

Keep your home renovation eco-friendly

While more and more Canadians are making the switch to eco-friendly cleaning products, Sharon Grech, Benjamin Moore Colour & Design Expert, suggests that an environmentally savvy approach can be taken for all aspects of home improvement. Here, she highlights some simple yet effective ways to make sure your home renovations have a low eco-footprint.

Start from the walls in: Painting your walls is the fastest way to completely alter the look and feel of a space. "Now there's no need to compromise when it comes to environmentally-friendly paint and performance," Grech points out. She suggests looking for a paint with low VOCs and emissions, such as Natura Waterborne Paint (by Benjamin Moore). It contains zero VOCs and no emissions, while re-

maining virtually odourless, making it a safer option for your family and the environment.

Refresh instead of replace: New furniture can eat-up a large portion of a renovation budget. Instead of replacing old items, Grech suggests repainting them with Benjamin Moore Advance. "Fresh colours and hardware can bring a dated item into the 21st century, and save it from the landfill," she says. "You can take the same approach with thrift or vintage store finds." You'll soon be enjoying a revitalized room at a lower cost, both financially and environmentally.

Choose your materials carefully: Even in small projects, material selection has a big impact. Explore alternative flooring options such as cork or bamboo, which can be manufactured in a much more sustainable fashion

than hardwood. Formaldehyde used to be a common additive to building materials and household products, despite its toxic nature. Today, formaldehyde-free and VOC-free cabinets and other products are available in a wide variety of styles – meaning you don't have to sacrifice style to ensure your home stays free of unnecessary toxins.

More information is available at www.benjaminmoore.ca.

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Walls and Ceiling: Timothy Straw 2149-40, ben, Eggshell Rafters: Guilford Green HC-116, ben, Semi-Gloss Door: High Park CC-620, ben Exterior, Low Lustre Plant Shelf: Split Pea 2146-30, ben, Semi-Gloss

Painting the Perfect Trim

Trim can completely transform the look of any room - large or small, classic or modern. Even so, selecting the colour and finish for the trim is often an afterthought in the design process. Sharon Grech, Benjamin Moore Colour & Design Expert shares her tips and advice for getting it just right.

A little colour goes a long way: It may be hard to believe now, but there was a time when it was common to paint trim darker than the wall colour - even black - in hopes of hiding dust and scuff marks. Fortunately, recent improvements in the adhesion and durability of interior paints, such as the Advance Waterborne Interior Alkyd Paint by Benjamin Moore, mean that any colour on the spectrum can be used without these concerns. However, that doesn't always mean that white should be your go-to colour. "White can sometimes provide too bold a contrast with your wall," says Grech. "It can strip the nuance and complexity of your carefully chosen shade. Save white for areas and spaces that have features you want to highlight, such as crown moulding."

To break free from white, Grech suggests trying a monochromatic approach. This will complement your wall colour and make the room feel larger. Moving up and down the paint chip strip, you can go lighter or darker on the same sample strip, or move across to find a 'greyed-out' version of your selected shade. Sharing pigments between your wall and trim is an easy method to ensure that your colour scheme makes a big impact.

Sheen matters: "Another trend I love, and one that is growing in popularity over recent years, is using the exact same colour for both wall and trim," says Grech. This option is well-suited for small spaces, or rooms with minimal archi-

tectural features. This approach encourages the eye to view these areas as a continual space. In this case, sheen becomes an important factor. A glossier finish not only repels dust and dirt, but can provide a subtle visual break without disrupting the sense of space. If you prefer a less glossy look, Grech suggests painting trim with a pearl finish instead of high gloss.

