

# Co-operative housing

**A co-op member pays \$40 a month rent and bread money, \$30 for food and does his own cleaning. In exchange he gets a real house-type home**

Some people at U of A got obstinate last fall.

They refused to live in the Lister residences—too much mass living going on there, they thought, for any real life.

They refused to pay what a decent apartment costs, mostly because they were ordinary students without that kind of money.

And the idea of a little bedroom way up in a Garneau attic or way down in a Garneau basement Hades was kind of short on aesthetic appeal.

So, being obstinate and possessed with the unreasonable idea university students should have a real home, in a house, even, they garbaged all the current alternatives of living space open to students.

They set about creating a new alternative.

The alternative to a lonely Garneau hell or a crowded Lister heaven coalesced

**feature**  
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into the Campus Co-operative Association. About 50 people, most of them university students, paid \$1 to join the association and loaned themselves \$25 furniture money. The University of Alberta rented six houses to the co-op, at a slightly reduced rate, through its holding company, Royal Trust Company.

A Co-op member pays about \$40 a month rent and bread costs to the association office and between \$20 and \$30 a month to his house for food, depending on how much people eat in the particular house in which he lives. He helps clean the house every week, keeps his own room neat, does his own washing, and pays no maid service because of it.

He has a real house-type home a block or two off campus, a family living room with family kind of furniture—old and well-used. He never has to worry about having a friend to go down to dinner with

him because supper happens normally. Between 6 and 12 people sitting around a dining room table, some of them friends who just drop in, share the stew potluck.

No lines. No one checking your quota. No soup spilling over your too-small tray as you try to find a seat beside someone you know among 2000 people in a huge cafeteria.

Or no Tuck hamburger when your landlady isn't home to cook up hash for you to eat in the kitchen.

Just normal supper. It isn't stew very often, either. In the co-op house at 11031-81 Ave., each person cooks once a week. And once a week a new eastern dish comes steaming to the table, courtesy of an East Indian student living in the house.

## WHAT HAPPENED AND WHY

Now that the university term has exams rattling loudly at its tail, people "in co-op" are looking over the first year of co-op housing at U of A with an eye of evaluation. What happened? Well, the Allin House, at 8808-111 St., was raided for marijuana.

"The police walked in at 2 a.m. with mud on their shoes," remembers Brian Whitson, arts 2. "They emptied the waste baskets across the floors, and pulled clothes from closets onto the mess."

"I woke up with a flashlight shining in my eyes. A policeman told me to empty my pockets."

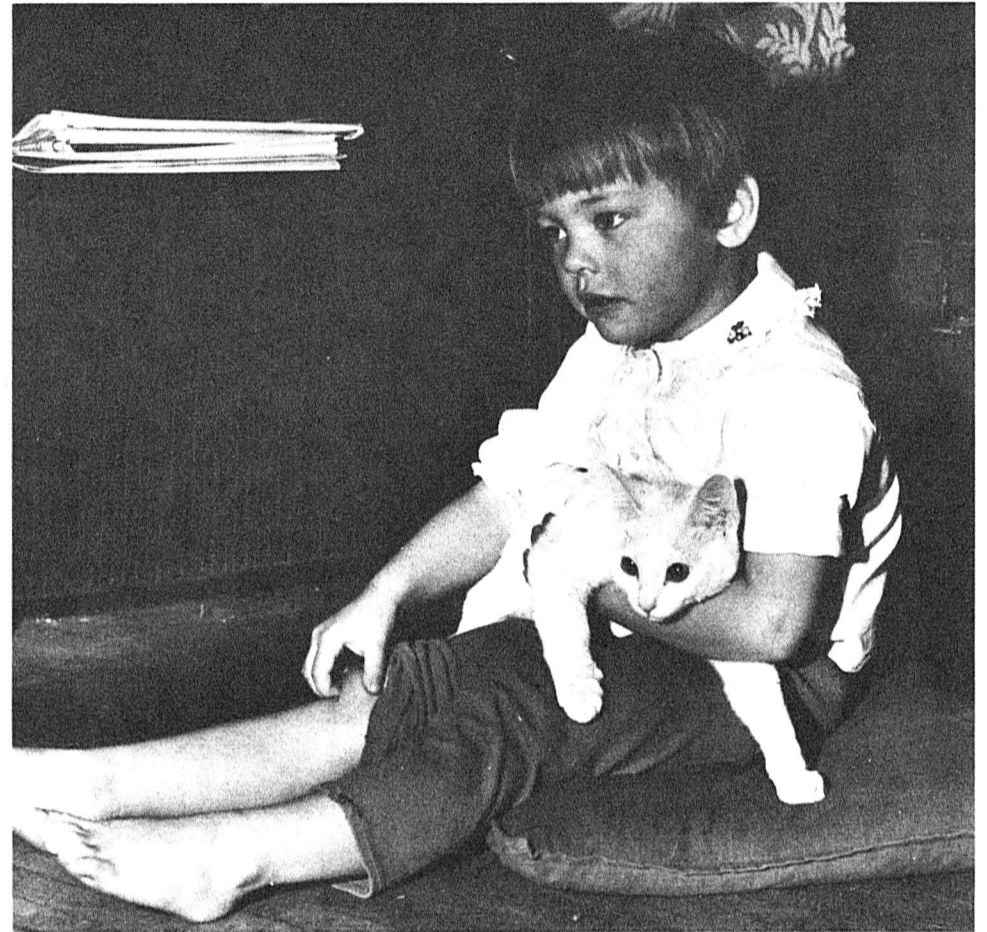
"I got out of bed, explaining I had pyjamas on and they didn't have pockets."

