



# Champion COMMUNITY Page

## Halton Recovery House celebrates milestone

By IRENE GENTLE

The Champion

August 26 was a double celebration for Rick Moir, but the glass he hoisted was filled with just coffee, juice or water.

That day marked the 25th anniversary of Halton Recovery House (HRH), a residence for men recovering from drug and alcohol abuse.

But it also highlighted a personal triumph for Mr. Moir, a HRH intake worker who went through the 90-day program some five years ago and has been clean and sober since.

For those who have managed to kick an addiction, every sober day is a celebration.

And there's a lot more of those men since HRH began helping males aged 25 to 60 from across the province gain control again.

It does so by offering them a place to stay with rules, plenty of structure and loads of counselling and peer support.

The non-profit house located on Trafalgar Road north of Hwy. 401 has eight staff members and is funded largely through the United Way.

Individuals can refer themselves to the program, or referrals can be made through community agencies, legal professionals, doctors or industry.

Once a resident is accepted, all he needs to bring along is a desire for a different life.

"Really all we're looking for is a willingness to change," Mr. Moir. "We'll work with that."

For many residents, HRH represents a final shot at patching up lives worn painfully thin by a reliance on drugs, alcohol or both.

"We deal with a lot of men who've gone through other treatment centres," said Mr. Moir. "We're always challenging them to keep doing the work necessary for change."

Those who don't are asked politely to leave. Others exit the 21-bed residence on their own steam, unable to deal with a hurt so strong it made substance use seem enticing in the first place.

"By the time they get here, they've closed off to family and friends. They get selfish, thinking only of themselves," said Mr. Moir. The program steadily erodes that self-absorption, teaching residents how to open up, share, and ultimately love.

In the house, bonds are developed. The men begin speaking of things they'd kept locked up in some dark place before.

"It's painful. It's an emotional pain," said Mr. Moir. "For so long they haven't talked about it." If there's nowhere safe for the men to go after graduating, HRH staff will find a bed for them in the community.

But for the most part, residents return to their regular lives. And despite the bolstering of ongoing support meetings for both former residents and their families, that can be tough.

"It's really scary to leave. A lot have been disconnected from people for so long and then they start to build a brotherhood here," said Mr. Moir.

And at some point, the guilt kicks in.

Beating back addiction means taking an unflinching look at the carnage etched in the lives of the addict and those around him.

That can make the strongest men want to run for cover, and Mr. Moir was no exception.

"There was a lot of shame and guilt and remorse," said Mr. Moir. "It was very difficult to be with my family because I felt

