

# The Marian Courtyard

BY DONNA DANIELLI  
THE COMPASS

Getting older isn't always a lot of fun. Having to choose between the ever increasing difficulty of maintaining a home or choosing to move away from family and friends makes aging that much more difficult.

Campbellville's Martha Gleeson has been a part of a seven-year process to give seniors a place in their own community to live as they grow older. Gleeson is the Chair of the volunteer Board of Directors of the Marian Courtyard, a new seniors' facility in Milton.

"I saw a need for affordable

seniors' housing when I was looking for a place for my mother in London," Gleeson explains. What followed was a seven year struggle to build a facility that seniors could call their own; a place they could move to when it became too difficult to maintain their own homes, while still offering them the ability to remain close to the network of friends and families they have built up over a lifetime.

The Marian Courtyard is a four-story building with 50 self-contained residences. A total of six unique floor plans are featured and include one bedroom, one bedroom with den, and two

bedroom plans. Unit sizes range from 680 to 1,140 square feet and selected units allow for optional solariums and fireplaces, or balconies and patios. A heated underground parking garage provides security and convenience.

The Marian Courtyard is about more than just having four surrounding walls and a roof. This non-denominational facility offers a craft room, workshop, lounge, tuck shop, whirlpool, exercise room, a guest room, gardens and has future plans to make space available for a hair-stylist as well as for visits from local podiatrists, financial plan-

ners, hearing aid clinicians, nurses, and more. As well, leisure and social activities will be planned by volunteers for the benefits of the residents. One member of the Residents' Association also sits on the Board of Directors, keeping the Board in touch with the evolving needs of the residents.

The Marian Courtyard opened for occupancy in July 2000. Of the 50 available units, 30 have already been purchased. Units are purchased as Right to Occupy Life Leases. Initial purchasers are required to pay upon occupancy but may resell their units at any time at an appraised

market value. They receive all proceeds from the sale with the exception of a 5 per cent administration fee, which goes to the Marian Courtyard Seniors' Residence (Milton) Corporation. All sales are processed through the Corporation to ensure that new purchasers are informed of the lifestyle, opportunities, services and responsibilities that accompany new ownership.

"It's all about encouraging community life and lifestyle," Gleeson explains. "People move in so they can remain close to their kids and still have an independent lifestyle."

Having a Residents' Association that plans outings and activities for anyone who wants to take part helps build a sense of community. The Marian Courtyard is conveniently located within walking distance to a number of churches, grocery stores, banks, drug stores and the GO bus stop, as accessibility is an important issue.

It's been a long haul from conception to occupation for volunteers like Martha Gleeson, Don Corker, Joe Barbetti, Father Earl Talbot and Sister Audrey Burns.

"Seeing the people in here now and how happy they are, gives you a lot of satisfaction. This is turning into real community. When you see something like that, it gives you the energy to keep going."

Individuals interested in knowing more about The Marian Courtyard in Milton is encouraged to give Martha Gleeson a call at 905-854-2714.

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