

Local real estate firm joins video revolution

By STEVE HOUSTON
Staff Reporter

Century 21 Marquis has joined the hi-tech revolution by using video-taped listings to sell homes.

According to agent Chris Mogan, having homes video-taped inside and out is an "ideal alternative" to having buyers trek from place to place looking for something they may want to purchase.

"This method of looking at homes saves hours and hours and the buyer is comfortable," Mrs. Mogan said. "He can come in to the office and look at half a dozen tapes without leaving here."

Colleague Allen Arnold echoes her sentiments. "With video in real estate homes, basically, become portable."

Mrs. Mogan emphasized that this method "doesn't replace actually going to a house," but said this way the buyer doesn't have to "look at 20 of them."

She also pointed out that many buyers become confused after looking at several houses and mix up the different features. She said that with the videos the features are labelled.

Besides the convenience to local buyers, Mr. Arnold said the video method has other advantages. He said out-of-town families looking to relocate can view the tapes and companies wanting to transfer employees to new locations can also use the method.

Entrepreneur Ken Wright of Vis-on Advertising is the man behind the camera and he "nurtured the idea" before setting out the sell. He said other realty companies were approached, but "turned down the idea." Finally, Century 21 Marquis accepted.

"They didn't realize that it is a great listing and sales tool," Mr. Wright said. "The (companies) that don't have this service will be lacking."

Mr. Wright went on to explain the format of video taping a home. He said the tapes "average about five minutes," and show the interior rooms as well as any special features the home

has to offer. Along with this, shots showing the surrounding area and backyard are shown.

With this, Mr. Wright said he tries to "educate the buyer" about the area the home is located in.

Since the implementation of the video service in February, Mrs. Mogan said she is "thrilled with the

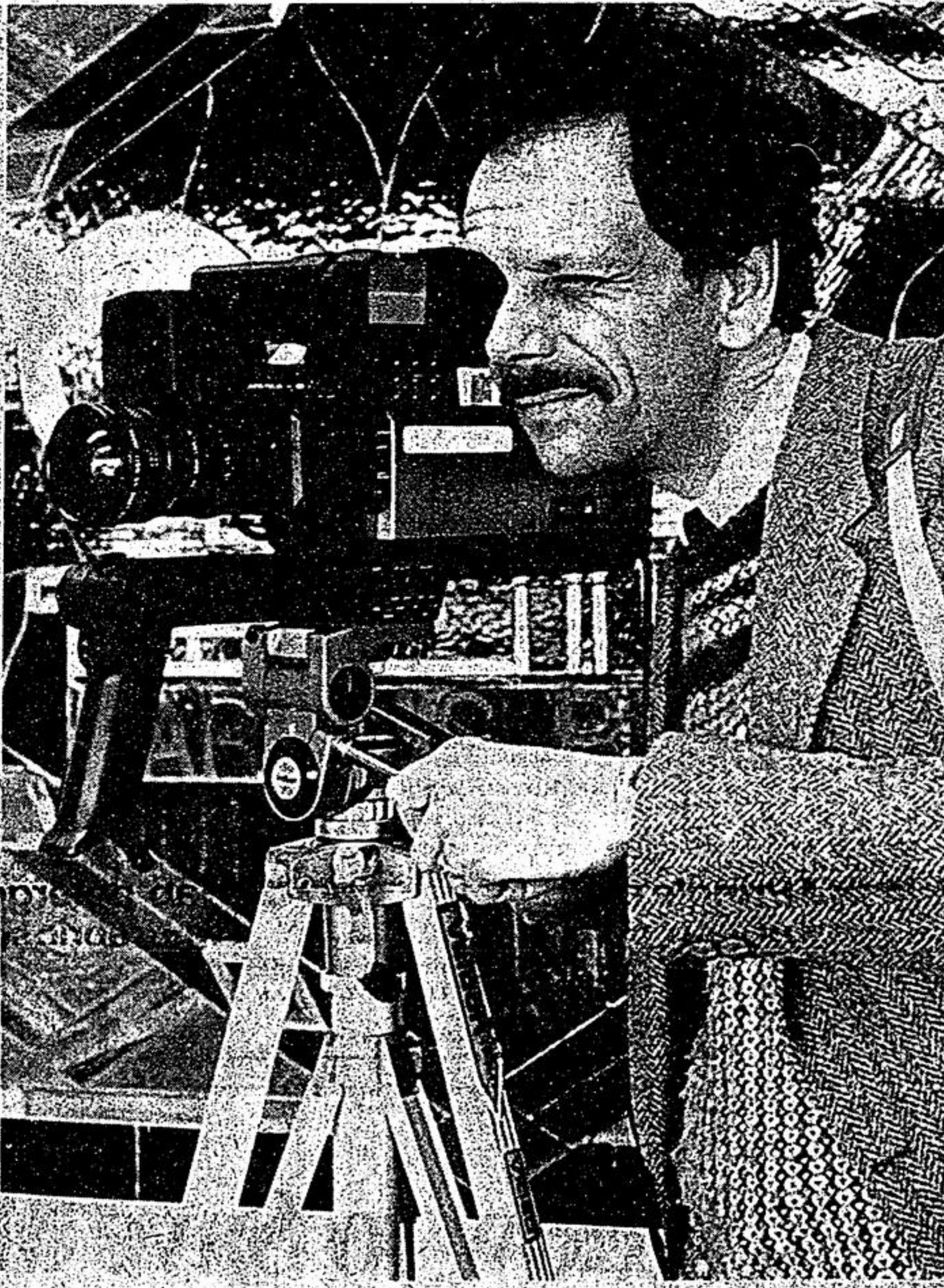
reaction." She spoke of one buyer who put an offer in on a home after only seeing the video.

