

Say You Saw It In . . . *The Independent & Free Press* Real Estate Digest

Number 1 tip to protect yourself from scams— get references

The man at the door says he'll repair your sagging verandah for only \$350.

The offer over the telephone sounds great...only \$25 for a full furnace and heating system inspection.

You need a mover fast; you call the first one advertised in telephone directory and are offered immediate service at a great price.

All three of the services offered may be well-performed by respected business, "but there is always the chance they might be scam artists, so we advise consumers always to compare prices and check references," said Marilyn Gurevsky, a manager with the Ministry of Consumer and Commercial Relations.

To help consumers keep pace with today's marketplace, the ministry offers some advice.

Movers

The moving business has traditionally attracted some scam artists,

who take advantage of people's vulnerability when shipping their most prized possessions.

In a recent case pursued by the ministry, a company had damaged, destroyed or disappeared with clients' property and attempted to intimidate them into paying outrageous fees for its return. As part of the overall sentence, the company principal was given a jail term under the Business Practices Act.

Gurevsky recommends doing a lot of homework before choosing a moving company. "Seek advice from other people, including neighbors, family members or coworkers," she said. She advised asking for a specific personal reference if possible, and making sure the company hasn't changed hands since the person who gave the reference dealt with them.

Check whether consumer help organizations—the ministry's General Inquiry Unit (416) 326-8555

or 1-800-268-1142 and your local Better Business Bureau— have complaints against the firm. Also, ask the Chamber of Commerce.

When you've narrowed the field to a few companies, call for estimates. A household mover should always come to your home to inspect the articles to be moved before provide a quote. The quote must be in writing and should set out any special needs, who is to perform the packing and what the insurance will include.

A common ruse of the scam artist is to intentionally underquote a moving job, then demand additional payment before returning the client's possessions. The best course of action is to ask for quotes from several different firms— if one is substantially lower than the others you should wonder why.

Home renovations

The annals of home renovation horror stories include tales of

crooked walls and leaky roofs that could set your tiles to weeping. At best, problems may stem from a lack of professional experience. At worst, a scam artist, who is only out for a quick profit and has no intention of doing a good job, may be involved.

A case in point is that of a Toronto renovation company. Over a two-month period a 90-year-old woman had paid more than \$50,000 for unnecessary or overcharged work to waterproof part of her home and fix a leaking basement.

For more information on renovations or for listings of contractors who are members of the Renovators Council, part of the Greater Toronto Home Builders Association, call (416) 391-3445. Membership includes adhering to the Builders Association Code of Ethics.

Home heating inspectors

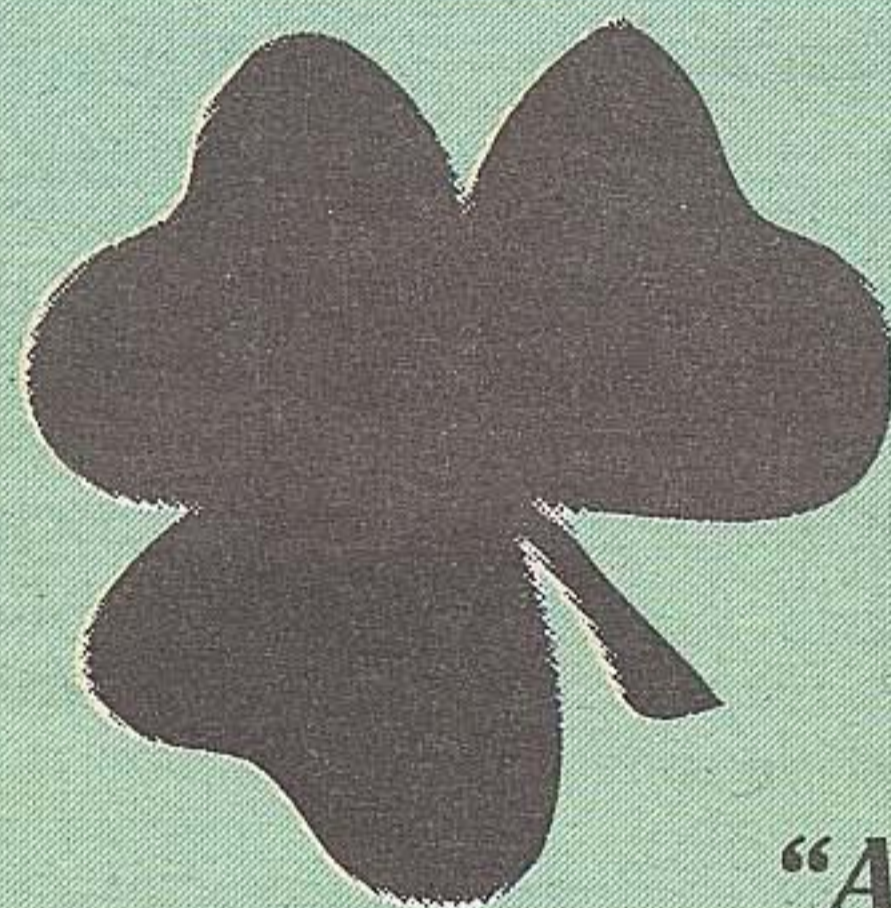
Gurevsky says a defective or poorly adjusted heating system can

