

SPRINGTIME

In the Islands



Gulf Islands
Driftwood

SECTION B

March 20, 1991

**Your Guide To
Home Building
and Renovations**

SPRINGTIME

Spring: it's a time to spruce up home

Spring announces itself in many ways. Burping, swamp-bound frogs herald the season for some islanders. Other devoted spring-seekers hunt birdfeeders and flowering bushes for the hummingbird's return, and still others depend on the mystical powers of a groundhog's shadow.

But there are other signs of spring. Sun creeping through windows suddenly illuminates a need to scrub winter from the glass. Overnight, lawns need mowing and gardens become a tangle of weeds and undergrowth.

Luckily, spring also gives birth to a renewed sense of energy: an eagerness to shake off the apathy of winter hibernation and get busy in the garden and house.

This special section of the *Driftwood* offers energetic readers advice, tips and ideas on a variety of interior and exterior home improvement projects.

a new look. Maybe it's time to undertake a landscaping project. Some people like to keep their property looking as natural as possible; others envision a well-sculpted product.

See Page B14 for a few landscaping ideas.

Gardening plans should definitely be in the works. Make 1991 the year you overcome THE SLUG. Check Page B16 for islanders' solution to the slaying of slugs.

The urge to renovate or build an addition may strike some homeowners as spring breaths new air onto the island. Several stories in this supplement offer timely advice for the renovator.

Permits are needed before any building activity takes place. It's not as bad as it sounds. Salt Spring's building inspector, Dick Stubbs, offers some sound advice. See Pages B12 and B13.

Compelling reasons to consider hiring a contractor for major renovations are presented on Page B10.

Those who plan to sell their homes in the not-too-distant future, may be interested in survey results (Page B20) pinpointing popular features that help houses sell. Those looking to put their home on the market this spring or summer should consider spruce-up tips offered on Page B17.

Redesigning a home's interior can be a daunting task — but there are ways to make it simpler. Advice on interior design can be found on Page B5.

An awkward design in the "heart of the house" (kitchen) is uncomfortable for all family members — especially the cooks. Three separate stories on kitchen design and rejuvenation are offered on Pages B7 and B8.

Buying new furniture? Upgrading old furniture? Check Page B24.

This springtime supplement also offers a special photo feature page (B22). See how several islanders have harnessed the wind in seeking an alternative source of energy.

Other feature stories can be found on solar energy and the rebirth of an 18th century heating system.

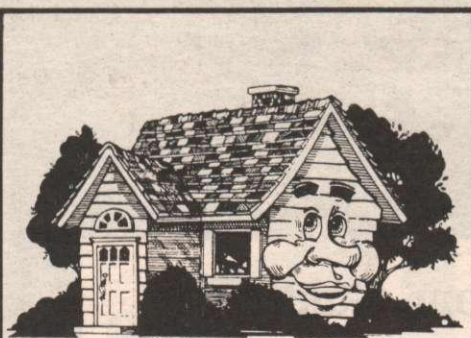
Maybe a spruced-up home and yard can be your "sign of spring."

SPRINGTIME Home Improvement GUIDE

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On the exterior homefront, skim the advice offered on Page B4 and undertake a home maintenance check. Minor repairs tended to now can mean huge savings in time and money down the road. Downspouts, roofs, walls and wood siding are important areas to check.

While taking in the clean spring air and wandering around your property, consider



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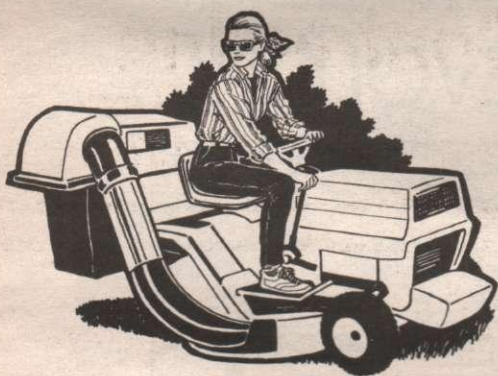
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SPRINGTIME

Minor maintenance can save repairs later

Undertaking minor maintenance and repairs now can often prevent the need for major repairs later. And if large-scale work is necessary you may still be able to beat the warm-weather rush to hire professional help.

Start by examining gutters and downspouts.

Notice whether any sections are misaligned or have pulled away from the edge of the roof or sides of the house. Clear debris from the splash blocks — the concrete troughs below the downspouts — and, if necessary, reposition them so water from the roof drains safely from the building's foundation.

Check downspouts

Improperly placed and missing splash blocks are a major cause of basement leakage. Splash blocks are sold at building supply centres.

To check downspouts for blockage insert a garden hose from below and force the hose upward. Equip the hose with a nozzle set for hard spray; if the hose jams before reaching the top, turn on the water to clear the debris.

On a day when the weather is good and the ground is firm, climb a ladder to inspect and clear the gutters. While there, you can realign gutter sections, repair and replace broken brackets, and patch any holes that have developed in the troughs.

Inspect the roof

Look for damaged or missing shingles, a common cause of roof leaks.

Curled asphalt or fibreglass shingles can be cemented flat with asphalt or plastic roofing cement, but only on a warm day when the shingles are flexible.

Broken shingles can be repaired by sliding a piece of metal, such as aluminum siding or flashing, beneath them, then liberally spreading roofing cement between the two. Missing shingles must be replaced.

Patch holes or cracks

Examine the flashing at roof seams and around the chimney, vent stack and other openings, such as skylights. Also inspect areas around television antennas and guy wires.

Patch any holes or cracks and seal any fasteners that penetrate the roof by covering them with roofing cement.

Apply the cement in a smooth layer with a flexible-blade putty knife. Avoid creating ridges that can trap water.

Check the chimney for deteriorating mortar. If damage is widespread, you will have to consult a mason. If minor, you can repair it yourself, although you might want to wait for warm weather.

To patch crumbling mortar, chisel it out from between bricks to a depth of at least half an inch (1 cm), then apply fresh mortar. Smooth joints with a small masonry tool called a brick jointer.

Inspect the walls

Scrape loose paint from flaking or peeling areas, sand them smooth, and brush on a protective coat of primer.

You can leave the primer exposed if you do not mind its appearance and you plan more extensive repainting later.

Otherwise, allow the primer to dry all day or overnight, then apply a coat or two of house paint.

Deeply blistered paint that reveals bare wood when pulled away is a sign of condensation inside the walls. Before repainting, you will have to remedy this, or the condition will continue and cause more damage.

Creating a vapour barrier, either with material or paint, on the warm (indoor) side of the wall will help cure condensation by preventing moisture generated indoors from passing into the walls.

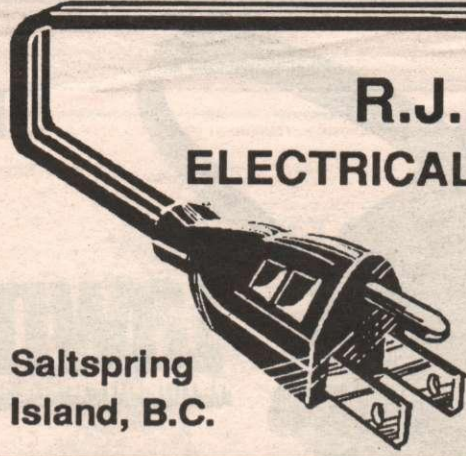
Wood siding at risk

Inspect siding, too. Vinyl and aluminum siding rarely need attention. But wood siding may crack, warp or decay.

Repair cracks and opened seams by filling with caulking compound. Small areas of decay can be restored with epoxy filler sold for the purpose at paint stores and home centres. If damage is extensive, or if siding is badly warped, decayed areas should be cut out and replaced.

Hairline cracks in concrete and stucco can usually be left alone. Larger cracks can be filled with caulking compound, patching cement or a stucco repair product resembling plaster, but disguising repairs to concrete and stucco is difficult. If the walls are mortared masonry, repair them as you would a chimney.

Check wood trim for the same signs of deterioration as wood siding.



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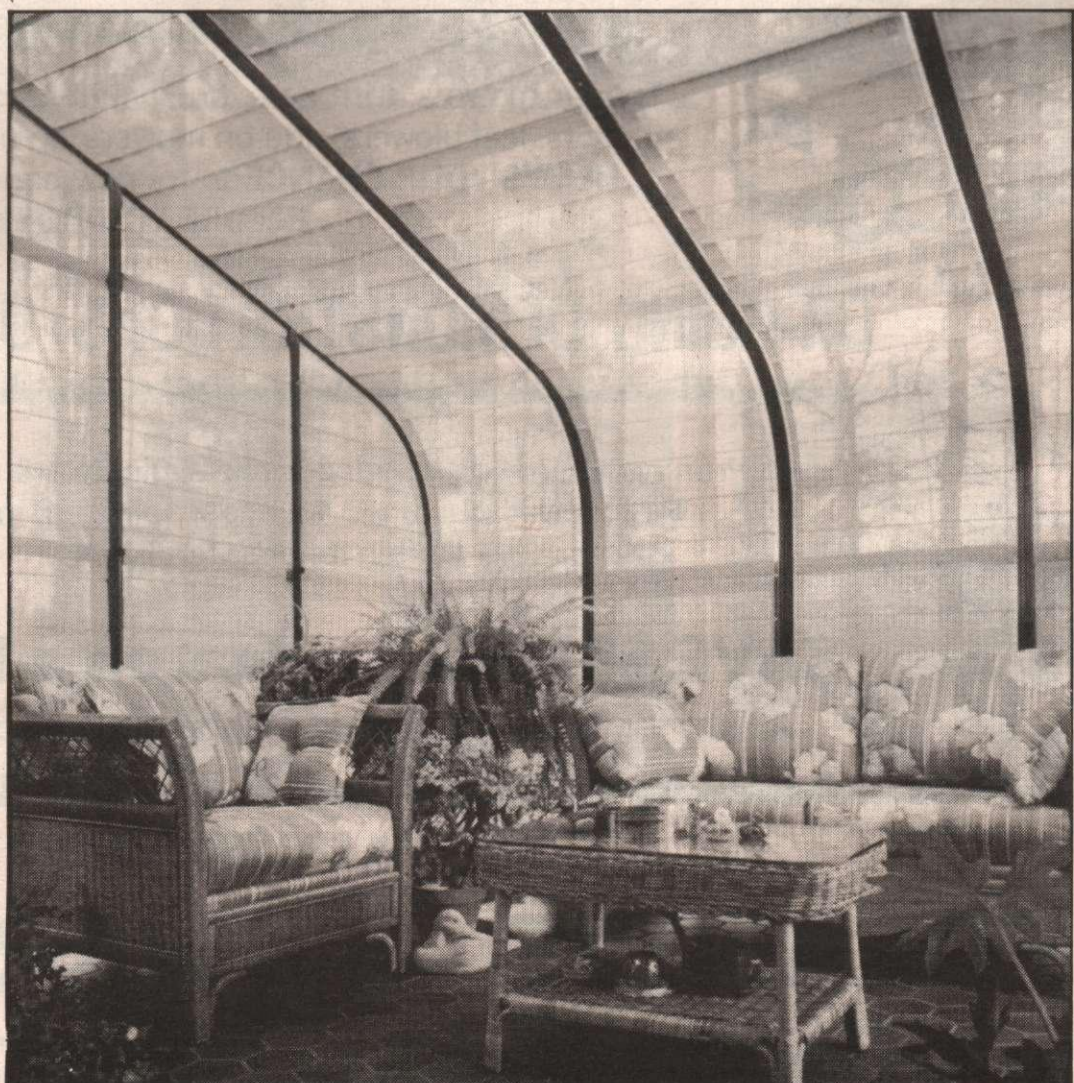


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SPRINGTIME



FICTIONAL SETTING?: These Salt Spring youths could have been characters in a Mark Twain story. Paddling around a Fulford-area pond -- it's a sure sign of spring.

Springtime photo by Derrick Lundy

Interior design

Colour scheme, mood are important to define

Redesigning a room in your home can be an intimidating prospect.

A single decision can seem impossible, or you can be drowned in a torrent of ideas. Eager with enthusiasm to redo our surroundings, serious mistakes can be made by prematurely tackling charming details or by trying to be unwittingly "unique" with redesign plans.

However, knowing what *initial* factors to consider and a few basic rules can simplify the process, preventing hideous and costly mistakes.

Salt Spring's Island Drapery business owner Val Mackey has some advice for the novice designer.

Mackey acknowledges that "at first, there may seem an endless and confusing number of choices." She attributes this in part to the need for decisions about four "major decorating masses in the room — upholstery, drapery, floor covering and wall covering."

The colours of all "decorating masses" should relate to each other, she says, "to make up what you will call your *colour scheme*."

A *colour mood* is determined by your desire for either a *warm* room or a *cool* room.