"And he did buy the house," she noted.

Allen Arnold said he thinks that such a method of selling homes "is the next logical step" in the business. Mrs. Mogan agreed and compared the

use of video to the widespread use of computers in the office. She said that as computers eliminated a lot of paper work, so do videos eliminate much of the leg work.

"With video, a client can definitely eliminate a house, or definitely choose a house he wants to look at," Mr. Arnold said.



Cameraman Ken Wright tests the equipment he uses when video taping a house. He says with this advertising tool, many unnecessary house tours are eliminated.

Mainstreet owner adds new partner

"A mutual passion for seafood and pasta," prompted two local businessmen to open a restaurant catering to those who share their culinary desires.

Owners Ross Matheson and Les Broadbent opened up Mainstreet restaurant last November, and since then, have seen patrons experience such dishes as Shrimps Mediterranean, Marinated Seafood Salad, and Manicotti with Spinach.

Mr. Broadbent, who is also head chef at Mainstreet, decided to go into business with Mr. Matheson, after serving as chef at The Duchess of Markham.

This is Mr. Matheson's second venture as a restaurateur; he already owns The Duchess.

"I can be a bit more inventive here at Mainstreet," Mr. Broadbent said. "I am constantly getting a fresh supply of seafood including swordfish and squid."

Along with the seafood and Italian dishes, the two hope to present "a little light jazz" for guests to enjoy while eating their dinners.

"We hope to offer music that is appropriate for dinner and a glass of wine," Mr. Broadbent said.

To compliment the entrees, he said Mainstreet boasts a wine cellar consisting of some 80 selections.



RUSS MATHESON



LES BROADBENT

Partnership in Mainstreet formed

"It's a different wrinkle. Guests have an opportunity to experiment with different tastes," he noted.

Guests can also watch Mr. Broadbent in action. Mainstreet was designed with an "open kitchen concept," that allows customers to watch their dishes being prepared. "That way they will know we haven't forgotten about them when they are waiting for their meal," he says with a chuckle.

