



For sale, home on the water. More than a few casual passersby have paused for a double take at Steve Aitken's largest project, a floating home. The Milton contractor hopes that similar houseboats will be the key to lakefront living at a fraction of the cost for a number of prospective clients.

## Builder sees houseboat as a housing alternative

By Terry Ruggles  
They've become popular along the western seaboard, and chances are they may soon dot our Great Lake harbours.

For those wishing to get away from the hustle of urban living and for the many who cannot afford the high cost of lakefront property—houseboats may become the answer.

At Bronte Harbour, Steve Aitken, a 28-year-old, Milton general contractor, is in the final stages of completing his first houseboat. It's a venture which he hopes may blossom into a lucrative enterprise.

Until he finds a buyer, Mr. Aitken intends on using the houseboat as his "weekend summer retreat."

Owning a houseboat "is an idea that will probably catch on very quickly," he says. "It's surprising it hasn't been done sooner in this area."

The cost of a lakefront cottage in the Muskokas can run as high as \$100,000 says Mr. Aitken, a sum quite out of reach for most couples.

Mr. Aitken plans on selling his houseboat for \$32,000, he believes a price he hopes will be attractive to many apartment dwellers seeking a lakeside summer place.

The living area of the houseboat is 450 sq. ft. divided into a washroom, dining area, and a bedroom loft.

The ceiling is made of pine with dual skylights and a half circle window looking out from the loft which affords a panoramic view of the lake.

From the inside it will look much like a contemporary, open concept apartment, says Mr. Aitken, that can be fitted with all the amenities found in an average home.

"You can have a washer and dryer put in, and even a dishwasher if you want."

"The only difference with this house is that it floats," he said. The structure of the building has been completely insulated so that Mr. Aitken estimates winter fuel costs at only \$39 using electric heating.

To facilitate extra heat, and for an added touch of class, a woodstove will sit in the corner of the front living area. The houseboat is not made for touring about rivers and lakes but can be easily transported assures Aitken "by a boat the size of a Roundabout."

It can be placed on land or moored in a harbor. "A house is not really that heavy."

"This (the houseboat) only weighs about 10 tons," he said. To prevent the houseboat from freezing in the lake during the winter Aitken proposes to pump air bubbles around the structure or to heat the hull with electric coils.

Mr. Aitken, a boating enthusiast for many years designed the hull, the building itself was designed by Sue Pink. Last fall he sold his 37-

foot trawler the Isle of Skye which appeared in a five-page spread in the February issue of Canadian Yachting.

"I've been thinking about building a houseboat for the last three years. With the support from friends and the people at Metro Marine (at Bronte Harbour) it's been the realization of a dream come true," he says.

Construction on the houseboat began about three weeks ago, and delivery of a complete houseboat can be made in four weeks, says Mr.

Increased counselling of such students is the other ploy. Burlington "has the greatest identified need," according to the report. Headquarters for the project would be Nelson High School.

In addition to helping such students improve their sense of worth; the project would examine ways of improving their fitness, social skills and generally get them out doing things.

The committee's proposal would limit enrolment at 18 in each course. To fund the

## Councillors pass town budget

The 1981 Milton levy was passed last week, and with major hikes in the Board of Education and Halton Region budgets, it carries an 11.31 per cent tax increase for rural Milton

and 13.47 per cent hike for the urban area. In terms of dollars it means the "average" home assessed at \$5,000 will have a \$74.80 hike in the rural area and \$94.25 in town.

## Pilot project for drop out students

One Burlington high school student out of 30 displays disturbing behavior.

That's why Halton's Board of Education west area—Burlington—may get a project this fall that's geared to increase these students' self confidence and job finding abilities, among other goals.

Most of the students who would get this special attention are boys under 16 years of age who are not doing well academically. Some of them face police charges. There are slightly fewer girls in the same group.

The main solution proposed in the board's early adolescent committee's first interim report is to provide alternate education to these students.

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Milton Director of Finance and Treasurer Don Lougheed said one of the major reasons for a tax increase is the inclusion of the hikes from the board of education and the region which set record-breaking budgets earlier in April.

Milton Council also must take part in a number of works programs this year and that has also caused the 1981 fire to increase.

The fire department is to build, equip and man a new substation on Derry Rd. The fire department will add a full-time dispatch service and there will be an after-hours number.

"This will be a giant step forward for the Town of Milton," Mr.

Lougheed said. The Parks and Recreation Department will put new washrooms in Drumquin Park during 1981. At the same time the town will purchase a "major new park property... on the corner of Thompson Rd. and Main St. and new master plans for recreational needs will be complete in order for long range planning to be developed."

Mr. Lougheed noted new equipment for the department will cost \$27,000.

Council also will help fund the updating of computer services in the Finance Department and will make the last payment on the computer system for the library.

as it applies to persons in possession of land within the Town of Halton Hills.

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Goatsbeard, Thistles, Chicory, Poison Ivy, Ragweed, Wild Carrot, and Milkweed are among the weeds considered noxious, and must be destroyed wherever found. Complaints regarding Dandelion and Goldenrod will not be accepted as these are not considered noxious under the terms of the Weed Control Act. Anonymous complaints will not be accepted.

KEITH LESLIE, Weed Inspector  
Town of Halton Hills 877-4841  
877-8246

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**Dog-gone, he's caught!**

Maplehurst inmate Maurice Kurys probably doesn't feel a dog is always man's best friend. That is because police dog "Max" was responsible for sniffing out Kurys, when the 18-year-old made his escape from Maplehurst grounds Thursday morning.

Kurys, who was serving an 18-month sentence for robbery, bolted from a work gang at approximately 10.30, running across Highway 401 to the fields beyond.

Halton Regional Police banded together with Milton OPP, Maplehurst guards and an OPP aircraft to recapture the youth.

But it wasn't until the arrival of "Max"—a police dog with Peel Regional Police—that Kurys was discovered hiding in nearby brush.

The dog apparently picked up the scent immediately and within a short time dog handler Constable Wayne Penner made the arrest.

Kurys has been charged with escaping lawful custody and is due to appear in court this week.

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