Mackey says "generally speaking, a north-facing room will benefit from a bright, warm colour scheme and a west-facing room that can be very hot in the summer will be relieved by using a cool colour scheme."

Combining these principles with personal preferences narrows down the boggling number of colour choices.

Choosing patterns can be a bit more difficult, says Mackey. Dramatic effects are often achieved by skilled designers, but an amateur can be successful with some preliminary knowledge.

Only one bold pattern should exist in any room, suggests Mackey. "You can use it on furniture, draperies, flooring or wallcover," she says, but "let one pattern predominate."

The bold pattern may be repeated, as on draperies and furniture, but the rest of the room should be done in solid colours or a small non-competing pattern.

Mackey also stresses the need to con-

small window or a small piece of furniture."

On the other hand, she notes, a small-scale pattern is "just fine on a large-scale piece or window treatment."

A sense of balance should be maintained when distributing patterns throughout the room, says Mackey. One way to achieve this is to ensure heavily-patterned fabrics are interspersed with solids or small patterns. A room would feel out of balance, she says, if all heavily patterned fabrics were on one side and solids on another.

The smartest thing to do when re-decorating, says Mackey, is to "find a shop with helpful, knowledgeable staff and make creating a beautiful room a fun project."

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SPRINGTIME

Guilbault provides an enlightening experience

Living on an island with dramatic scenic views and expansive acreages can create a desire to take advantage of natural light.

When homes need assistance with lighting in specific areas, islanders often want it to blend with light provided by nature.

Local electrician Joe Guilbault has been looking after the needs of islanders for more than 10 years. Last June, he and his wife Carol opened a local lighting store — a natural extension of his electrical business.

"I had been sending customers off island for years for their lighting and thought we could supply them right here."

Describing lighting requests as "pretty basic," Guilbault says there is not a big market on Salt Spring for fancy chandeliers because they do not fit with the island lifestyle. Most requests are for recessed fixtures and track lighting.

Competition with off-island business means keeping a sharp pencil and stressing customer service.

"It's the same old story all the businesses on this island face, and we are no different."

Guilbault has seen many changes on Salt Spring since he arrived here in 1963 to work for electrician Dave Pollat. He made his way here via Calvington, Saskatchewan and Victoria.

After Pollat died, Guilbault started his own business. Three journeymen and two apprentices help out with his electrical business at the present time, and he has trained several apprentices since starting in business.

Looking around the community, he sees many commercial projects he worked on including Mouat's new building, Grace Point Square, Pharmasave and most recently Creekhous.

He says he is proud of his reputation for providing quality work and insists that his employees maintain that reputation. Cost plus is the basis for 75 per cent of his projects, an indication that his customers have faith in his work.

In addition to commercial space, Guilbault has provided electrical work for several big homes on the island, including one of approximately 10,000 square feet. He has worked on some as large as 7,500 square feet and, of course, the regular square-footage houses as well.

"I guess you could say when I came to Salt Spring, I saw the light."

Hardwood flooring is durable

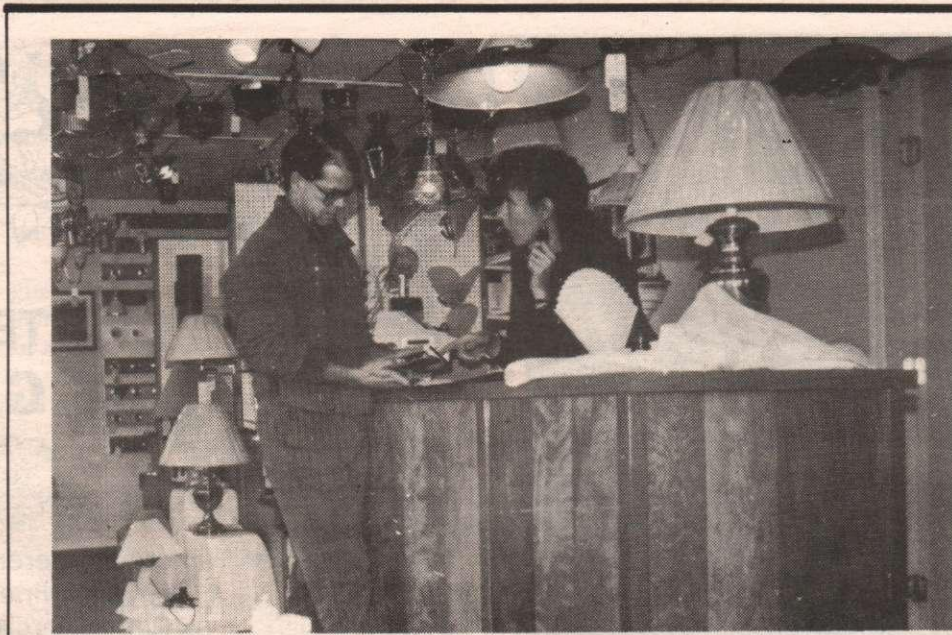
For a warm, cosy and inviting look to your home, consider installing hardwood floors.

More often these days, hardwood flooring is chosen over linoleum or wall-to-wall carpeting. Hardwood floors don't gather dust like carpets and are beneficial to those people with allergies.

Hardwood is durable and easy to maintain. Such floors are being used in areas not considered before. Kitchens, entrance halls and even bathrooms are being floored with hardwood.

The flooring varies from strips, 5.1 centimetres (two inches) wide, to planks which when used in random widths offer a casual look to parquets which offer a variety of designs.

Hardwood of choice seems to be oak although maple, ash, walnut and cherry hold favour with some people.



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SPRINGTIME

Good kitchen design: a crucial consideration

Those who have tried to cook in a badly designed kitchen, know how important it is to get the arrangement right.

There are several steps to achieving a good design — steps to take before purchasing the first appliance or cabinet.

Anyone who is thinking about a new kitchen should:

- Research the subject. Check the library for design books, read all the latest magazines. These will provide a good sense of what's new and what's available and familiarize you with pertinent terminology.

- Set a budget, even if it's just a rough estimate. Kitchen renovation costs can range from fairly low (for new cabinet doors and paint, or a wall of cabinet) to something stratospheric for custom carpentry and exotic finishes. You'll save everyone time (and yourself anguish) by being practical about your limits.

- Don't rush out and buy something large — like a huge refrigerator — or something specific — like a left-hinged refrigerator that can't be changed to the right — and expect to design the kitchen around it. It may work, but more likely it will be a huge impediment in the design process. Wait until you know exactly what you need and where it's going to go.

- Assess how you use the space. Are there kids and dogs in this room, or does it serve a couple who both work and microwave every night? How many cooks are there, what kinds of things do they cook? These can have an impact on design.

Once you've done some background research, you can begin formulating a plan. You may want to hire a kitchen designer. Some designers work as consultants, on a per-hour basis, and are flexible enough to work with any budget.

Home-improvement centres and stores that sell the equipment often have experts on staff who can help work out a plan (though the assistance may be tied to purchase).

Good measurements are critical to a successful design — first because almost all cabinets are constructed in basic dimensions, generally with three-inch increments. A mistake as small as a fraction of an inch can throw the whole room out of whack.

Wall spaces should be measured from trim edge to the next trim edge or corner. (Architectural plans may measure only the opening, not what's around it.)

If you've ever been burdened with a tiny kitchen, you may think bigger is better. That's not necessarily so. A huge kitchen can mean a lot of unnecessary steps.

Designers suggest walking around the space, imagining where things will be and testing the arrangement. You can use tape to mark off items on the floor. If you want a centre island, they suggest putting a box in the centre of the room — to see if you want to walk around it "for the next 10 years."

If you draw your own plan, it's still a good idea to get someone in the field to look at it for potential problems.

Mix wood, tile, marble for warm kitchen feeling

Wood, tile and marble can warm up a kitchen, softening technology's edges. However, those planning to use these materials should "mix them up."

A combination of materials keeps a kitchen from looking like a matched suite and makes it look as if it evolved over time. Combining wood, marble and tile adds up to counters that work harder — with separate areas for baking, chopping and resting hot pots — and intrigue the senses.

- Wood floors, protected with several coats of sealer, are yielding and good looking. To clean, just damp mop. If installing a new floor, your choices range from pre-finished planks or squares with tongue-and-groove fit to seasoned heart pine, salvaged from vintage buildings and remilled.

- For countertops, wood is a good chopping surface. But water makes it warp, so use another material around the sink.

- Wood cabinets look better in country kitchens. If your budget allows, consider units with paneled doors and paint washes or stains that let the wood grain show through.

- To give ordinary cabinets a new lease on life, just have the doors replaced. Use standard cabinets, but have the doors custom-made from old-style board and batten.

- For cottage charm, try beaded panelling on the walls and ceiling. Painted or natural, it's a great cover-up for rough or uneven walls.

- Quarry tile, with its sunbaked colours, adds visual warmth. But think twice before using it for flooring: it's hard on your legs and cold underfoot. If you do a lot of cooking, better pick a more yielding surface. Try vinyl tile that mimics the real thing.

- Offering infinite colours and patterns, glazed ceramic tile is a popular countertop material. It resists stains, grease and water. But remember, it is not a good chopping surface, so keep cutting boards handy.

Glazed tile is ideal for back-splashes. It can take the curse off a boring plastic laminate counter. You can tile right over a laminate backsplash. Just roughly sand the laminate first, so the glue will grip.

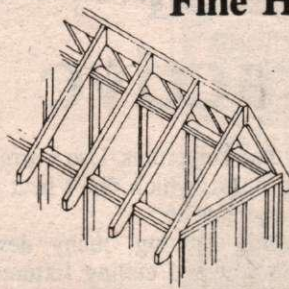
for a convenient place to park hot pots and a jolt of warm colour.

- Marble makes a handsome countertop that's perfect for baking. It is porous, however, and may yellow, stain and chip. A sealer or wax finish will help protect the surface, but there's something very appealing about the homey personality of time-worn marble.

Honed marble has a soft matte finish that generally looks more at home in a country kitchen than does polished marble, with its high-gloss surface. Cutting and finishing marble — it's all done by hand — usually costs more than the material itself, so keep your design simple.

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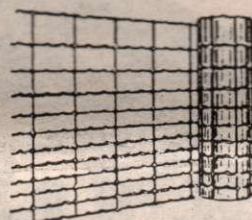
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SPRINGTIME

Kitchen storage space: varied and attractive

Forget the white box, the walls lined with identical built-in cabinets and everything hidden behind sterile closed doors. Today, we want storage that's attractive and varied — a mix of shelves, plate racks and antique dressers, as well as closed storage.

Colourful pottery, ceramics and glassware are being brought out in the open for visual interest.

To relieve the monotony of a wall of closed cabinets, simply remove a door and you'll create open shelves. Then show off handmade pottery, ceramic pitchers, salt and pepper shakers — whatever you collect and love.

To evoke kitchens past, bring in an antique like a chimney cupboard — tall and narrow — or a Welsh dresser. Who says kitchen storage has to be built in? These freestanding pieces add new shapes plus the warmth of wood.

With wall space at a premium, finding room for display sometimes takes ingenuity. Build shelves over kitchen windows or the upper cabinets — perfect for platters or bowls.

Glass-front cabinets are back — they offer both storage and display. Glasses and china seen through the windows add colour and interest. But do you really want to stare at the cereal boxes and soup cans? Stick to solid doors for the food pantry.

Or, if you want glass-front units all around, hang shirred curtains inside the doors. An opaque glass, such as sandblasted glass, will conceal clutter but keep the open feeling.

Two kinds of light are needed in the kitchen — a work light for cooking and an overall wash for general illumination or mood.

Strip fixtures hidden under upper cabinets provide task light — they shine

right onto the countertops. Use warm-white or halogen bulbs, which don't heat up the way incandescents do.

For overall lighting, many designers recommend recessed ceiling fixtures with incandescent bulbs — they're the closest thing to natural light. Mounting the fixtures 20 to 25 inches from the wall puts light on the counter — not the back of your head. For a 10- to 12-foot length of counter, three evenly spaced lights should do. A rheostat (dimmer) lets you adjust the level of light.

Hanging pendants provide task light and mood, too. But don't install too many — they can make a room look cluttered.

If you serve meals here, add a special fixture over the table — maybe a reproduction chandelier. This puts the spotlight on the table — and the dirty pots piled in the sink fade into the background.

Candles can change the mood instantly. They recall the old ritual of lighting the hearth.

Damaged flooring can be fixed

Resilient flooring needs little attention to look good and any damage can usually be fixed without too much trouble.

Such flooring, whether its sheet linoleum, asphalt or vinyl tiles, can blister, tear or stain.

Stains come off the flooring through use of elbow grease, and an undiluted detergent containing ammonia. Use a plastic-mesh scouring pad and, if the stain is persistent, try dampened cleaning powder and a fine grade steel wool.