Mr. Broadbent's love affair with food started 15 years ago when he was taken on as an apprentice chef at a large hotel in Leeds, England.

Since then that love has grown and taken him many places, including The Duchess and now Mainstreet.

"Les is a very talented chef," said Mr. Matheson. "I'm very fortunate to have him as a partner."

While the summer months and warmer weather draw near, plans to open a patio are in the wings. Mr. Matheson said they will add tables and "maybe put in an oyster bar."

"The main thing we're looking forward to now is opening Markham's first sidewalk cafe," he said.

Seven Star Plaza expands by adding office complex

The Seven Star Plaza at the corner of Hwy. 7 and McCowan Rd. is expanding with a two-storey office and retail complex.

The project, by Tolomi Construction Ltd., will be built on a vacant site to the east and will be integrated in an L-shape with the plaza.

The ground floor will have 1,111 square metres of retail space; the second floor will have 1,585 square metres of office space.

Because of its proximity to residences on Southdale Dr. and Gladiator Rd., a number of changes were made by the developer to accommodate a local residents' pressure group.

Residents on Gladiator Rd. objected to windows on the east side of the building that would overlook their backyards. Also, a driveway along the east side was changed to a treed green space to minimize noise. A south parking lot will be used by employees at the plaza only.

The owners of Seven Star Plaza have purchased a residential property to the south on McCowan Rd. known as the Ohms property. This move has sparked fears among residents on Southdale Dr. who believe the company will one day expand in that direction.

When asked about the

purchase at a meeting in January, a company spokesman told the planning meeting that the house will be used as a home by a caretaker for the Seven Star complex.

Residents and councillors alike laughed and jeered at the reply.

The Ohms property is zoned residential. An application for a zoning bylaw amendment would be treated separately from the expansion application.

However, no application has yet been submitted according to Councillor A. Rayner.

Home of the Week

A quiet spot in Markham

A two-storey home in the Amber Glen area of Markham on 30 Barker Court, on a quiet court just off Major Bilton's Drive is the March 20 Home of the Week.

The house is a detached dwelling with a two-car garage in front. Built on a pie-shaped lot, it backs onto a large park.

The main floor consists of an entry hall with ceramic tile. On one side, there is a large living room with an adjoining dining room. Both have hardwood floors. The kitchen has plenty of cupboard space with an eat-in area, a built-in writing desk, and a walk-out to a patio.

The main floor also has a family room with a floor-to-ceiling fireplace and a walk-out to the garden.

There is also a laundry room with extra cupboards and a two-piece bathroom.

Upstairs the master bedroom has walk-in

closets and a five-piece ensuite. Another bathroom services the other three bedrooms. Both have ceramic tub enclosures.

The full basement includes a roughed-in three-piece washroom and a roughed-in fireplace. There's also a stairwell to the basement from the garage entrance.

Other features include upgraded carpets on the circular oak staircase and in the family room, exterior yard fencing, intercom, two slot windows in the garage, fireplace mantle and glass brass doors, roughed-in for air conditioning, wall paper throughout, and woodpanelling in the family room.

Asking price is \$179,900.