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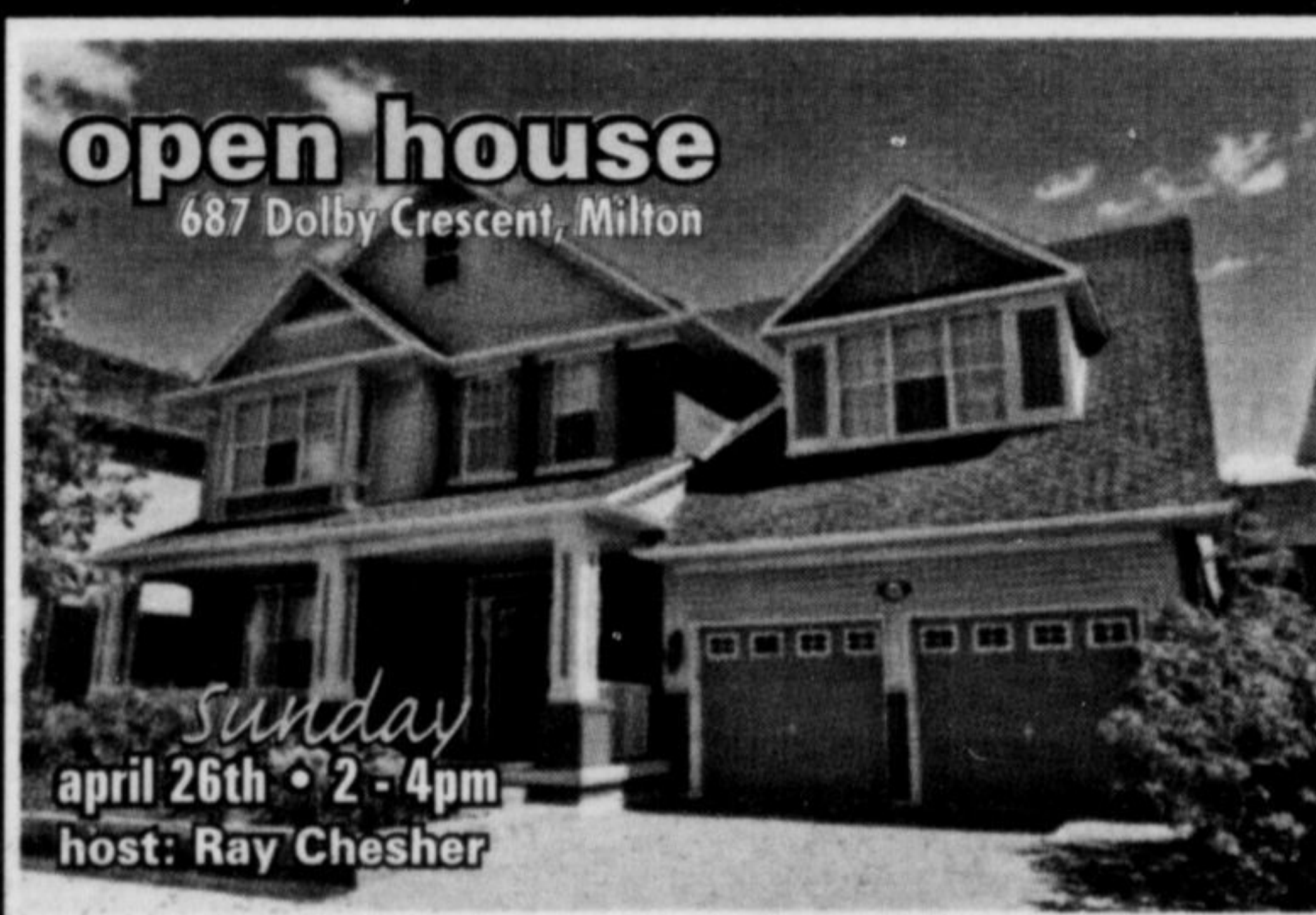
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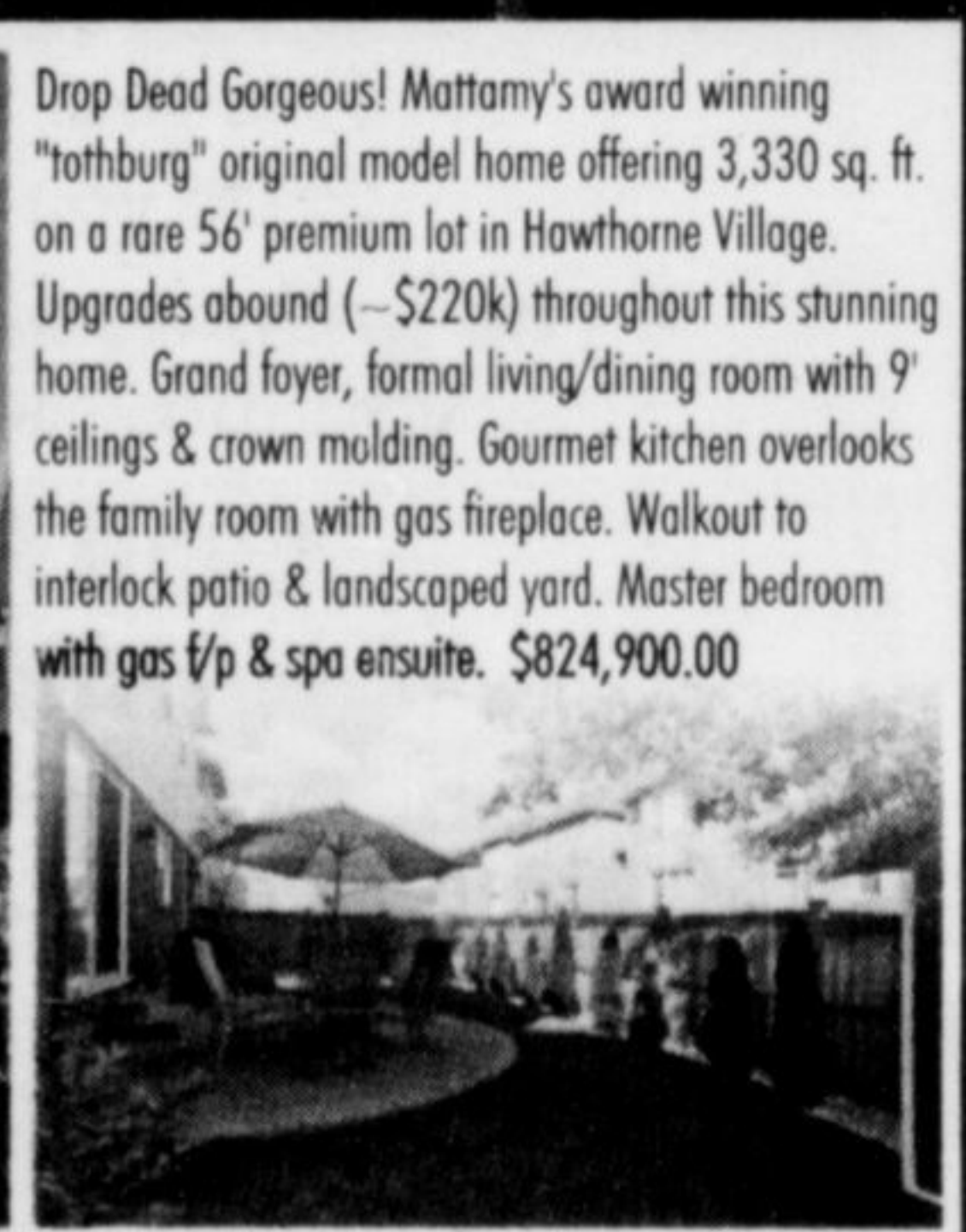
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