Glossy finish will return on small areas by dabbing clear nail polish on it. If the area is larger, use a liquid floor polish designed for that type of floor.

Scratches disappear by spreading a small amount of paste wax along the scratch. Wipe off the excess and the mark will disappear. Rubbing the scratch along its length with a coin will depress the edge of the scratch. If wax doesn't hide the scratch, try pressing heavy-gauge aluminum foil with a hot iron along the mark.

Large tears might require removal of the tile square and replacement with an undamaged one.

Smaller tears can be masked by rubbing on a colour-matched putty. Find an unused piece of flooring a scrape bits and pieces from the surface. Mix with clear nail polish and press the resultant putty into the tear. Iron the area using aluminum foil and a hot iron.



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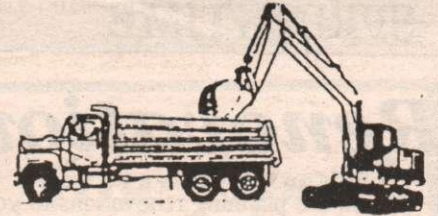
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SPRINGTIME



Bob Ellison and young Niko Laing point out solar panels

Driftwood photo by Bill Webster



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Salt Spring's weather is ideal for solar heat

Sun shines on Salt Spring Island for more than 200 days each year presenting ideal conditions for using a solar water heater.

When used in conjunction with a standard electric water heater, a solar heater can translate into money savings on hydro bills.

Using solar water heaters for domestic water as well as for heating water for swimming pools were outlined by Bob Ellison of Isles West Hot Tubs. He cautioned when used in conjunction with hot tubs, however, solar power would not pay for itself.

"The bottom line on solar powered water heaters is the payback time," Ellison said. "If the equipment and the installation work costs are too expensive, solar power is not viable."

Solar heating packages vary in price and according to use. If, for instance, a customer wanted to heat a swimming pool, a unit for domestic water heating would not work well and vice versa, a solar unit used to heat the water in a swimming pool would not function efficiently to heat domestic water.

A unit used to heat water for a pool has to deal with a large body of water, upwards of 37,850 litres (10,000 gallons), and raise the water temperature by 2.8 degrees to 5.2 degrees Celsius (five to 10 degrees Fahrenheit). It is also deals with water pressure of 10 psi.

Ellison explained the number of panels needed to heat a swimming pool depends upon the surface size of the pool. Each panel measures three by .3 metres and the number needed can be worked out using a formula based on the area of the pool surface.

Water, Ellison explained, flows through the collectors in the series of panels, is heated and returned to the pool. A problem arises at night because heat from the water is radiated into cooler air. If covered for the night, the pool will retain heat.

Sensors are placed in the collector and

at pool side to measure water temperature. When water in the pool reaches the desired temperature or if water in the collector gets too cool at night, the system will shut itself down.

Units needed to heat domestic water are based on heating a lesser amount of water, usually 132 litres (35 gal.) to a greater temperature.

Water enters the system from a source at approximately 7.2 degrees C. (45 degrees F.) and is heated to 37.7 degrees C. (100 degrees F.). The heated water is used only as needed to supplement heated water in the hot water heater.

In most homes, electric hot water heaters raise the temperature to close to 60 degrees C. (140 degrees F.). If water entering the tank is 37.7 degrees C., less energy is needed to heat it three more degrees than would be required to heat it 30 degrees.

Solar water heaters for domestic use measure 2.4 metres by 0.9 metre by 45.7 centimetres (eight feet by three feet by 18 inches). Ellison explained that one unit would serve the needs of a family of four and any further water requirements would need a second panel in sequence to the first.

Placement of panels is also important in taking full advantage of them. Domestic systems should not be too far from electric water heaters. For swimming pool heaters, placement on a roof would be adequate because of continuous flow of waste through the system.

Domestic water units should be in a place which takes day-long advantage of sunshine and be reasonably sheltered from wind.

"Ideal placement means more efficiency from the panels," said Ellison, "which means a shorter payback period."

Using the sun as a source of energy saves on other sources, and being able to reduce costs at the same time is an extra benefit to homeowners concerned about energy.

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SPRINGTIME

Renovation jobs: they're never what they seem

If you are planning renovations to your home, call a contractor unless you are an expert carpenter and can afford to spend time completing the task.

Renovations can become slightly more than they appear on the surface.

A Salt Spring contractor has some interesting things to say about renovations.

"Something always goes wrong that you don't expect."

As an example, he told of a seemingly simple job of renovating a kitchen which he was to carry out. His customer wanted a new floor and new cupboards. The kitchen was gutted and the contractor discovered floor joists containing wood rot.

What was to have been a relatively simple kitchen renovation turned into a task of ensuring the bottom did not fall out of the house.

Renovation costs can on occasion end up 50 per cent higher than anticipated. Part of the problem stems from not knowing what is behind the walls and part of the problem comes from the customer saying, "While you're here . . ."

Another island contractor emphasizes the point about costs. He suggests customers obtain a flexible estimate of costs, have the demolition work done and then get a firm cost figure. Most contractors handling renovations work on a cost-plus basis which covers them if more work than mere renovations are required.

His partner outlined reasons why owners renovate their homes.

An individual comes to Salt Spring, discovers a property with a beautiful view but a less than adequate house. The view wins. Because the house is less than adequate, fixing and expanding space become primary. As well, friends visit and bedroom space is needed.

All three contractors agreed the kitchen is usually the first space in a house which

Hiring a contractor can be useful

comes under mandate for renovations. Bathrooms are second. If a house has a garage, that space often becomes an added room or the owner can simply ask for an additional room to be added to the house.

Well-planned renovations make sense in that they add to the value of the property. A cramped, inadequate kitchen can deter a buyer from purchasing a house. On the other hand, he added, a less-than-adequate house would sell if the kitchen were attractive.

Some owners know what they want, while others offer a vague idea of "well, I'd like something done to the kitchen."

Contractors can talk to owners to determine what the person has in mind. They can draw up plans according to the space available or what the customer expected and go from there.

Discussions with the customer produce concrete ideas of what is wanted. The contractor can then plan what can be done.

When plans are prepared, the contractor can then tell the customer: "This is what we can do for you for your dollars."

Renovators must also gain the confidence of potential customers. They have to overcome the "sleaze factor" caused by fly-by-night renovators who take a job, complete it quickly, take the money and run.

"Find a contractor to trust," one contractor suggests, "and stay with him. It doesn't always involve working with someone you know."

Both other contractors stress the "diplomatic" aspect of renovations.

"Workers are doing the job while people are there in the house," one said. "While

the job is going on, it's a delicate touch to deal with the people there and could end up being a trying experience."

His partner explained another valid reason for hiring an experienced contractor. Additions to a house should fit the profile of the building.

"An addition should look, in a year, like it's always been part of the house," he said. "It spoils the look if it just looks added on."

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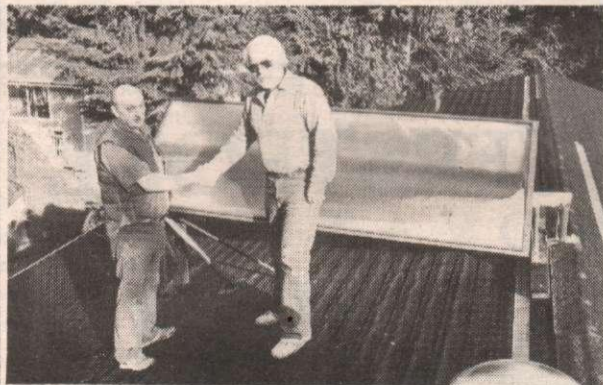
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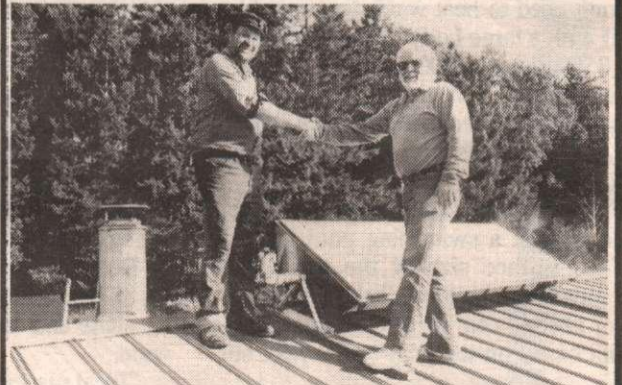


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SPRINGTIME



Springtime photo by Derrick Lumby

POST AND BEAM: The lost art of post and beam construction comes alive as Pat McGee builds a traditional barn with a minimal number of nails. Here McGee chisels out unwanted wood to create a perfect fit.

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SPRINGTIME

Inspection assures house is structurally sound

"Some people put more research into buying a pair of shoes than a house"

Building inspectors have often been given the same degree of regard as city metermen — they are welcome to wander around checking things, as long as they don't find anything wrong.

Contrary to some twisted myths, it is not a building inspector's job to catch people violating the B.C. Building Code and related bylaws.

Above all else, Salt Spring Building Inspector Dick Stubbs and Capital Regional

District office staff provide assistance, information and inspections to property owners and contractors building homes or other structures.

This process, says Stubbs, "gives the home owner or future owner knowledge that the house is structurally sound and meets a certain standard."

He says some people put more research into buying a pair of shoes than they do investigating the quality of a home they want to buy. Having proof of an occupancy per-

mit being issued by a building inspection office should be obtained before signing a contract to purchase a house and property.

In addition, almost all money lenders now require proof of an occupancy permit before mortgage funds are advanced.

CRD permits are required before any construction, renovation, demolition or building relocation takes place. They are also necessary in order to connect sewer or water systems, install chimneys or fireplaces, woodstoves, fireplace inserts or lawn sprinkler systems.

With a complicated set of regulations in the B.C. Building Code and relevant local

bylaws, Stubbs becomes an interpreter and coordinator for many people. He feels "a building inspector should be there for a source of information."

Besides dispensing "official" information, Stubbs often relays messages between tradesman or clients, simply because he is in contact with so many of them on a regular basis or knows where they are likely to be.

The actual amount of time spent in-

INSPECTION B13

Permits are required before construction projects are started

Paperwork is a major consideration for any homeowner contemplating changes to a residence. Whether it be construction of a new home or a renovation or addition to existing premises, it is important to remember the paperwork which must be completed.

All construction on Salt Spring and in the Capital Regional District is governed by the British Columbia Building Code, Building Bylaw 1012, the B.C. Plumbing Code and local zoning bylaws.

This means sheets of paper called "permits" are required before construction projects are started. Certain information must be provided to the Building Inspection Office before permits are issued.

Two copies of project plans — three in the Outer Gulf Islands — must be submitted to the office, along with a copy of the property tax assessment notice.

The Building Inspection Office asks that plans "be drawn to scale, be clear and durable and . . . indicate the nature and extent of the work."

Installation of a sewage disposal system also requires three copies of the site plan. Permits are issued after inspection office approval of the application and plans and payment of required fees.

Salt Spring Building Inspector Dick Stubbs says the formula for ascertaining fee amounts considers several factors, including project square footage and the number of chimneys and plumbing fixtures. Total fees range from \$400 to \$2,000, he says.

For construction of a new home, inspections are required after completion of the following stages: Form and steel (but concrete not poured); foundation or vapour barrier; framing; insulation and vapour barrier; chimney; lath and stucco; final completion.

Plumbing and drainage work must also be inspected six times between the ground being covered until completion of all hook-ups and fixture installation.

The Building Inspection Office asks permit holders to follow a few guidelines to facilitate smooth processing.

All work requiring inspection and approval should be complete when an inspector is requested to visit the site. Access to the building should be assured, and if the building is occupied, a person must be on the premises at all times during the inspection.

Approved construction drawings should be available on site during all inspections, and construction work should not proceed beyond the stages indicated for each inspection without the prior written approval of the Building Inspector.

For more information about building permits and inspections, call the Capital Regional District Building Inspection Office at 537-2711.



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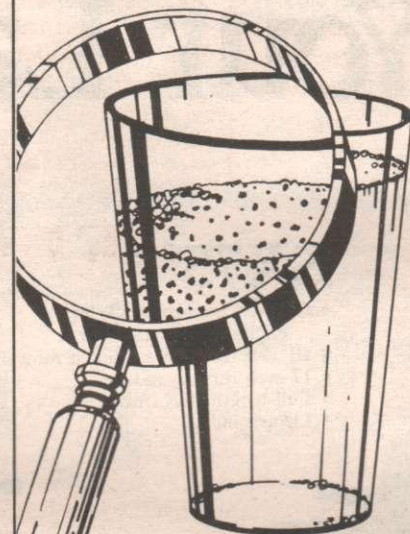
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SPRINGTIME

INSPECTION

From Page B12

specting work is relatively small, he says, though he often logs 50 miles in an afternoon of visiting 10 to 12 work sites.