Two men from the house were charged with possession of marijuana. The group who had the narcotic in the house had already been served notice of eviction by the co-op association, and had only a couple of days to remain in the house when the raid occurred.

The co-op called a general meeting at 4:00 a.m. that mid-November morning, but the damage was done. Radio news rooms across Edmonton were reading the story by 6 a.m., reporting marijuana had been removed from a house "inhabited by unemployed flower children and hippy-like university students."

Long after the trouble-makers had gone, and in spite of a co-op regulation forbidding any narcotic on co-op premises, the campus spun with rumors of pot parties and drugs in the co-op houses.

Al Quirt, grad studies, lives in the Allin House. He was sitting in Tuck Shop



—B. S. P. Bayer photo

## JENNIFER AND HER FRIEND, THE CAT

... residents of the Saskatchewan Drive co-op house

having coffee one night last winter when a passing acquaintance who didn't know where he lived joined him and informed him the Allin House held grass celebrations in the living room every Friday night.

"Well, if there are, I've never been invited—and I've been in that living room most Friday nights," Al replied.

And for long after the raid, phones in the house were bugged and the people going in and out watched. It drove everyone paranoid.

But life was interesting, anyway.

The Allin House men weren't afraid of cops—they laughed at the shadowy men who would stare in the window at an innocent talk session. But they didn't laugh in the kitchen. None of the 11 men could handle the cooking, so Leslie Patterson, house ec 2, and Bette James, phys ed 2, moved in as cooks-in-residence from two girls' co-ops.

The university had previously held the co-ops to two stipulations for lower rent: don't have the sexes mixed unless the people are married, and don't paint the walls anything but a pastel shade.

But the situation in the Allin House was impossible, and the university administration waived the regulation about integrated housing.

Now the men are a little sorry. The first improvements the girls made were a "guys do the dishes" rule and a duty roster including things like "feed the cat".

At the 11032-89 Ave. house, "Earl Dean's house" as it's called by the co-op, Earl and Lois Dean have two small children. The men in the house are always there to babysit.

They learned a lot about unacademic things this year at Earl's house. It was sort of Diapers 100.

The girls in the co-op at 11029-Saskatchewan Drive, "the Saskatchewan Drive house", have three-year-old Jennifer and a white kitten theoretically named Thomasia but really called Cat.

