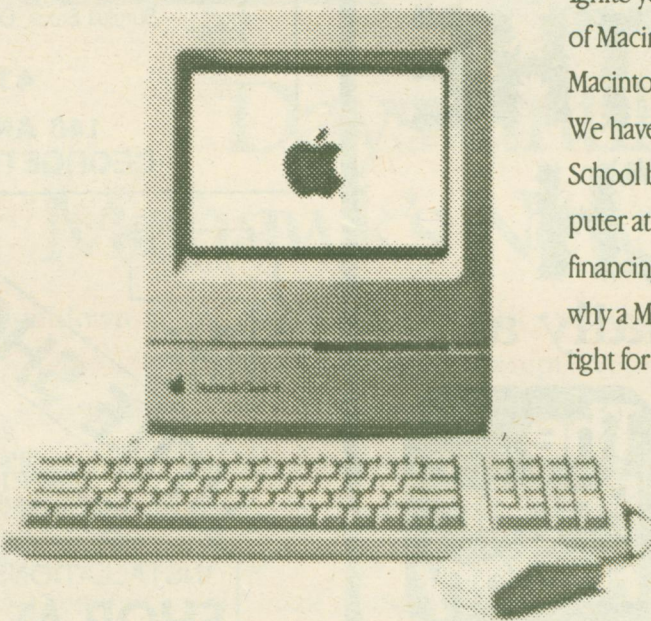
Asked if the concerns of home buyers about workmanship in the units will be addressed, the Law official replied, "That's right."



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## You Were Asking:

With Don Hearn\*

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### How to choose a realtor

**Q** My fiancé and I have decided to purchase our first home. Yet we're finding it extremely difficult to choose a realtor. How do we know if we're choosing the "right" realtor for us? Where should we start?

**A** Many prospective buyers choose their realtors on the basis of a referral from a friend or relative who has successfully worked with a particular agent. In other cases, you might have a friend who happens to be a real estate agent who you could choose to work with. If neither of the above circumstances is true for you, you might want to consider the following alternatives.

Call the office of the most active realtors in your area, they have access to information on almost every property that might suit you.

Visit Open Houses in neighbourhoods where you might like to live. "Interview" the agent holding the Open House. After a day of visiting different Open Houses, you should be able to select one agent who you would feel most comfortable working with.

Possibly you have heard of a real estate

agent who has represented a number of homes in the neighbourhood where you are interested in moving. Contact the company where that particular salesperson is affiliated and make an appointment to talk to him/her.

Another source is to call on ads or signs of homes that interest you. Talk honestly and openly with the salesperson, honest communication regarding personal finances is the only way an agent can accurately help you choose a home.

You may have seen a particular agent's name in the paper affiliating him/her with an organization or an event that interests you. Contact them and explain your objective.

Finally, in selecting a real estate agent, you are asking that person to work for you without pay until you purchase a home from a seller who pays the agent. Before you begin to look at properties, the professional agent will spend time determining your needs and wants. You will be educating him/her as to your objectives for home ownership. Buying a home is an emotional as well as a monetary investment and you want to choose someone who understands your needs and lifestyle.

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