



G'DAY MATE! Rodney Thomson poses with a native Aussie!

Rockwood Leo visits 'down under'

BY FRANCES NIBLOCK
The Rockwood Miller
 "Two thumbs up!" That's Rockwood Leo Rodney Thomson's assessment of his summer trip to Australia as a Lion's Youth Exchange student. Thomson, 21, spent six weeks "down under", one of 48 Canadian Leos (junior Lions) on exchange programs. When he wasn't sight-seeing with his Australian host families, Thomson, a charter member of the Rockwood Leos, saw first-hand how Lions operate in Australia. Thomson was impressed. "The Clubs aren't split with men in one and women in the other, and

I found that they work better getting both perspectives on a project or idea," Thomson said in a recent interview. "I think all the Clubs in the world should be co-ed because sometimes it is pretty hard for both clubs to survive. In a way it's hard on the community to have to support both groups," Thomson explained. Travelling with his host families Thomson saw the sights and took part in a mock air-sea rescue. "We also saw Sea World, Dream World, Movie World and Under Water World. We went sand tobogganing and camping and then headed to Queensland."

Thomson attended four Lions meetings while in Australia and got to know some of the other exchange students. Thomson is now at Seneca College, training as a Fire Protection Engineering Technologist. He hopes to become involved with Lions again. "The Rockwood Leos have folded and now that I'm at school I don't have the time to be involved, but I will in the future. "I owe thanks to the Rockwood Leos and Lionesses for making this trip possible," Thomson said. For Rockwood Lions President Daryl Nichol, the Youth Exchange Program is a good way to see a different part of the world.

"All the young Lions have to do is get to their chosen country," Nichol explained in a recent interview. "A Lions Club host family will take them in and treat them like one of their own." In Thomson's case, he saved the \$4,000 airfare himself and received \$500 from the Rockwood Lioness Club and \$250 from the Rockwood Lions to spend on his trip. "The exchange program educates the Leos about different cultures and shows them how to get along with one another," Nichol said. "Rockwood has had exchange students from Australia, Japan, Germany — all over the world. Each of these students has brought their culture to us and helped us learn more about the world."

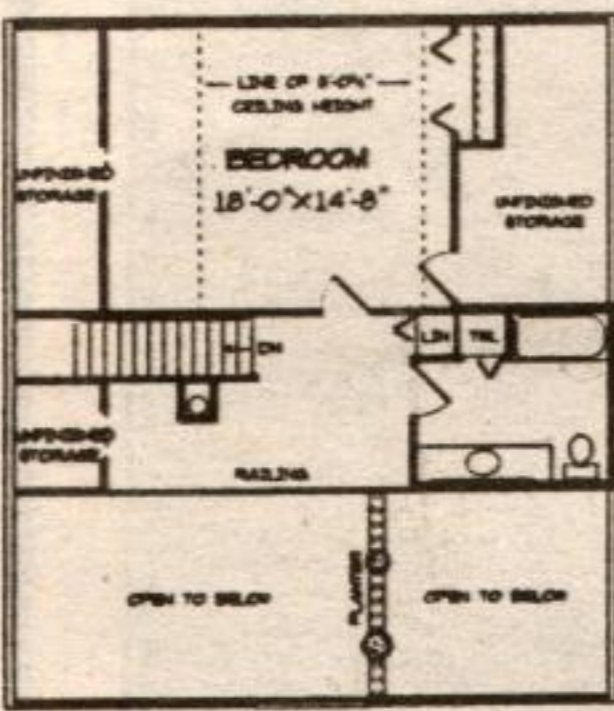
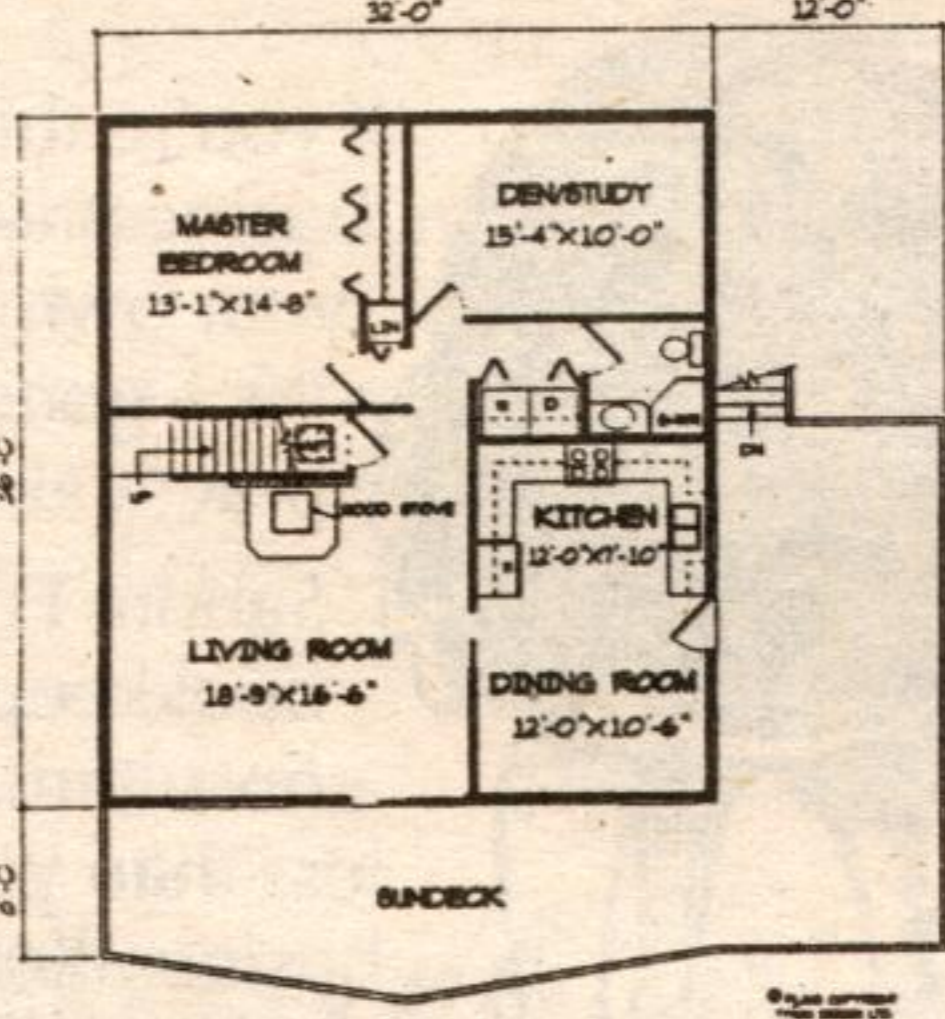
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Prepare your gardens for winter

The Eden Mills Garden Club welcomed Peter Olsen of the Royal City Nursery as guest speaker at their September meeting. Olsen's subject was "Bulbs for Fall Planting" and he ended his informative and interesting talk with an active Question and Answer session. "Preparing for Winter," (house plants, mulching and general fall clean-up) will be on the agenda for the next meeting next Thursday (Oct. 27) at 7:30 pm at the Eden Mills Community Hall. Everyone is welcome at the meeting. For more information call Gill at 856-4003.

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