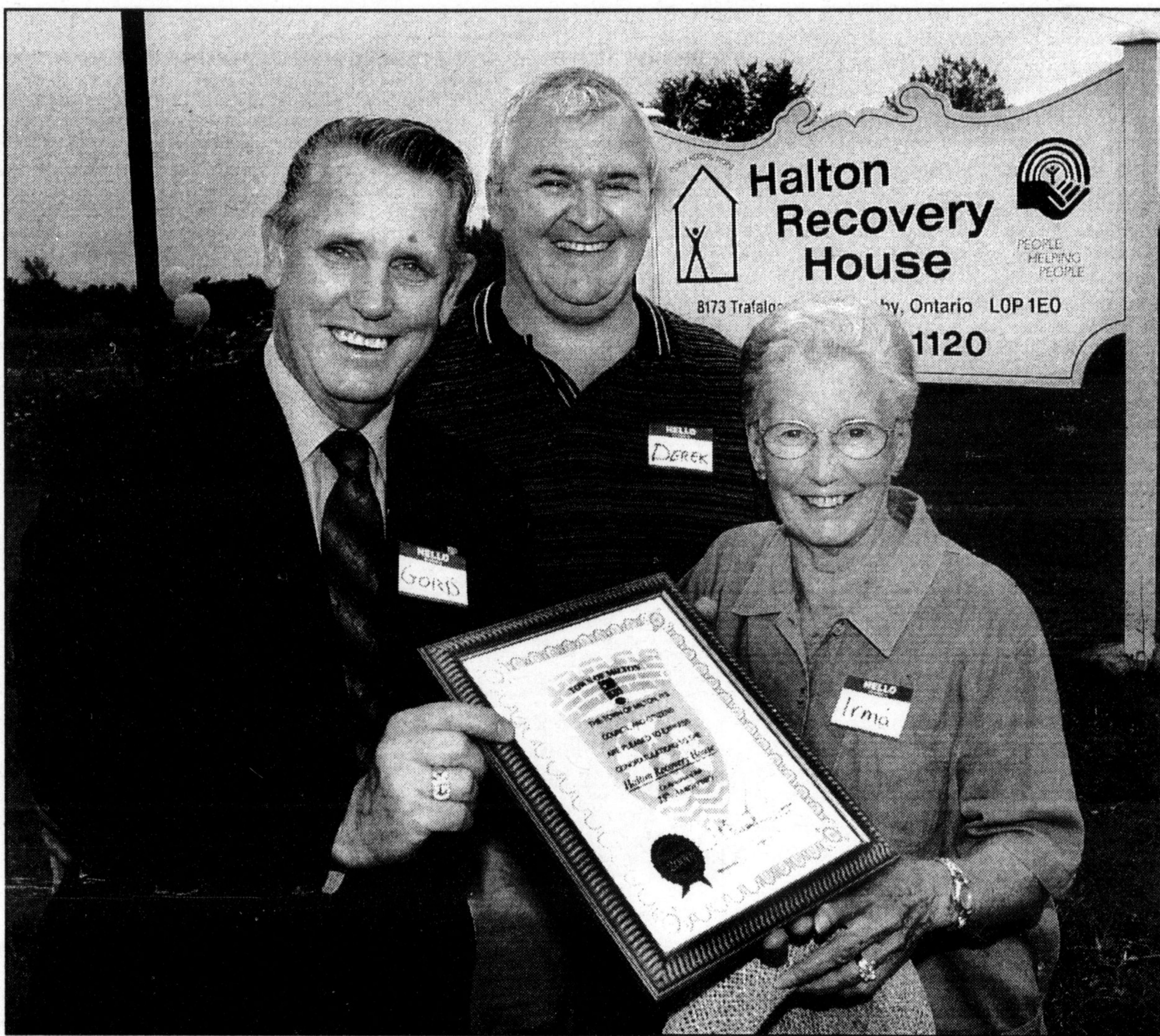


Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

Mayor Gord Krantz (left) attended 25th anniversary celebrations of Halton Recovery House (HRH) recently. While there, he presented HRH director Derek Callaghan (centre) and board of directors president Irma Coulson with a congratulatory plaque.

terrible for all the things I had done."

Mr. Moir began drinking at age 14. He kept at it because he craved being in the peaceful place it brought him to.

When alcohol stopped taking him there, he moved on to crack. And when that no longer worked, he stepped it up to heroin.

"When it wasn't taking me there anymore," said Mr. Moir, "I turned to here."

At HRH, he learned to scale the wall addiction had erected between himself and his family.

"It was a difficult transition, but as time went on I began to get to know them a little bit," said Mr. Moir. "They began to get to know me. I started feeling comfortable around my family."

Now 37, Mr. Moir has been clean for five years. After graduat-

ing from HRH, he began volunteering at the house.

In time, he was hired as a staff member.

And through it all, he has stayed clean.

"I know I want to live this way of life, so I've surrendered," he said. "At the beginning I was fighting it, because this is all I knew. But then it was like a kind of freedom."

Going drug and alcohol free means plugging the holes substance use once filled.

"I was taught to pray here. I was taught to share every day with alcoholics and spend time, quality time, with my family," said Mr. Moir. "When I'm on that track, it's very easy to stay sober."

For more information, or to make donations to HRH, call 878-1120. Donations are tax deductible.

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### COGECO 14 Programming Schedule – September 12th, 2000 - September 18th, 2000

#### Tuesday, September 12th

10am, 11am, Noon	Plugged In! Encore
5:30, 6:30, 7:30pm	Plugged In!
6:00pm	Hands up Puppeteers
7:00pm	War Amps: Spot The Danger
8:00pm	Halton Hills Council and Municipal Awards

#### Wednesday, September 13th

10am, 11am, Noon	Plugged In! Encore
5:30, 6:30, 7:30pm	Plugged In!
6:00pm	Cable in the Classroom
7:00pm	Down To Earth
8:00pm	Georgetown Ambassador Competition

#### Thursday, September 14th

10am, 11am, Noon	Plugged In! Encore
5:30, 6:30, 7:30pm	Plugged In!
6:00pm	Watercolour Workshop
7:00pm	Money Week
8:00pm	Cogeco Sports: Flamboro Speedway

#### Monday, September 11th

10am, 11am, Noon	Plugged In! Encore
5:30, 6:30, 7:30pm	Plugged In!
6:00pm	Living on the Edge
7:00pm	The Issue Is...
8:00pm	Miss Acton Pageant