Since taking up his position on Salt Spring over 18 months ago, Stubbs has absorbed a great deal about the island, contractors and the myriad "permit holders" he has dealt with. Stubbs handled 300 permit applications last year, about half of which were for single family dwellings.



Dick Stubbs

He inspects a home at least six times from start to finish and often more frequently when problems arise or builders have specific questions.

Asking for assistance amid uncertainty is encouraged by Stubbs.

"I would much rather answer a question than have to get someone to rip something out," he stresses.

Sometimes, he will advise do-it-yourselfers to fit everything into place — as with plumbing fixtures — and have him inspect the job *before* it is permanently assembled.

Stubbs says he thinks it is "great" that so many people on Salt Spring undertake their own building projects.

"I would hate to see the day," he says, "when a guy couldn't go out and build his own house."

He observes that "the contractors are, by and large, really cooperative here," and says he endeavours to be the same with them.

As a former contractor, Stubbs says he realizes "these guys have a job to do," and "it really helps if the inspector can be as cooperative as possible."

He tries to provide prompt service — knowing his approval is necessary before work can continue — and he asks contractors to give him advance notice when they need him on-site.

The quality and variety of construction on the island makes Stubbs' job more interesting than it would be in many other locales. In referring to city blocks of subdivision housing, he says "can you imagine going and looking at the same house 20 times a day?"

On Salt Spring, he says, "you can go from one extreme to another," in one day, looking at homes "from a luxurious mansion to an 800-square-foot log cabin."

A large amount of "high end" housing and "a pretty high standard of craftsmanship," characterize the local construction industry, he says.

He believes the permit and inspection process can be problem-free if all parties address a basic question: "How are we going to make this right for all concerned?"

Stubbs is available at the CRD Building Inspection office in the government building during most weekday mornings, and conducts inspections in the afternoons.

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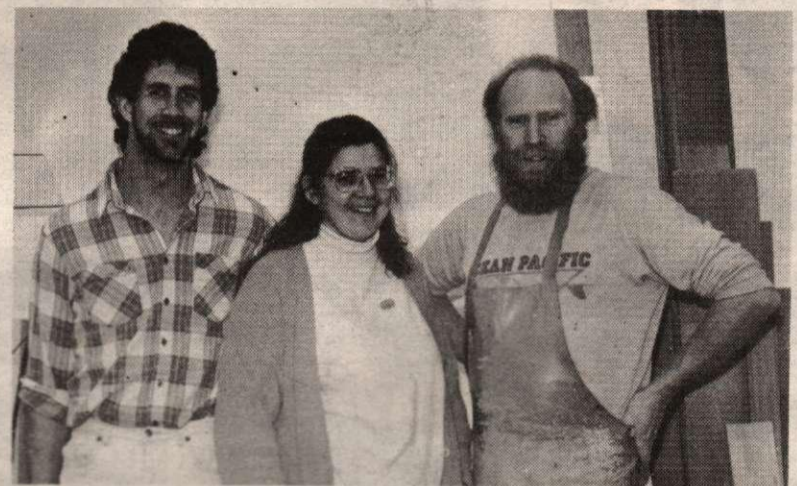
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Permit cost

Building permits range in price according to the work planned.

For a single- or two-family dwellings, factory built and mobile homes the permit is based on an approximate market value, explained Dick Stubbs, building inspector for Salt Spring Island.

He gave permit values in square feet although those values can be converted to cover metric measurements.

Approximate market value is determined by multiplying the area of construction by \$45. Stubbs stressed the \$45 per-square-foot figure is arbitrary and bears no relationship to actual cost of construction which could, on average, run up to \$70 per square foot or more.

For instance, on a house measuring 1,000 square feet, the approximate market value would come to \$45,000. The first \$5,000 of value bears a permit cost of \$68. Each \$1,000 of value above that figure carries a permit cost of \$10 per \$1,000.

Plumbing permits cost \$10 per fixture. If the house had a kitchen sink, a bathroom sink, shower, toilet and hot water heater, the plumbing permit would cost \$50. For a chimney and wood stove add another \$30 while the septic system and water hook-up costs \$20.

Building permits for a 1,000 square foot house would cost \$68 plus \$400 (\$10 x 40) plus \$50 plus \$30 plus \$20 for a total of \$568.

Permit costs would be adjusted accord-

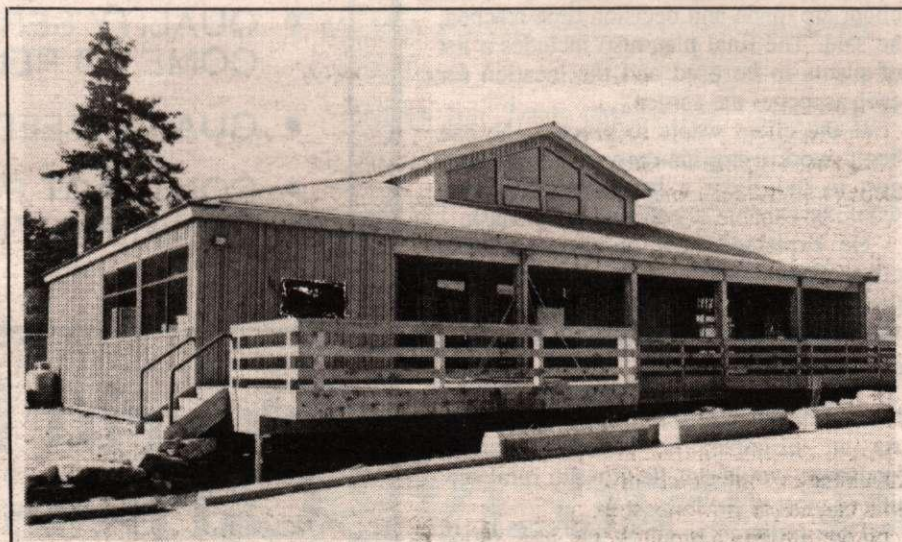
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SPRINGTIME



Springtime photo by Kay Cullin

Signs of spring blossom everywhere

Choices in landscaping

Knowledge goes a long way in many endeavours and particularly in planning or maintaining landscaping around the home.

Many home owners on Salt Spring maintain their properties as close to natural as possible while as many more seek to keep the natural — but in a planned way.

Landscapers can be hired on a consulting basis to plan and design a garden or a landscape and carry the approved plans to completion.

On the other hand, the owner may want to do it alone.

One landscaper explained the process of creating a viable landscape or garden for a homeowner. First, he talks with the individual to elicit personal preferences.

"I want to find out what the garden represents for the individual," he said.

He asks such questions as "will the garden be used for tranquillity?" and "is it to be a playful area?"

He also wants to know how much time would be spent in the garden or landscape. He checks views from the home to determine how the exterior fits with the interior.

A good garden begins at the driveway entrance to the property, he noted.

"The plant material should lead the way to the front door," is how he explained the concept.

Emphasis on the natural environment also rates high with him.

"This for me is a real commitment," he said, "to try to work in harmony with nature."

In planning for each property, he asks the client "How much time, realistically, are you prepared to spend looking after the garden?"

He stressed that a garden can change its mood very quickly if it is not attended to properly. On the other hand some people want low maintenance, natural style gardens which would entail choice of vegetation which does not suffer too greatly from

requiring deep roots would not be suitable. Choice of garden plants also runs along lines which would complement the natural vegetation, he said.

Several stages are required to come up with a comprehensive plan, he explained. After talking with the client, he will measure the areas and view what is there.

"If you think about what the land is," he explained, "a good plan acknowledges what it is saying."

With measurements and site sketches, he prepares a preliminary plan which he discusses with the client.

"The preliminary plan incorporates my understanding of what I've heard from the client," he explained.

Changes to the plan as suggested by the client are made and decision time reached, he said. The final plan also includes a list of plants to be used and the location for each aspect of the garden.

If the client wants to proceed, he can begin work using his crew or he can suggest to the client a list of workers who would be capable of carrying out the task.

He explained how he proceeds with client discussions by seeking "honesty of theme." By that he means the concept should fit with the natural landscape of the area.

"The theme shouldn't destroy the inherent character of the property," he said. As an example, he noted an urban landscape would not fit into the rural setting of most of the island.

Time required to finish the task varies according to the complexity of the plans, he explained. If the design calls for a simple garden and scattered flower beds, the job would be completed quickly. Or work can require more time -- even up to a year or two -- if the landscaping is to be carried out in stages as other work on the property is completed.

Comes a time, however, when the gar-

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SPRINGTIME

They're black, brown, pink or spotted. They're the gardener's nightmare, the one pest guaranteed to turn the most committed pacifist into Norman Schwarzkopf.

They're slugs. And you've got millions of them.

By ANNE LYON
Driftwood Contributor

If your young delphiniums have disappeared, leaving only a glistening trail of slime; if you have to fine-tooth-comb your lettuce before you dare eat it — read on.

If we have to share our planet with these disgusting creatures, surely our superior intelligence enables us to get the better of them without resorting to savagery? What are our non-violent options?

First we must forget our anthropocentric world view and learn to think like a slug.

In spite of their incredible success as a species, individual slugs are fragile creatures. They have no elaborate climate control systems as mammals do, and thin, delicate skin, so they need, cool, moist surroundings. Unless it's damp and cloudy, they want to be under things . . . things like boards and pots in the cold frame or greenhouse, or debris and overhanging foliage in the garden. Fanatical cleanliness and fussy housekeeping can eliminate a lot of these hiding places.

Apart from their sex lives (you don't want to know that each slug is both male and female, so it can always find a partner) slugs live to eat. Their favourite food is dead things . . . grapefruit rinds, compost heaps, fermenting grass clippings, beer and things your cat leaves lying around. Their second favourite food is tender young green growing plants.

So you can discourage slugs by growing plants they don't like. They aren't as fussy as deer, though, so this isn't easy.

Grass is usually safe. They don't like dry-looking herbs, such as rosemary or lavender, or bitter alkaloids such as tomatoes or potatoes. They don't bother evergreens, like fir trees or rhododendrons. And the bigger the plant is when you bring it home, the more likely it is to grow faster than the slugs can eat it.

But if you're seriously trying to grow broccoli or peas or petunias, you'll need a slug fence.

Slug fences don't need to be seven feet tall, but they often need maintenance. Here are some suggestions:

- Seaweed. The combination of the salt and the sharp bits of sand and clamshell do seem to work for a while. If you could rig up some protection from the rain it would work longer, but bear in mind the slugs will ooze up and down your clever arrangements of posts and guy-wires.

- Bark mulch, especially cedar. Some people swear by this, especially if it's a wide enough band the slugs get a rash on their tender little bellies and go home to sulk.

- Have you tried a moat? Remember, slugs can't swim. A six-inch trench lined with weighted poly should do it, filled with water or, if you're feeling generous, beer.

- For cold frames, where one seven-inch banana slug can wipe out a season's planning in a night, try a combination. Build the frame on posts set in basins of water on a bed of cedar chips, and tuck seaweed around the boxes inside the frame.

My last guilt-free suggestion is the Slug Relocation Program. A slug will be just as happy if you fling it over the fence into the neighbour's garden. With rubber gloves, you can pick a coffee-can full of slugs in your garden, take them for a ride in the car, and set them free like kittens in the woods. Or in a warmhearted spirit of giving, leave the can on your neighbour's doorstep. If she chooses to pass them on to her neighbour's ducks it's morally clearly out of your control.

But let's be honest here. To most gar-

Simple solutions to the slaying of slugs

deners, slugs are the enemy. Slugs are evil. Slugs maim and murder innocent plants. And so we kill slugs. Every gardener has a favourite method:

Claudia says set out saucers of beer and let them drown in it. At least they die happy. Some say homebrew works best.

Some recommend salt. I salted a slug once and it slowly wrinkled up, until it looked just like Ronald Reagan. It was

awful.

Susan McIver of Fulford Harbour has this advice. "I drop very large rocks on slugs. This does positively nothing to reduce the slug population overall, but is psychologically very satisfying to humans!"

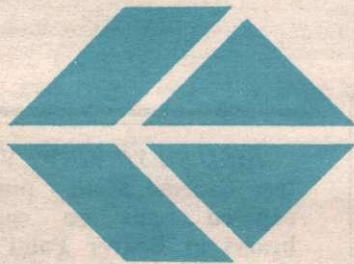
Jill says gumboots are the answer. They only work on the big slugs, though, and must be new enough to have a sharp tread.

Stores will sell you slug poison. Don't buy it unless you are on irreversibly bad terms with the neighbour's pets. Metaldehyde slug bait can be fatal even to a large dog.