cause death by carbon monoxide poisoning or fire. Consumers are advised to have their furnaces checked and cleaned every year by a registered heating contractor.

Registered heating contractors will inspect the entire heating system and tell the householder about any problems. If any unqualified person does the work the only result will be to give a consumer a false sense of security.

"Most people deal with the same heating contractor for years. If you need a heating contractor, ask neighbors for references and if you're not familiar with someone you're thinking of hiring, call to check whether or not the contractor is licensed," she suggested.

The agency to call is the Technical Standards and Safety Authority (TSSA) at (416) 325-2000. The ministry requires that all home heating contractors be licensed with TSSA.



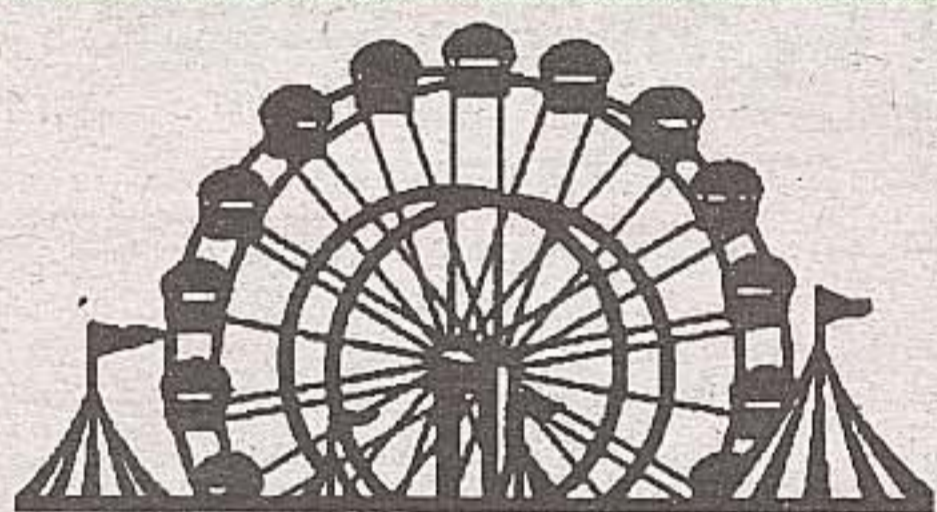
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Enjoy the Erin Fall Fair this Thanksgiving Weekend!

THE OAK BY RYDON HOMES



2210 sq. ft. of quality & style, set on almost 1/2 acre lot, located on edge of Erin Village, next to Credit River with trail. Close to shopping and schools. Vinyl windows, 9 ft. ceilings \$279,900. Call John Cook** or Cec Chambers**.