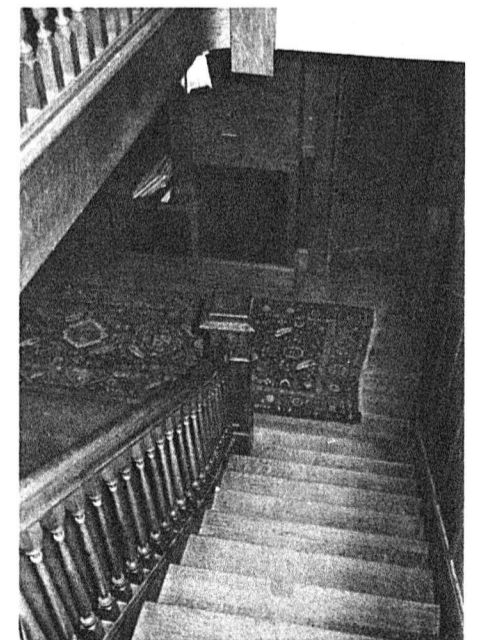
The Saskatchewan Drive house is a little different from other co-op houses. The girls are 20 or older, are all members of Students for a Democratic University, and are all politically active on campus.

A sense of drive, an atmosphere of common belief and direction, pervades the dinner table there.

Talk over the spaghetti tends to what the students' union ought to be doing, how students can gain more power in the university structure, or how many more pamphlets need to be run off to distribute tomorrow at the birth control information booth.

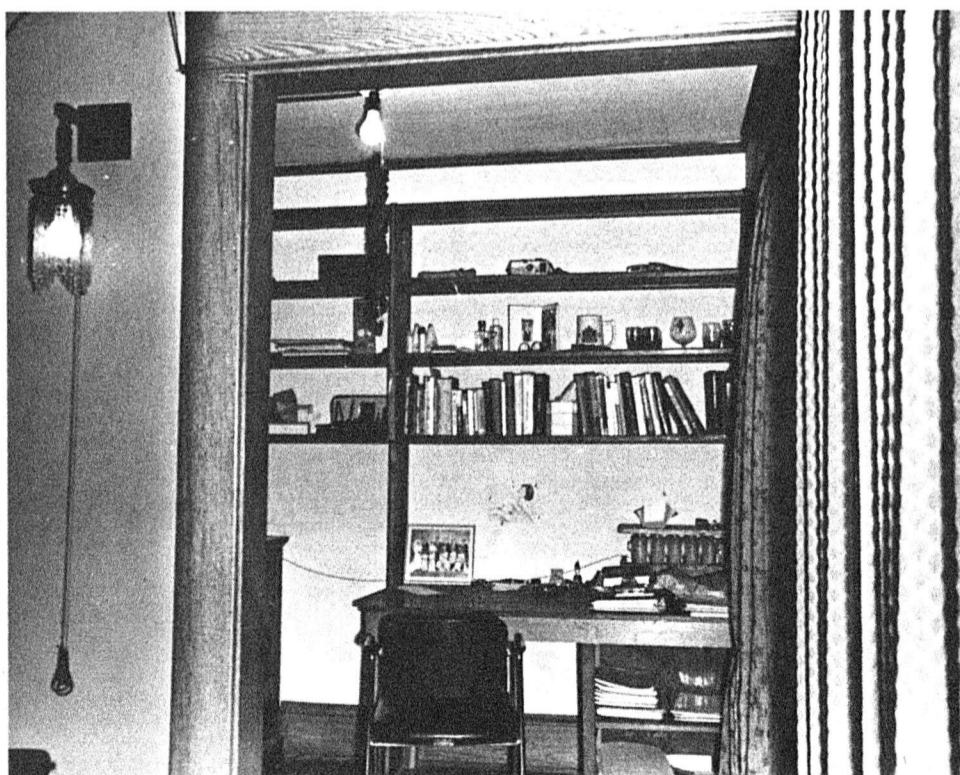
The girls in the house all say they would rather be living in a non-university house, even a non-co-op house, because the few restrictions imposed by the co-op association are still too stifling.

People in the Saskatchewan Drive house are trying to live a philosophy of



## A FINE OLD HOUSE

... gone to pot?



## IT MAY BE A LITTLE CRAMPED, BUT IT'S CLEAN

... and you do have a sense of privacy