Bill still remembers being impressed when he visited his mother-in-law in Agassiz, where the slugs make ours look like tourists. At dawn and dusk she'd be out in her gumboots on slug patrol, fag hanging from the corner of her mouth, single-mindedly pushing soggy leaves aside with her battered kitchen scissors and snipping the slugs in two.

A bonus to this last method is that slugs

SLUGS B16



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SLUGS

From Page B15

are attracted to dead slugs, so they get easier and easier to find. A word of advice though: don't bring the scissors back into the kitchen.

Don't get your hopes up. Seasoned gardeners know that even constant vigilance can only reduce but not eliminate the slug problem.

But perhaps we're looking at this the wrong way. Perhaps slugs are in fact not a problem but an opportunity.

Perhaps we're overlooking a wholesome source of protein here! After all, slugs' close relatives, snails, have been gourmet escargots for centuries. And my mother recalls as a child in England seeing a man

pick a big black leather (licorice) slug off the forest floor and pop it whole into his mouth.

In her unpublished work, "The Intrepid Epicure," between recipes for Woodbug Croutons and Worms Vermicelli, Jane Beard suggests:

— Keeping the slugs for a day or two in a damp bucket with cornmeal (as you would clams) to clean out their stomachs.

— steaming them and serving them either hot, with garlic butter, in large escargot shells, or cold with Caesar salad.

— the banana slugs are especially nice in a fruit salad with a honey vinaigrette.

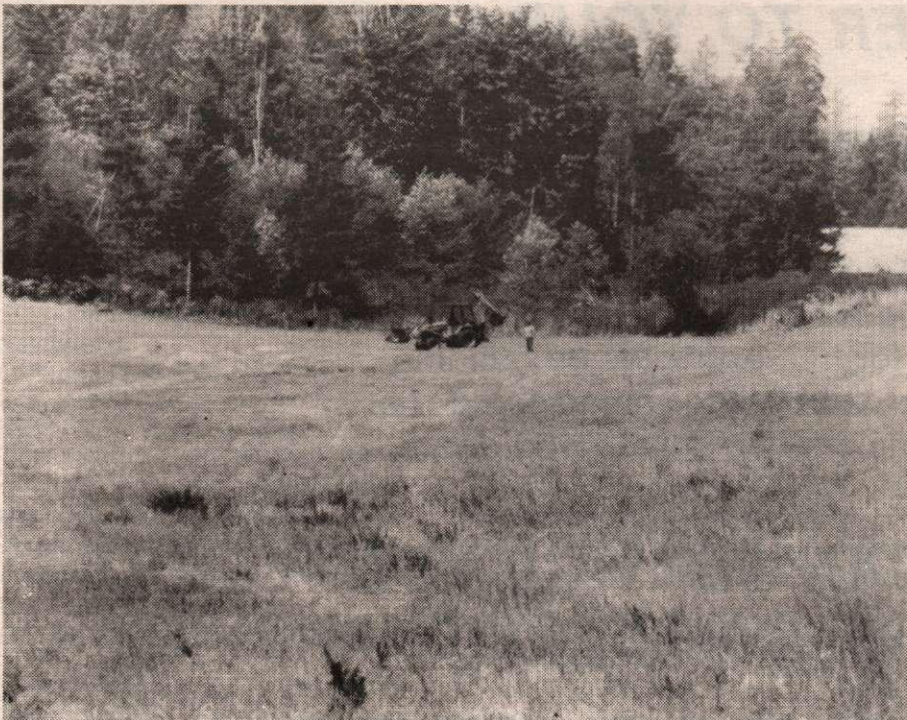
Good luck and bon appetit!

BIRD'S EYE VIEW: Volunteer Graeme Moltby punches exposed nails on support beams at Beaver Point Hall construction project.

Springtime photo by Derrick Lundy

Ken Byron Excavating

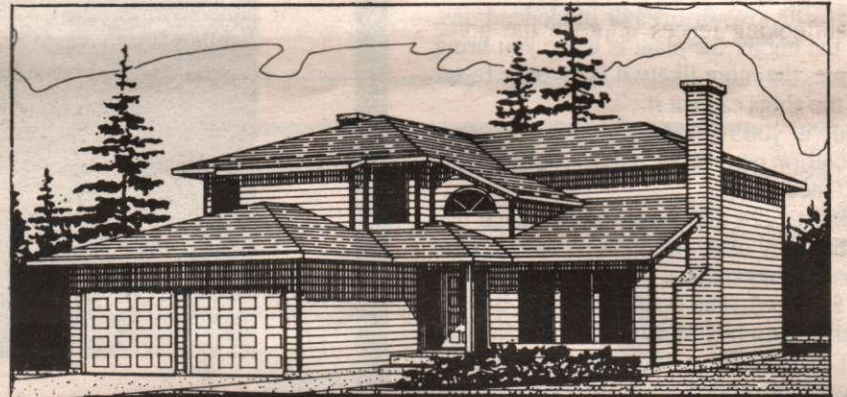
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SPRINGTIME

Some spruce-up jobs needed prior to sale

Finding a realtor, naming the price, and hammering a "For Sale" sign into the front lawn are only the first of several steps in selling a home.

As Century 21 principle agent Mary Small points out, "a potential buyer's first impact is emotional" when he or she views a house. Therefore, it's important the seller has done everything to make that emotional impact a positive one.

The exterior of a house is very important. Some people can see through the clutter, but others see junk as indicative of an uncared-for home.

Before a house is even put on the market, the owner should attend to a variety of "spruce-up" tasks and minor (or major) repair jobs.

"The exterior is very important," Small says. Some people can see through the clutter, she adds, but others see junk as indicative of an uncared-for home.

"If you see a yard cluttered with broken bicycles, broken vehicles and other junk, it can be a good indication of what the whole place is like. It's likely the furnace hasn't been serviced, for example."

Potential buyers are generally attracted to a tidy yard — mow and rake the lawn, clean up garden refuse and store any garbage or junk well out of sight.

Freshly painted trim, and repaired, clean-looking fences improve the home's exterior appearance.

Small says, "We don't encourage spending a lot of money on decorating, because decorating is such a personal thing. You could spend a lot of money re-doing the inside of a house and the buyer would just want to change it all."

"The emphasis is on tidiness and cleanliness."

Some sellers may want to tackle a few major repair jobs before placing their house on the market. Small says rotten railings or stairs should be replaced. Basement leaks should be corrected; eavestroughs should be clean and functional.

Buyers are often very concerned about roofs and chimneys: repairs can be onerous and expensive. Serious purchasers will look to see if the roof will need repairing in the immediate future, and if it has been

patched or redone in the past.

Chimneys can be re-pointed and recapped to improve their appearance.

Home owners can become blind to many small "areas of need" in their homes which viewers will note right away.

Small advises sellers to clean windows, removing any mildew along the frames. Mildew can be a major problem in rooms where windows are infrequently opened. Remove broken or dirty screens on doors or windows, rather than show them to the viewer, who may consider them indicative of other uncared-for aspects of the home.

Those with hot-air furnaces should vacuum any dirt and dust that has collected in the floor grills. Records of furnace servicing should be available for scrutiny by a potential buyer.

Something as easy as cleaning light switches can improve the room's appearance, Small adds. Any finger prints on glass and woodwork should be removed.

"One of the worst things is showing a house with low voltage light bulbs," Small says, adding that a brighter bulb will augment the entire look of a room.

Sellers who have tenants living in their house cannot always count on tidy presentations of their home to potential buyers. These houses are usually priced accordingly, Small says: sellers have the option of lowering the sale price and obtaining rental revenue, or making sure the house is in top form and receiving a higher price for it.

Some people actually look to buy these types of houses, counting on "sweat-equity" to make them pay. People may intentionally buy a rundown home at a lower price, fix it up themselves, and sell it for more money.

At the other end of the scale, Small warns home sellers not to create an uncomfortable feeling in their house by "over-cleaning."

"I've actually had people say to me *this house is too pristine, we couldn't live up to it.*"

Small advises owners of these homes to leave the laundry or *something* out to give the house a more "homey" atmosphere.

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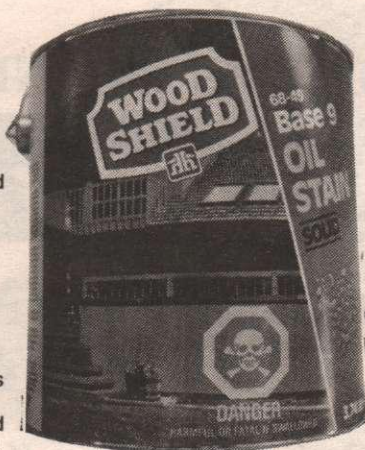
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SPRINGTIME



FIREPLACE CONSTRUCTION: Paul Hart works on the Rumford fireplace at Beaver Point Hall.

Springtime photo by Derrick Lundy

18th century fireplace

For a traditional source of heat

Renovations at Beaver Point Hall have been underway all winter and are now nearing completion. A major part of that work centres around an 18th-century Rumford fireplace.

By **GEORGE CLOGG**
Guest Columnist

Count Rumford was a soldier, statesman, scientist and man of letters. He is best remembered as one of the fathers of thermodynamics. As a scientist he was fascinated by light and heat, and was the first researcher to recognize the existence of radiant heat and light.

The traditional source of heat in the late 18th century in Europe and North America was the fireplace. Rumford was bothered by the inefficiency and smokiness of this household fixture and set about to design the unique and now renowned Rumford fireplace.

Beaver Point Hall Community Committee carried out some detailed detective work and traced down plans to enable bricklayer Ray Shergold, formerly of Southampton, England and resident of Canada for 10 years, to build the complicated brick edifice.

Shergold rates his experience mathematically. "Add it up for yourself. If a brick measures eight inches, and I estimate I have laid 2,160,000 bricks during my career, then end to end they would stretch 272 miles. Stack them above each other

and the bricks would equal a chimney 102 miles high."

For Beaver Point Hall, Shergold worked week after week, cutting bricks according to the ancient formula. Experts 200 years ago claimed that fireplaces had earned a reputation for wasting energy, sucking heat out of the house when the grate was cold and returning little warmth to the room.

Many people building on the Gulf Islands today are introducing the fireplace back into their homes. It is becoming a new vogue in comfortable living.

However, it needs to be built by a mason who really knows how to follow the rules. That of course applies to any fireplace.

Human attraction to fire initially was more physical than romantic. Intent on getting maximum heat from the flame, our ancestors built their fires smack in the middle of a cave where it was convenient for cooking.

RUMFORD FIREPLACE B19

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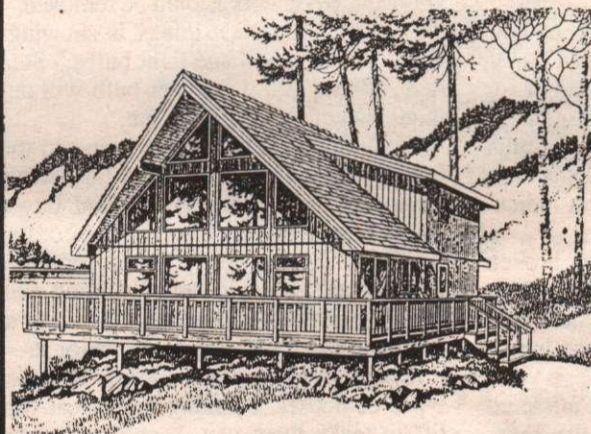
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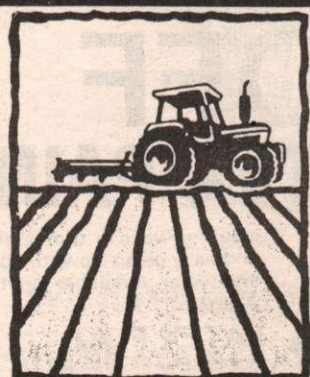
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SPRINGTIME



EFFICIENT HEAT SOURCE: Mason Ray Shergold puts finishing touches on Rumford chimney at Beaver Point Hall. The Rumford is a traditional and highly efficient fireplace.

Springtime photo by Derrick Lundy

RUMFORD FIREPLACE

From Page B18

The first Beaver Point Hall Community Centre was, ironically, burned to the ground in 1936, after a family feud. A member of the feuding family set it afire to get his vengeance. Then he hung himself.

But the determined Beaver Point area residents rallied to build again, raising money for materials by holding dances and other means. Times were not easy but their biggest asset was their community attitude.

Gwen Ruckle, 59, who was born at Ruckle Farm, recalled: "Residents from miles around built their lives on community help they gave each other. Their comradely spirit involved men, women and children. Back 54 years ago there existed a great feeling of pride and joy, helping each other."

"For instance, I can remember Beaver Point Community Hall being painted in 1936. There were at least 18 to 20 families living around. Men who could get to the top with their paint brushes mastered that section, others the middle. The not so tall and able brushed away further toward the bottom."