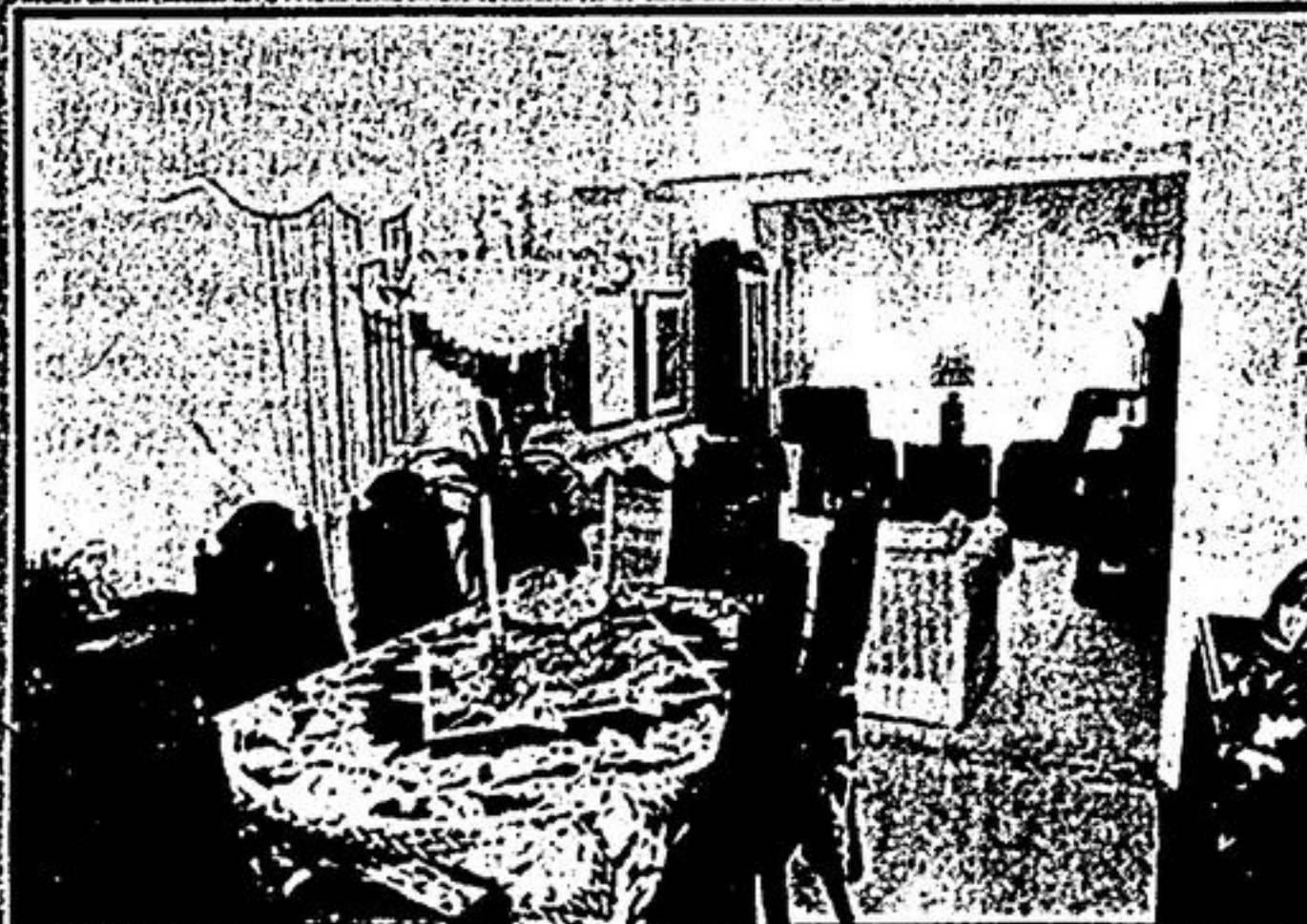
The home is listed with Century 21 Marquis Realty Limited and the agent's Allen Arnold. He can be reached by calling 294-3435 or 298-3113.



