

Listerites and co-ops compare the two ideas

What the people on the outside say

Another of those Gateway surveys renowned for accuracy and scope was taken in the cafeteria of Lister Hall last week.

News reporters Shirley Kirby and Alex Ingram asked 40 residence students if they would move into co-op housing if they could.

Co-op housing costs about \$65 a month room and board, and about six hours a week in housework time. Residence rates are \$95 a month room and board, with maid service.

Of the students polled, 50% said they would like to move into co-op housing rather than res. The most common reason for a co-op preference was, "It's cheaper."

"There would be no rules and no discipline," said a girl in ed 2 and a boy in eng 1. Two other men chose co-op because of the uninhibited atmosphere they imagined would exist.

"I imagine it would be less im-

personal," commented a man in sci 3.

Many of the students who were ready to leave res for the co-ops qualified their choice with the condition they could pick their house-brothers or sisters. One girl said she'd move as long as her house-mates were not drunks.

Twenty students said they would not move into a co-op house if they had the chance. But of these, only five actually preferred residence to a co-op situation. Five were already planning to leave res for apartments next year.

The major objection to co-op housing was the housework involved.

Two people did not believe 10 people could get along in a house. One person said she didn't think the working atmosphere in a co-op house would be good.

One male student in eng 4 said point-blank, "I'm lazy. I like having things done for me. I'll stay in res."

What the people on the inside say

Students who participated in U of A's first attempt at large scale student-operated housing have been evaluating their living experience of the past year.

Most of them chalk up a "yes plus" beside co-op.

"I think the best argument for co-op above Lister is that in Lister you are molded," said Al Quirt, grad studies, of the Allin House. "Co-op lets each different person develop differently."

Leslie Patterson, house ec 2, cooks at the Allin House. She lived in an all-girl co-op for half the term.

"Our smaller numbers bring us closer together," she said. "In Lister, there are 60 people on a floor. In co-op housing, you are living with no more than 11."

"Co-op is not impersonal," agreed Brian Whitson, arts 2. "In Lister, there is no place to sit down unless you want to stare at a regulation grey wall."

Ian Walker, arts 3, lives in "Earl's house" at 11032-89 Avenue. He commented, "In a co-op house, the same people tend to be in the same living room every night. You talk, have extended discussions. That does something."

During exams, the Allin House

held an ad hoc "night-owl club" gathering every night in the living room for anyone in the whole co-op up late studying. Exam tension went down.

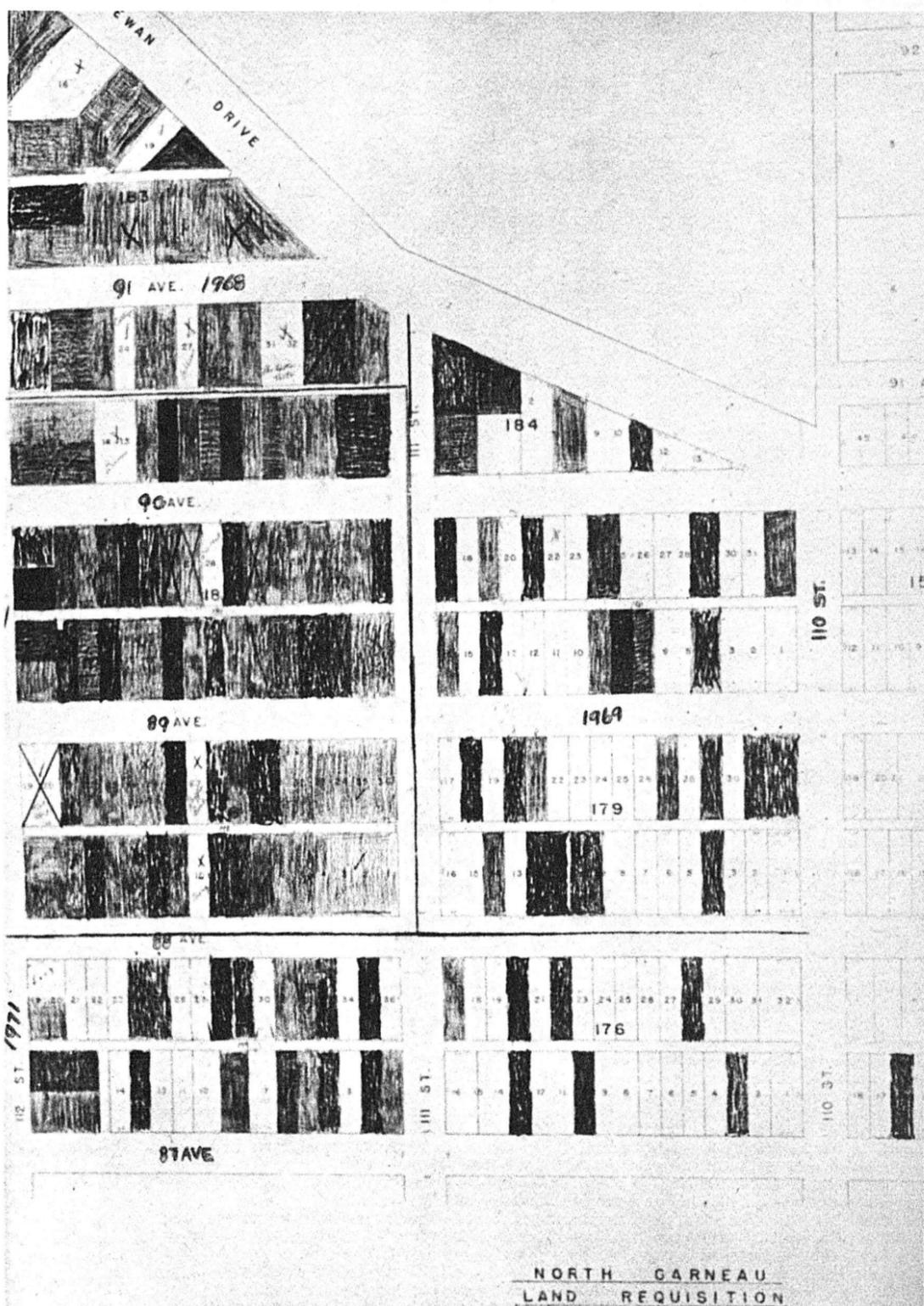
Other co-op members are glad of the freedom. Friends can drop in for supper. The fridge has food in it all the time, and anyone can have a midnight snack.