Painted battleship grey, the hall was refinished in one day.

There are few left who witnessed the grand opening of the new Beaver Point Hall but it remains a poignant memory in the minds of a few.

Construction of the Rumford fireplace which is being faced with specially-donated stone is just one more project in the continuing upgrading of Beaver Point Hall.

Refurbishing the hall will be an on-going affair, says committee member James Fogarty. In spite of generous help already given, further cash is needed to furnish two rooms and replace the kitchen among other things.

To date \$30,000 has been awarded by the Capital Regional District Windfall Fund, enabling immediate improvements to be carried out while a further \$20,000 has been awarded by the B.C. Lotteries Fund. The hall association pledged \$5,000 raised through hall rental, staging the popular Bean Supper, the Christmas Craft Fair and numerous other events. Other public-

spirited organizations have also donated funds.

Fogarty aptly evaluated the outlook of the area that refuses to look dowdy:

"Our spirits fly like a bird. Hopefully, our almost indestructible community spirit will live on and on."

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SPRINGTIME

House "hot buttons"

Popular selling features identified

Individuals looking to upgrade or renovate their homes with an eye to a future sale might want to consider "hot buttons" — or special features that could trigger the 1990s home-buyer to make the sale.

A new U.S. survey of 1,737 active home-shoppers provides some interesting facts.

Selecting a security system

How much is enough security for your cottage? That's a difficult, often subjective, question to answer. It is bad enough trying to come to grips with security at one's principle residence.

Location is the realtor's cry when determining property value. It is relevant when considering security. If your cabin is on a remote, nearly inaccessible lake with few neighbours, theft is less likely than if it is easily reached.

But this is not always the case: proximity to other cottagers, for example, can be your best security. Neighbourhood Watch programs work well. Why? Because people have a shared interest in protecting their community, for looking out for one another.

Of course, traditional rural and cottage communities have an informal Neighbourhood Watch. If you know you're going to be away three weekends in a row during the summer season, let your neighbour know. And, if you get a newspaper or mail delivery, make sure someone picks it up for you. Don't advertise your absence.

If you are not at the cottage for months on end, is there a local resident who would keep an eye on your property? Perhaps all the cottagers in your area would band together and offer him or her some monetary compensation for this obligation. After all, it is a responsibility, and as an occasional resident you do not want to become an imposition to local residents. Think about your possessions. Do you want to fill your cottage with Canadiana antiques? Or, do you want to furnish it with comfy, less expensive furniture and second-hand appliances that, if stolen, you are not going to miss with the same sense of aching loss?

The above pointers relate to life style issues. You alone can answer the question of what you expect out of cottage life, how often you will be there, what degree of comfort you expect.

Analyzing your expectations is a good start when considering how much money you want to spend on an alarm or other security system. After all, if you have a rustic, "bare-bones" hunting retreat, security is not necessarily as important as if your cabin is a summer/winter regular retreat complete with the comforts and conveniences of televisions, dishwashers, stereos, antiques and so on.

If you opt for security systems, study the market before you buy. If your cottage doesn't have electricity your selection is restricted, but you can consider battery-operated systems. Check the voltage requirements — will the alarm operate on your car battery?

Many ultrasound, infrared and microwave systems are on the market that can protect the area around your property. If the beam is interrupted, an alarm sounds. It is possible to install such systems yourself. But be forewarned that wise placement and angle of the beam is critical. Any moving object can trigger the alarm: cats, raccoons and deer are as likely candidates as any human intruder.

The survey, conducted for *Builder* magazine by Fulton Research, asked shoppers to rank the desirability of a new home's features from one to five, with five being the most desirable. Any feature scoring three or higher is considered a "hot button," the magazine says.

Here are the results:

• Windows

The hottest hot button of all was double-pane windows, with a score of 4.17.

Also popular were bay windows and specially shaped windows.

• Outdoors

A rear deck or patio was ranked at 4.12, a very high score.

Also popular were exterior lighting, upgraded landscaping and backyard fencing.

• Interiors

The highest-ranked features were a wood-burning fireplace (3.84), French

SURVEY RESULTS B21

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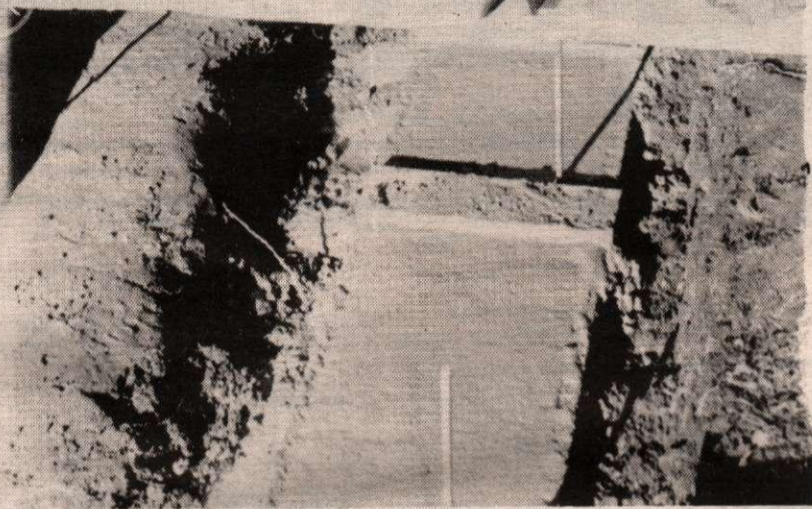
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SPRINGTIME



PREPARATION: John-Marc Billaud trowels cement footing in preparation for decking which is added on once the cement has cured (24-hours). Billaud is seen working at Beaver Point Hall.

Springtime photo by Derrick Lundy

SURVEY RESULTS

From Page B20

doors, panelled interior doors, built-in shelving and ceiling molding.

• Kitchens

The most popular features were a walk-in pantry (3.91), island work area, matching appliances and cabinet fronts, slide out trays and ceramic tile floors.

• Master bathroom

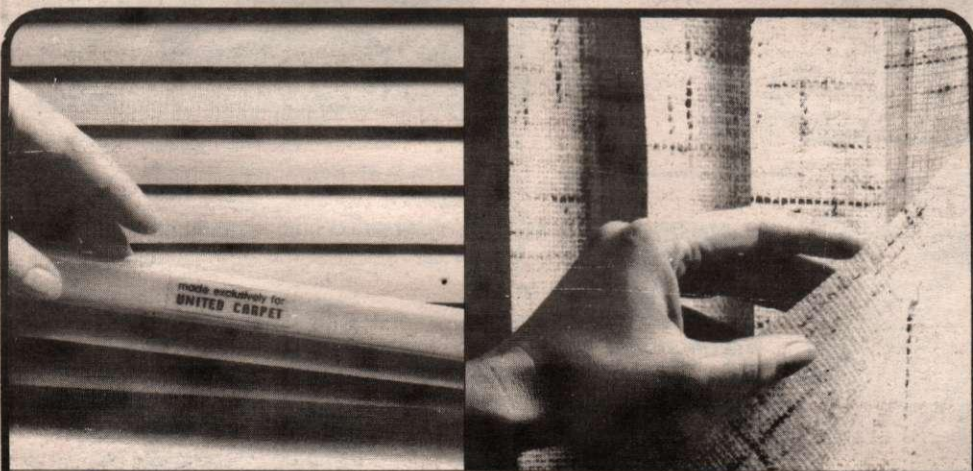
This room has the longest list of desirable features: two sinks (4.12), separate shower (4.11), ceramic tile tub, private toilet, ceramic tile floor, upgraded fixtures, whirlpool tub and dressing-make-up area.

One section of the survey asked shop-

pers where they wanted to add space to a new home they considered adequate.

The answers showed a desire for a bigger family room (39 per cent), master bedroom (20 per cent) and kitchen (15 per cent). Very few people would add space to the master bathroom (five per cent) or dining room (two per cent).

The survey also asked about optional rooms that add to a house's cost. The highest ranked extra was a sun room, favoured by 38 per cent of shoppers. The lowest was a media room, attracting only seven per cent.



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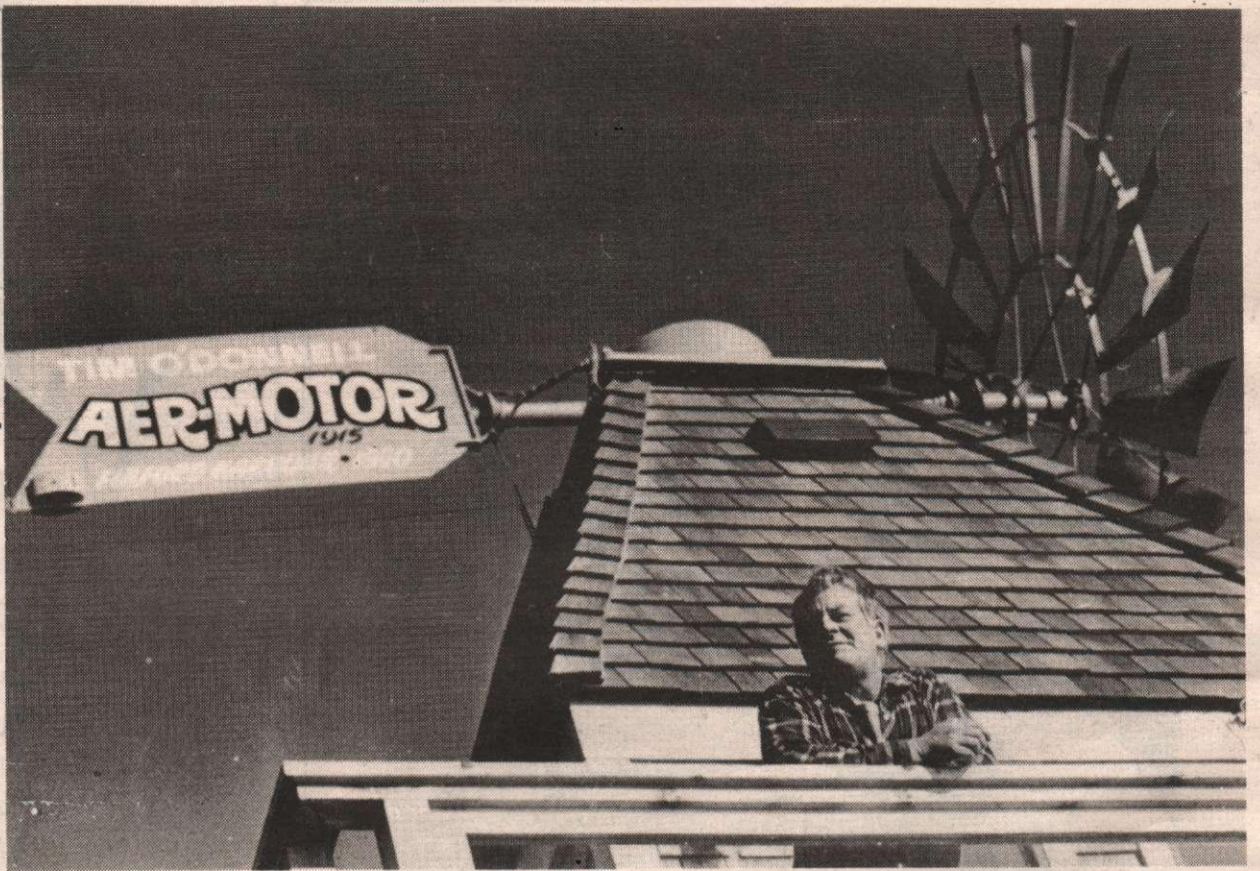
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PHOTO FEATURE

O'DONNELL: "I have always wanted to put one up and utilize it here," says Tim O'Donnell, standing in front of his completely self-contained windmill.

The island resident took different car and truck parts, integrating them with an old set of blades from an early 1930s windmill. The old windmill was used for pumping water on Salt Spring.