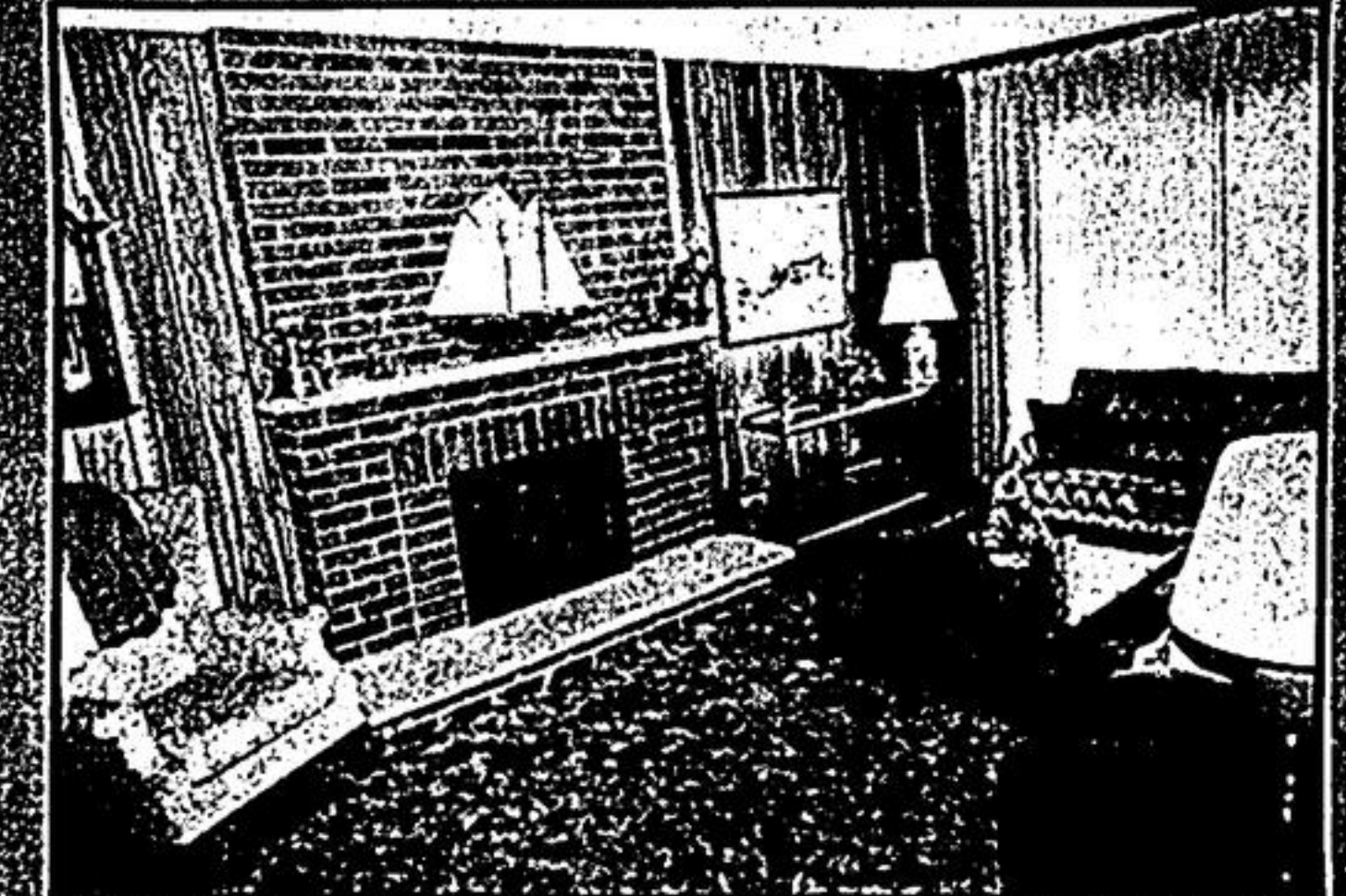
This home in the Amber Glen area of Markham backs onto a park and has an asking price of \$179,900. It is listed by Century 21 Marquis and the agent's Allen Arnold.



The kitchen is extremely large with plenty of cupboard space. It has an eat-in area, a writing desk, and a walk-out to the patio.



The living room is large and roomy and along with the adjoining dining room, has hardwood floors. It also has a large ornamental chandelier.



One of the features of the main floor of the home is the large family room. The room has a floor-to-ceiling fireplace and a walk-out to the garden.