FEATURE HOME



INCOME WILL PAY MORTGAGE
Legal Triplex, completely renovated with over \$54,000 spent. Two one bedroom apts. and one two bedroom apt. All new appliances, new furnace, new plumbing and wiring. Must be seen. Call Bonnie* for more details. Asking \$189,000.00 McE-540

LARGE 2 STOREY VICTORIAN



with apartment and 2.4 acres of Industrial land. Stone workshop. Asking \$229,500. Call John Cook**.
McE-506

\$329,900



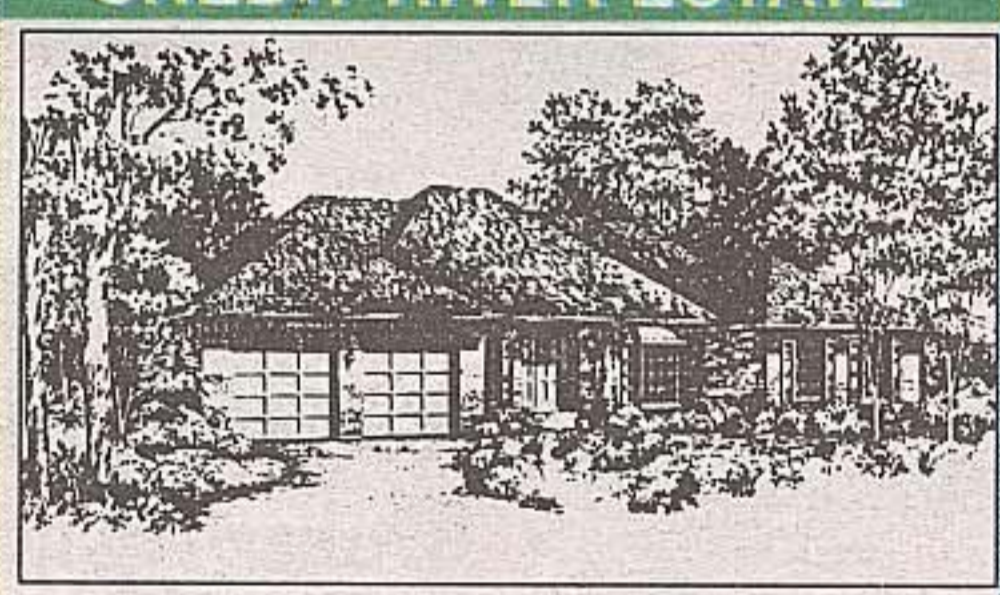
Beautiful country home in desirable area close to all Town amenities. 4+ bedroom home with lots of features including ceramics, hardwood floors and an oversized garage for Dad, all on a private wooded country property. Call Ed Bessey*.
McE-524

ERIN HEIGHTS



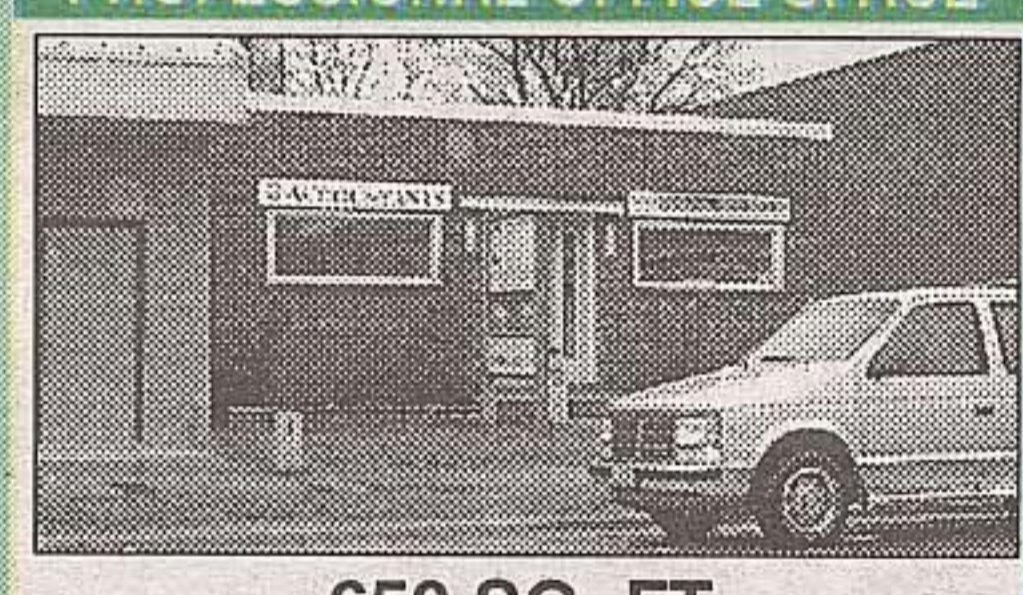
3 bedroom bungalow, new roof, windows & kitchen. Quick closing. 2 car garage, new door. Lot 100'x150'. Priced at \$182,900. Call John T. Cook**.
McE-535