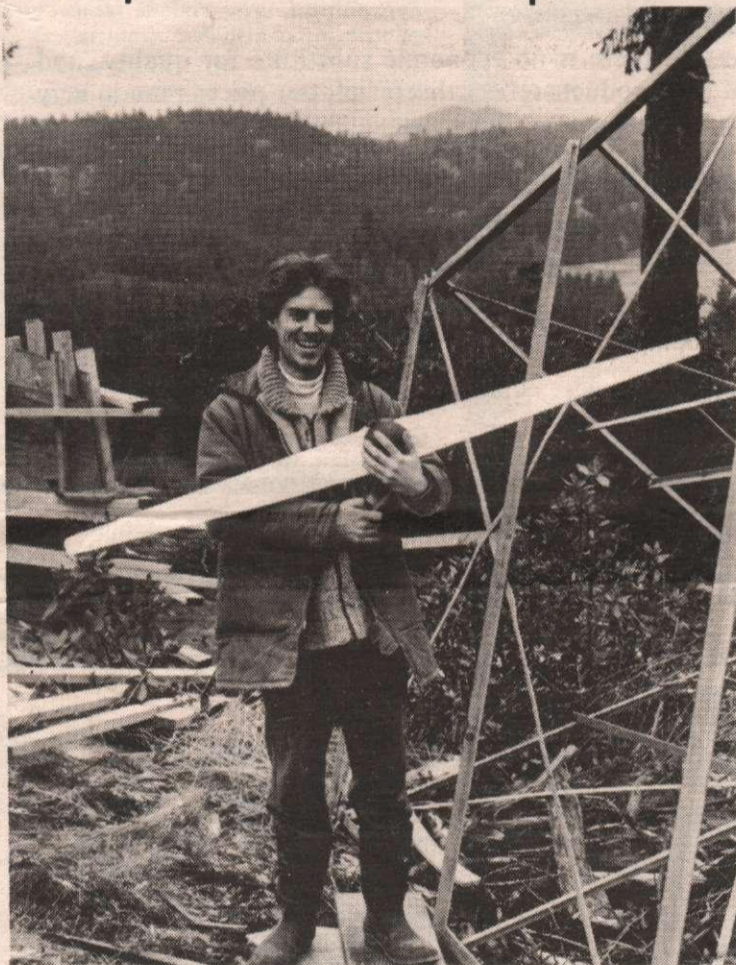
O'Donnell transformed the pumped water system into a generator drive which produces 12 volts (27 amps) stored into batteries. He uses the windmill at a summer cottage, enjoying his efforts in Fulford Harbour.



RUDD: Islander Warren Rudd is pictured here with his brand new *Wind Seeker II*. Rudd sought an alternate method of producing electricity after he discovered the high cost of bringing hydro to his Mt. Maxwell home.

The *Wind Seeker II* produces 350 watts of electricity which charges 12 volt batteries and goes through an inverter, converting it to normal household power.

Rudd also uses solar panels and a propane generator to be self-sufficient and minimize his impact on the environment.



SPURRILL: Bill Spurrill says he has "always wanted to" operate a windmill, since he used horses to erect an earlier version in 1925.

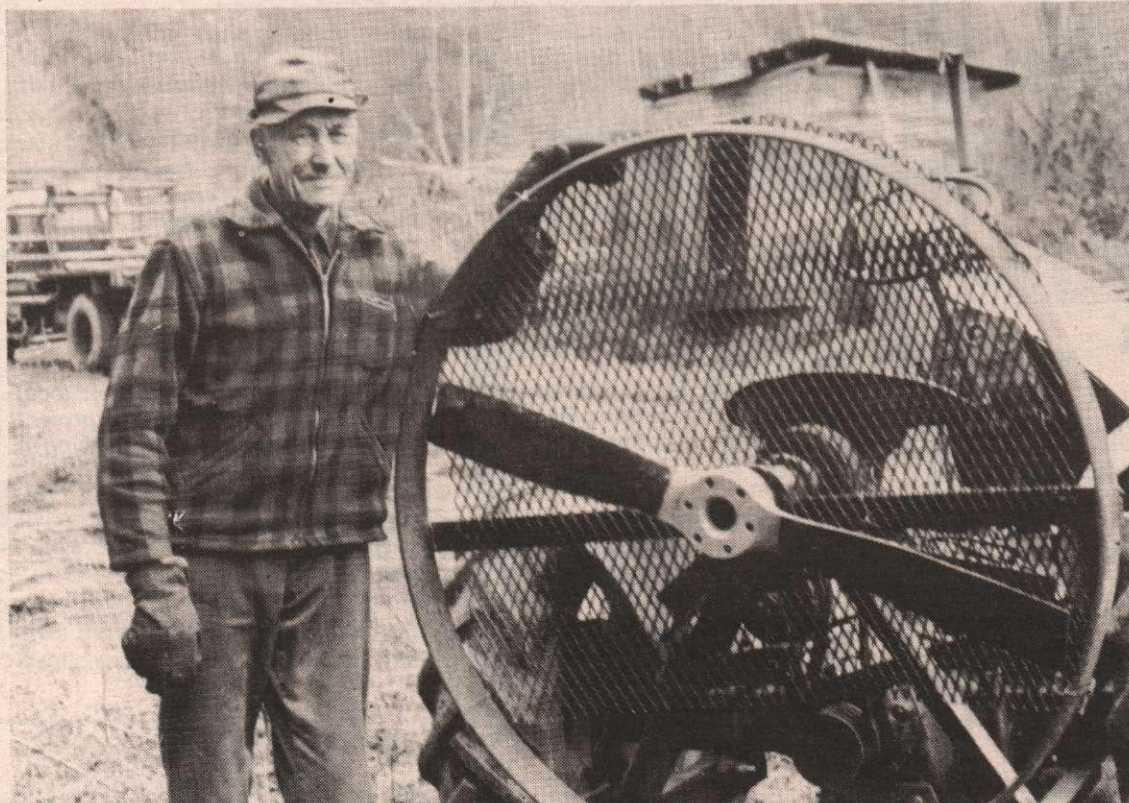
This one is a "monitor" made in 1909 by the J. Baker Manufacturing Co. It was used to water about 200 head of stock in southern Manitoba. Bill brought it to Salt Spring about five years ago and set it up on his property.

He has since modified it into a force pump to fill a cistern which waters his garden.



BLOWIN' IN THE WIND

Springtime photo feature by Derrick Lundy



McGEE: Ralph McGee has fashioned this airplane propeller to the power take-off on his old tractor. Even though the wind doesn't propel this unit, Ralph uses this to force air on wet burn piles of sawdust and scrap wood.

On the corner of Atkins and Lower Ganges roads, nestled among the blackberries and an old orchard, sits this rusty double-gear "ideal" windmill made in Brantford, Ontario. It awaits a transformation to bring it back to a life of blowing in the wind.



SPRINGTIME

Basic tools needed

Each home should not be without a few basic tools.

Home repairs can be handled easier if proper tools are available. Tightening a door knob, for instance, with a kitchen knife can create frustration.

A tool box helps hold the tools and keep them in one place. Consider a metal version about 48 centimetres (19 inches) long.

Buy a hammer. Try out several in the store to see which one feels right. Hammers come with wooden, cast iron or forged steel. A 16-ounce weight will do just fine for most carpentry tasks.

Add screwdrivers to the tool box. Look for good quality steel in the screwdrivers and obtain several types to cover different screw heads. Use a cheaper version for such tasks as prying off the lid of a paint can.

Wrenches come in handy. An adjustable wrench, 20 cm (eight inches) is fine for most work involving nuts and bolts or small pipe fittings. A jaw-locking wrench helps in several common situations to hold something in place or for use in tightening bolts.

Wire cutters cut wire and can also be used to trim rose bushes or cut flowers. Power tools are optional although a saw and a drill help cut and drill things when needed.

A tape measure, a putty knife, an all-purpose knife and sandpaper come in handy and are sorely missed if not available. Don't forget to obtain an assortment of nails, screws, tacks as well as nuts and bolts.

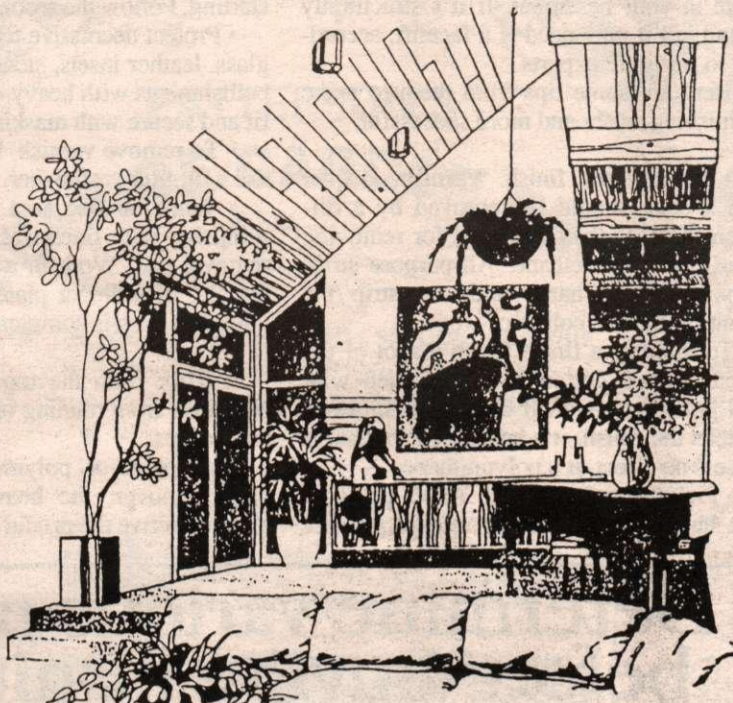
No bathroom should be without a plunger.

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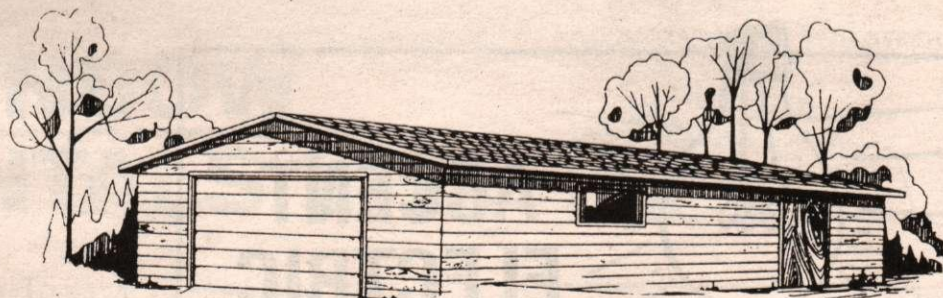
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SPRINGTIME

Facelift can make furniture as good as new

There may be a beautiful piece of furniture hiding beneath that ugly bookcase or table in your basement. If it's structurally sound, all it may need is a facelift, according to furniture experts.

Here are some tips from them to make refinishing easier and more successful:

- Identify the finish. Varnish, lacquer and shellac should be removed by a different process than that used for removing paint and polyurethane. All-purpose strippers often are harsh and can strip the beautiful natural colour of wood.

To identify a finish touch a spot of the finish with a cotton ball dampened with nail polish remover. If the cotton sticks or softens the finish, it's lacquer or shellac. If there's no effect, it's polyurethane.

- Pick the right product. Avoid products that have a water base or require a water

rinse. Water can damage wood.

- Read all instructions thoroughly before starting. Follow the recommendations.

- Protect decorative trim. Cover mirrors, glass, leather insets, stencils and other embellishments with heavy-duty plastic, cut to fit and secure with masking tape.

- To remove varnish, lacquer or shellac, use a furniture refinisher.

- Work on one area at a time. Apply refinisher with fine steel wool or a finish-removal pad. Work in a small area, about the size of a dinner plate, and stay with it until the finish is completely dissolved.

- Work from the top down to prevent old finish from running on to clean areas as it dissolves.

- For paint or polyurethane, choose a paint remover; the heavier the can, the more effective the product.

- Paint removers work best when the temperature is 65 to 85 degrees F (18 to 30 C).

- Stroke in one direction. Don't use a painting motion to apply paint remover. Do not touch the surface until all the bubbling action stops.

- If heavy paint spots remain, don't

scrape or try to dig them out. You'll damage the wood. Apply more remover.

- To get paint out of wood grain or carvings, use a genuine brass brush and work in one direction.

- After removing paint, immediately wash the wood with paint remover wash on steel wool.

Determine various needs before buying furniture

You probably won't shop for upholstered furniture often, so when you do, shop wisely. Chances are, it's a big purchase and will put a significant dent in your pocketbook.

There are a number of things to consider before you shop:

- Measure: be sure to measure the area in which you plan to put the furniture. If it's an easy chair you intend to buy, measure the exact area where you plan to put it. If it's a recliner, extra room might be needed. Take the measurements and a measuring tape when you shop. Also, measure doorways or sliding-door entrances. Some people buy furnishings and then find they won't fit through the door.

- Match: If you intend to match other fabric such as window coverings or other furniture, take a piece of the fabric with you. If fabric isn't available, photograph the furnishing.

Now that you've done the planning, it's time to shop. Here are a few suggestions to make it a little easier.

- Compare: If you don't have a specific store in mind, check newspaper and advertising supplements for sales.

- Take notes: Carry a notebook if you're shopping many stores. You might think you'll remember, but about the time you've visited your tenth store, what you've already looked at will become a blur.

- Try it: Don't be afraid to "try out" upholstered furniture. Sit, lounge, lie. See if it fits you.