Everyone interviewed in the co-op indicated they felt co-op was a much more personal kind of living than residence. Linda Kumm, arts 2, commented, "If things get tough for someone, we are more open with each other. If you feel like being alone, it's just like asking a brother or sister to get out of the room for a while."

"I think people are more honest with each other in co-op housing than in res."

Many people in co-ops think men and women in the same house would be a great idea. But the university has requested this be held off until the co-op is independent of university-owned houses.

A clause in the university lease agreement says the university can terminate the lease at any time if students in co-op "bring disrepute upon the university."



—Al Fries photo courtesy Bursar J. M. Whidden
A MAP OF U OF A'S NORTH GARNEAU LAND REQUISITION
... the shaded areas are university-owned and face future demolition

Student-run housing is as old as universities

By ELAINE VERBICKY

Co-op housing is news at U of A this year.

It was news at the University of Paris about the year 1200.

Student-owned-and-operated housing is as old as the first university. From the time of Socrates, students have had to find a place to eat and sleep at night.

It is only in recent years university administrations have become so interested in the common welfare and common money of students to market to them food-and-snooze, no-booze "residences".

U of A is a young university, so it has a double history of student housing. Its first administrators thought student housing an administration concern, and put up Athabasca Hall in 1911.

The building accommodated classes, the library, the gymnasium, laboratories, and offices of the administration, as well as residence areas for staff and students. Instead of 12,000 undergraduates, there were about 120 at U of A in those days.

And even then, some students opted for independence instead of residence. They went knocking on doors in Garneau until they found a garret or a basement room that cost hardly anything a month, usu-

ually with either a sloping ceiling or a sloping floor, and sometimes both.

They left their beds unmade, stacked library books on the floor and kept closets full of cases and cases of dead glass soldiers. Who could afford clothes?

The tradition has carried on. Garneau still supplies the independent type with cheap garrets or basements. Students today are using the same historic plumbing as the first U of A pioneers.

They get the same queasy feeling Dad had when he woke up the morning after Saturday night and discovered the floor was falling away and the ceiling was diving at him. And closets are still full of empties.

But Garneau accommodation is getting harder to find every year. The university is expanding into North Garneau, gobbling houses students used to live in. The old houses are going down for parking lots and classroom complexes. And soon there will be virtually no place to live within walking distance of campus except residence.

The university's residence history has an early and a late period. Between Athabasca, Pembina and Assiniboia Halls, all completed by 1915, and the modern Lister Hall complex, there is a gap of nearly half a century.

St. Joseph's College, a Roman Catholic residence, went up in 1927. St. Stephen's College was the first building on campus, but was not solely a residence for some years.

University enrolment, very low through the depression, jumped just before World War II and never came down. The housing situation became critical during the war, when the military took over the three old residences, and students had to move into Garneau.

After the war, the increased influx of students quickly re-filled the residences. Lister Hall came up with the '64 frosh, ready for 1500 students.

This year, a third tower is rising, along with residence rates, in the Lister complex. Michener Park, for 300 married students, is open.

And something new here in student housing has arrived—the Campus Co-operative Association. A group of students are renting houses and doing maintenance work themselves in an effort to live more cheaply in a more home-like atmosphere than in residence.

Six houses in Garneau are being rented at reduced rate from the university this year, but the co-op hopes to become independent of the university next year.

The co-op is ready to purchase houses,

but a combination of Garneau zoning laws, high prices aimed at high-rise developers, and rapid expansion of the university is making the situation look ugly.

The city's zoning laws say only seven people are allowed to live in a house in Garneau. This has been tacitly ignored by generations of Garneau landlords, but the co-op association will not be able to get official city approval for more than seven students dwelling in any house they may want to buy.

And the co-op cannot buy any house at the current jacked-up prices because they need more than seven in a house to finance purchase, as well as city approval to obtain a Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation loan. This situation appears to be internally contradictory.

The university has no official policy on the co-op, but has informed people in four of the six houses they must vacate before July demolition crews move in.

"Perhaps some faculty groups located in areas now slated for demolition will be moved into the other co-op houses," said Dr. W. H. Worth, vice-president in charge of campus planning, last week.

Co-op members are beginning to wonder if this piece of student housing history will pass into tradition after only one promising year of existence.