CREDIT RIVER ESTATE



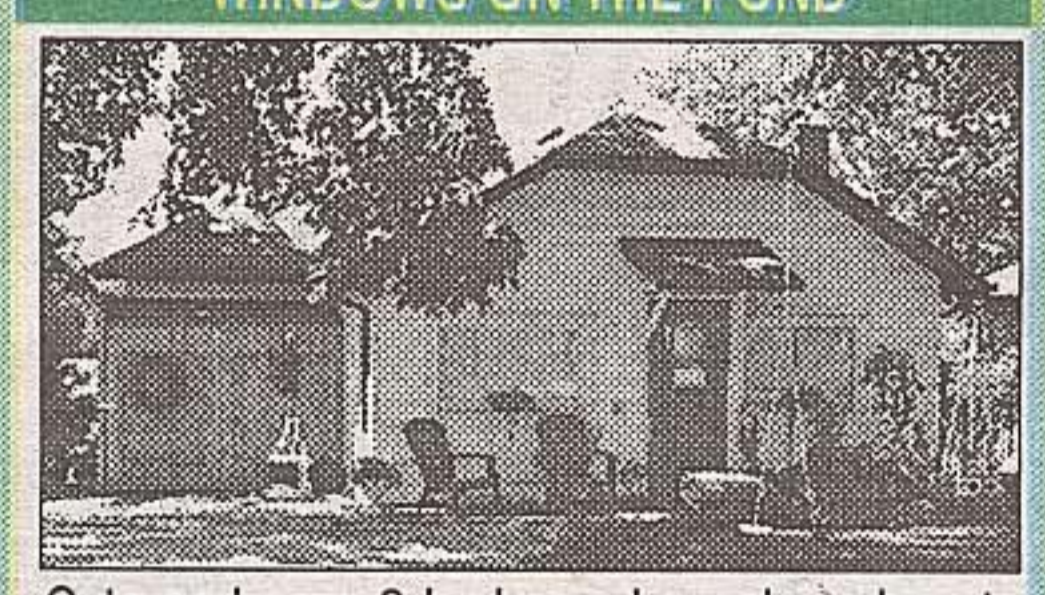
OXFORD MODEL
2200 sq. ft. bungalow, 3 bdrm, all brick, large eat-in kitchen, family room with FP, 3 bathrooms. Lot 83' x 350'. Only \$309,900. Call John Cook** or Cecil Chambers**.

PROFESSIONAL OFFICE SPACE



650 SQ. FT.
Presently Real Estate and Accountant. 4 rooms, washroom, gas heat, new carpet and paint. Great investment, leave tenants or move in your own profession. Town of Erin in great location. Asking \$119,500. Call Cecil Chambers* for details. McE-509