- Do your homework: It helps to know a little about what's under all that nice upholstery.

For example, upholstered furniture is made in three parts: the frame, the filling for cushions, and the outer fabric.

- Ask questions: Sales clerks are there to help and inform you.

- Flammability: Check whether the furniture is flame-retardant. Many people lose their lives when they fall asleep, letting their cigarette fall and ignite furniture.

- Delivery: Be sure to ask about delivery unless you have your truck outside and don't mind some heavy lifting.



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SPRINGTIME



CONSTRUCTION: Island contractor Steve LaFortune (above) uses a cross-cut saw to cut a piece of siding for an outside covering at a Reginald Hill job site. At side, volunteer worker Doug Motherwell donates time at Beaver Point Hall renovation site. Springtime photos by Derrick Lundy



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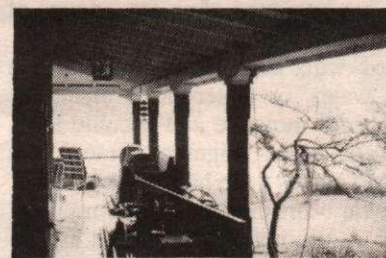
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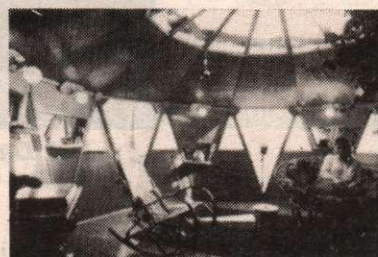
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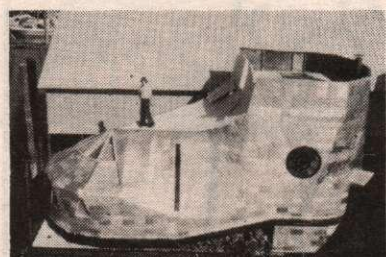
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SPRINGTIME

Recycle material into tools for the workshop

Do-it-yourselfers can do a good turn for the environment and their bank accounts by giving useful second lives to some materials that normally go into trash cans.

These are examples of things that can be recycled for home maintenance or workshop purposes:

• Flexible plastic foam

Sheets or strips of this rubbery foam make excellent throwaway applicators for putting on many types of finishes, including water repellents for decks and outdoor furniture, stains and paints.

The foam sometimes is used in packing and also can be recovered from some old chair pads and pillows. Foam about an inch thick is best, but thicker material usually can be cut to usable sizes.

To make an applicator pad, cut a small square or rectangle for the base from a scrap of 3/8-inch or 1/2-inch plywood. Nail a scrap of 3/4-inch wood to the top of the base to serve as a handle. Cut a piece of foam to match the pad base, with an extra 1.5 inches at each of two opposite ends. Fold the ends of the foam over the base and tack or staple the ends in place on the base's top side.

When the foam becomes worn, tear it off and apply a new layer.

To make a brush, use a rectangular piece of plywood or cut it in the shape of a brush handle. Cut a piece of foam and fold it over the end of the handle, stapling on both sides. The brushes are especially handy for touch-up work.

• Rigid plastic foam

Chunks of thick, white, rigid foam often

are used in packing, especially with electronic equipment. The foam makes fine benchtop holders or protective sheaths for sharp tools such as wood chisels, knives, awls, drill bits and screwdrivers. Push each tool into the foam to make a custom pocket.

• Other salvage

Large plastic bags, including trash bags, make good drop-cloths to catch paint drips and spills and can be used over and over. The best drop cloths: packing envelopes for a mattress and box spring.

Slit open the sides of bags to make large sheets. The thicker the plastic, the better, because it is less prone to blow around in a breeze when used outdoors.

Cardboard boxes, especially large ones, can be cut into pieces and the panels put to many good uses, including drip catchers for painting. Put a sheet of cardboard under the oil pan when changing the oil in a car or lawn mower — it invariably ends up stained with oil that would otherwise be on the driveway or lawn.

Also, put a cardboard sheet in the trunk of a car when hauling material that could stain or soil the carpet.

• Plastic bottles

Large plastic soft-drink bottles with reinforced bottoms can be converted to first-rate containers for nails, screws or small parts. Use a sharp utility knife to cut off the reinforced bottom and discard the top portion.

The bowl-like bottoms have smooth, half-sphere interiors that make it easy to scoop out even the tiniest objects.

Tips for long-lasting brushes

Even inexpensive brushes and rollers will last years with proper use, cleaning and storage.

Choosing the right brush or roller is also important.

Natural-bristle brushes, traditionally considered the best by professional painters, have many excellent qualities, particularly springiness.

But they are expensive and should be used only with oil or alkyd-base paint or other solvent-thinned finishes, none of which contain water.

If used with latex-based paint, which contains water, or water-based stain, the bristles absorb moisture and become limp. Also, water-based pigment enters the bristles and makes them hard to clean.

Synthetic brushes — nylon and polyester — are not absorbent and can be used with all types of paint and finish.

High-quality synthetic brushes can produce results rivalling those having natural bristles and they cost much less.

When buying rollers for use with water-based material, choose those with cores made of plastic or plastic-coated cardboard to repel moisture and prolong their life.

For applying solvent-based material, consider using inexpensive rollers with an unprotected cardboard core.

PAINT BRUSHES B27

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SPRINGTIME



TOUCH-UP: Painters Ron Cooke (left) and Katharine Harris give special care and attention to this painting job. Tips on maintaining paint brushes and rollers found below.

Springtime photo by Derrick Lundy

your home IS your castle

PAINT BRUSHES

From Page B26

Cardboard is not softened by solvent-based solutions, and since rollers lined with cardboard are so inexpensive, it is better to just throw them away.

Dipping a paint brush properly will prolong its life by making it easier to clean: dip the brush into the paint or other substance no more than half the length of the bristles.

When brushing, avoid splaying the bristles greatly, which can cause the brush to lose its shape. Lay brushes flat when you put them down. Do not leave brushes or rollers soaking in liquid, as this will damage the binding.

To clean both brushes and rollers, first wipe them between layers of newspaper to remove as much residue as possible.

Wash brushes used with water-based material under warm running water in a sink or in a bucket of warm soapy water and then rinse with clear water. Be sure to clean between the bristles, especially at the top where they join the brush handle.

When the brush is clean, insert it up to the handle in a plastic or paper bag, close the top by gripping it around the handle, and shake the brush to dry it without creating a mess.

Smooth and shape the cleaned bristles so they lie flat, square the edges and tip and then lay the brush flat on newspaper or suspend it by the handle to dry completely.

To clean a roller used with water-based materials, remove it from the handle and wash it as described. It helps to wring the roller with your hands during washing, but be careful not to crush the core.

When the roller is clean, rub it to raise the nap, then stand it upright on newspaper to dry. Do not lay a damp roller flat or it will develop a flat spot.

To clean brushes or rollers used with solvent-based materials, different techniques are required. For brushes, fill a wide-mouthed can or jar with about an inch of the appropriate solvent.

Turpentine or mineral spirits are standard solvents for paint, varnish and stain; lacquer, and denatured alcohol is the solvent for shellac.

Special emulsifying cleaners for brushes and rollers are also available that allow washing the item clean with soap and water.

Press the bristles of the brush against the base of the can or jar and flex them vigorously in the solvent or cleaner several times, until the liquid becomes saturated with residue.

Then pour the liquid into a container for disposal and replace it with a fresh supply. Wipe the brush on clean newspapers, and then repeat the process.

Continue wiping until the brush no longer produces streaks of colour.

Then wash the brush in a small amount of warm soapy water and rinse it with clear water.

Brushes and rollers should be wrapped to protect them during long term storage. T Secure the wrapping with a rubber band but do not crimp the bristles.

Rollers can be placed in paper or perforated plastic bags. Some air circulation should be present to prevent mildew.

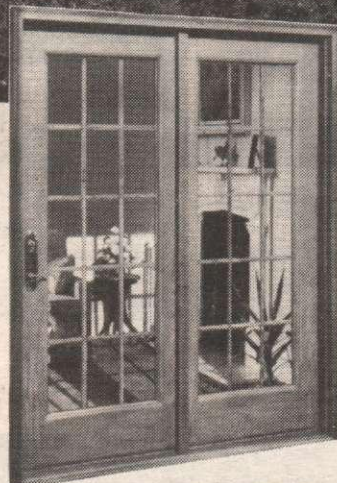
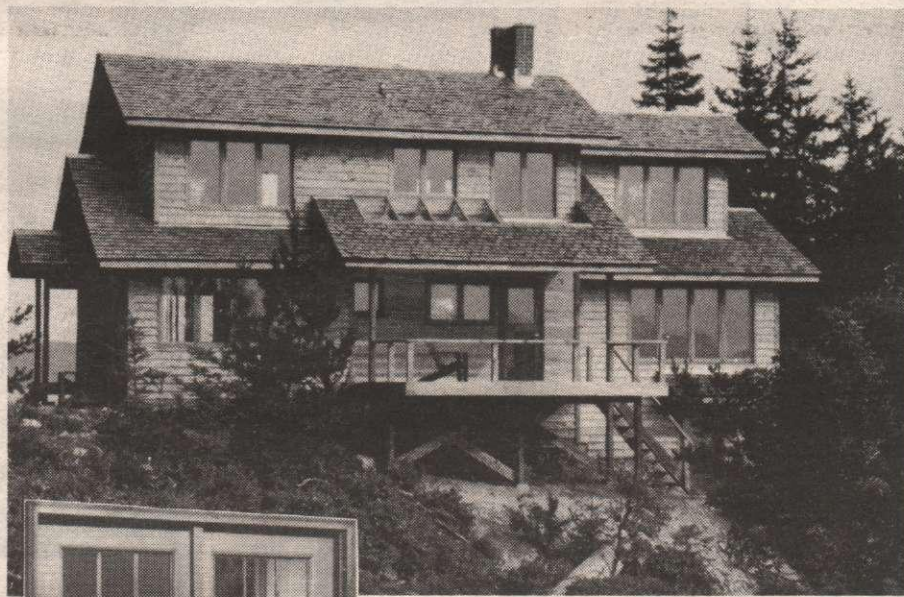


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SPRINGTIME

Following are Environment Canada tips for reducing water use without plumbing devices.

Avoid

- Thawing frozen foods under running water.
- Cleaning fruits and vegetables under running water; instead scrub them in a partially filled sink, and rinse quickly.
- Running to the tap for every glass of drinking water; instead keep a bottle cooling in the refrigerator.
- Running a half-filled dishwasher.
- Dripping taps; close tightly and, if they are leaking, install new washers.
- Using water-softening treatment systems and garbage disposals in the kitchen sink; water softeners flush away a lot of water when the softening agent is generated; garbage disposals waste water

Tips on saving water

in order to pulverize the waste.

- Running a tap while brushing teeth and shaving.
- Bathing when a quick shower will do; if you must bathe, you can get just as clean with a half-full tub. When drawing water for the tub, first put in all the hot water you want, then slowly adjust temperature with the cold water.
- Extinguishing cigarettes by flushing them down the toilet.
- Watering your lawn when the sun is at its brightest; early morning or late afternoon is best.
- Placing sprinklers where they water

the concrete rather than the lawn.

Use

- A device to create a dam in your toilet tank to reduce the amount of water it normally holds. Any non-porous item such as a plastic bottle will do, but stay away from bricks as they disintegrate and can plug up the system.
- Insulation on your hot water tank and pipe, and a thermostat set back to 50 degrees Celsius. This saves hot water by keeping it warmer longer and can reduce water-heating costs by 25 per cent.
- A bucket and sponge, requiring only

450 litres to wash a car, instead of the 700 litres expelled by a hose. Save 90 litres by attaching a trigger nozzle to the hose for rinsing off the suds.

- A cover for any swimming pool, to cut down on evaporation.

Here's how the average Canadian household uses its water:

- Inside the house, every day, we each use 350 litres, compared with an average 140 litres used in Europe.
- 45 per cent of it goes down the toilet.
- 30 per cent is washed away in showers and baths.
- 20 per cent goes to do the dishes and laundry.
- 5 per cent is drinking and cooking.

Expect a 100 per cent increase during the summer if you water the lawn or wash the car.

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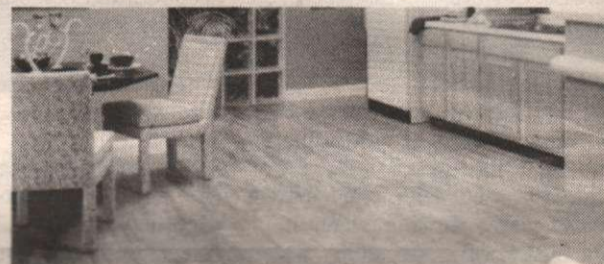
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