

Developer displays models at Markham Home show

Preston Lake Estates, the developers who are planning a subdivision of Country Estate Homes north of Markham, will be exhibiting their models at the upcoming Markham Home Show, Oct. 25 to 27.

The new community, which will be located near Preston Lake off Bloomington Rd. and William Ave., boasts several recreational facilities in addition to 3/4 to 1 1/2-acre lots.

Prospective buyers of these homes will have the choice of six models, with prices starting at \$178,000.

This year's home show, the largest of its kind in Canada, will be at the Markham Fair Grounds. It offers its visitors hundreds of home related products, with demonstrations from experts and a number of draws and contests.

Markham teen builds miniature mansions

So what's so amazing about the house that Grant built?

Plenty, if one considers that Grant Cowan, president, project manager and chief-constructor of Mini-Mansions, is only 16 years old.

The custom-made homes, which boast a play-area of 24 square feet, came to be out of frustration.

"Grant was in the market for a playhouse for his three-year-old brother Tommy, and when he couldn't find a suitable product anywhere, he decided to build one himself," says his mother, Mrs. Bea Cowan.

"We originally planned on spending about \$100 on the project," says Mrs. Cowan, "but the thing just kept growing."

When it was being built, people would frequently stop by the Cowan home (on Southdale Dr. in Markham) and marvel at Grant's project. Indeed, one neighbor even asked him if he would build his cottage for him.

"A lot of people would walk by and stare at me working away," says Grant. "When I finally showed the finished product at the Markham Fair, they would approach me and say, 'so that's what you were up to!'"

The surprising element of this story is that Grant had never previously done any woodworking.

With such a high demand for his product, Grant has decided to expand, enlisting the services of his friend, Adriano Sestino, who performs the finishing touches on the Mini-Mansions.

The developers are now receiving orders for homes earmarked as Christmas gifts. The price is \$695, which seems like a lot, but with material costs exceeding \$500, "the net profits barely cover the boys' labor," says Mrs. Cowan.

The Mini-Mansion comes completely assembled and is furnished with a table and chairs. It even comes with a homeowner's certificate.

According to Grant, everything possible is included in the package, "except mortgage financing," they're not that big yet.

Lansing Buildall Company lets customers do it their way

Markham do-it-yourself renovators and woodworkers will have an opportunity to match their skills against professionals and amateurs alike in a contest sponsored by Lansing Buildall.

The contest, which runs until Feb. 28, 1985, includes two categories — an open contest for professionals and amateurs alike, and a separate competition just for amateurs.

The first category is any major home improvement. Improvements eligible are a deck, fence, recreation room, kitchen or any addition to a home.

The second category is woodworking. For example, any furniture, wood trimmings or carvings are eligible.

The four winners will each receive an all-expense-paid trip to Cobbler's Cove Barbados. All entrants must have purchased the majority of wood and other building materials at any Lansing Buildall store, proof of purchase must be supplied.

The Markham Lansing Buildall is located at 8651 McCowan Rd. The winners will be announced at the National Home Show, April 5 to 14, 1985.

The judging will be based on degree of originality and creativity in design and use of products, quality of workmanship, esthetic appeal and degree of functionality.

Howard Kitchen, co-owner of Lansing Buildall, is enthusiastic about the contest.

"This contest is to encourage the growing interest in home improvement. People are turned on by the satisfaction of doing renovations and woodworking for themselves," he said.



Grant Cowan, 16, seen here examining his work, has gone into business for himself. The 24 square-foot playhouse that comes complete with a table and chairs and an owner's certificate, sells for \$695. Right now, Grant is accepting orders for Christmas. — Sjoerd Witteveen

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