WINDOWS ON THE POND



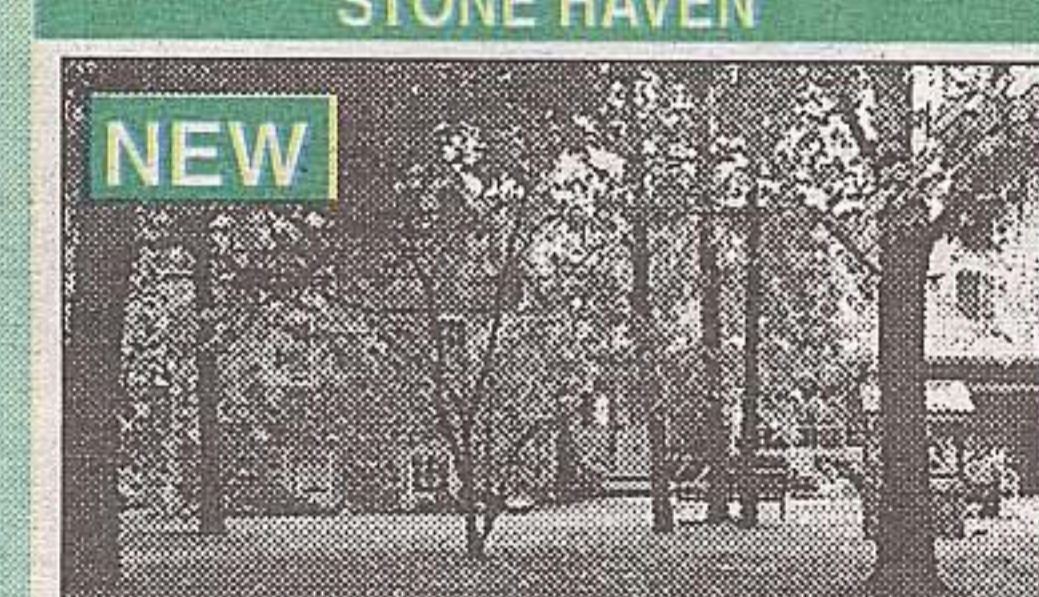
Cute and cozy 2 bedroom bungalow close to downtown Erin. Great starter home with gas fireplace, finished family room with walkout to private yard overlooking pond. Quiet street. Asking \$144,000. Call Bonnie* soon.
McE-529

CREDIT RIVER ESTATE



ESSEX MODEL
2845 sq. ft. 4 bdrm master BR walk-in closet, 5 pc. ensuite, main floor den, FP in living room and family room. Covered deck. In area of fine homes. Call John** or Cec**.

STONE HAVEN



NEW
Yes a cobblestone executive home on 1 acre south of Georgetown (5 S.R.). Everything you could want and more. Plus stunning in-law suite. Priced at \$369,900. Call John T. Cook** for more details.
McE-536

VACANT LAND

2.2 ACRES INDUSTRIAL LAND. Ready to build. \$79,900. Call John T. Cook**.
McE-520

2.2 ACRES OF INDUSTRIAL LAND on paved road. Gas hydro. Asking \$79,900.
McE-505

6.5 ACRES of industrial M2 zoning. Ready to build outside storage. \$129,900. Call John T. Cook**.
McE-536

INDUSTRIAL LOTS -1.2 ac. ready to build in Town of Erin. Vendor will hold mortgage \$49,900. Call John** T. Cook.
McE-541

TOWN OF ERIN - 5.85 ac lot close to Town on paved road. Level and for easy building. Build your dream home or rezone for hwy. commercial. Asking \$119,000. Call Bonnie* for details.
McE-510

154 ACRES next to the Town of Erin with Credit River flowing through. Great site for Golf Course, future development or just a beautiful country estate. \$499,900. Call John** T. Cook. McE-519

HWY. COMMERCIAL LOT - 1.5 ac. - 3 ac. \$69,500 - \$139,900. Vendor will take back mortgage. Call John T. Cook** for details.
McE-468

1.3 ACRE building lot, suitable for walkout basement, pine trees at rear. Ready to build. Asking \$99,900. Call John** T. Cook.
McE-538

44 ACRES - Lots of bush and pond site with potential for a very private home, including stream and lots of wild life. Call Ed Bessey* for more details. \$139,900.
McE-527

15 ACRES OF BUSH and quiet meadow at front of 5 acres. Great home site, stream and more. Call John* or Cecil*. \$125,000.
McE-504



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Ed Bessey*
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Cec Chambers**
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John Cook**
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Ken Laing*
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