

DAGS gets home

by Bob Flute

On Friday, February seventh, a new graduate social and recreational centre was opened by Dalhousie President Dr. Henry Hicks. For Dalhousie's graduate students, this event marked a long-awaited and much-welcomed development. Although an entity in its own right, the graduate student population has long been a forgotten and somewhat hidden body at Dalhousie. It has been felt that this state of affairs could be attributed to the absence of a local centre specifically designed to accommodate the needs and interests of graduate students, who are

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However, one reason for waste is that many students do not really know how to handle animals nor are they able to perform the surgery skillfully enough. Many experiments are ruined because the initial, basic surgery, e.g. cutting open the animal, is not performed correctly. To correct this problem the Animal Care Centre has, for the first time, established a non-credit course in experimental surgery. The demand for this course is evident, and it will in all likelihood be expanded next year.

People from other Maritime schools have come, and are coming to the center to learn how to work with animals. The center is even working with high school students on a project concerning the effect of noise on pregnant mice.

With more facilities available, and greater coordination with the other scientific departments, the Animal Care Center can become a major center for research activity.

certainly one of the University's most varied groups. Over the past few years, the graduate population at Dalhousie has grown considerably. At the present time, about nine hundred students are engaged in full-time graduate study at the University. Not only does this number cover a great variety of departments—humanities, languages, natural sciences, social sciences, and professional schools—but the composition of the graduate population is drawn in great part from outside Canada, as graduate students come to Dalhousie from fifty-five different countries. The Dalhousie Association of Graduate Students therefore takes great pleasure in announcing its new acquisition.

The absence of such a centre has, in the past, constantly frustrated efforts by DAGS to stimulate graduate activities. Considerable difficulty is faced in building an organization that can act effectively as the medium through which concerns can be voiced. Typically, the nature of study at the graduate level limits the amount of contact with others. Long hours are



spent in relative isolation; communication with other students, particularly outside one's discipline, can be very difficult. A centre which can draw together graduate students who otherwise would not have the opportunity to meet one another is a basic precondition for an active and purposeful graduate student body.

At the present, there is a Task Force composed of members of the University operating at Dalhousie as part of a federally-initiated Canada Council Commission inquiring into the state of graduate studies in the humanities and social sciences. As a conscious decision on the part of the two graduate members of this Task Force, it was decided to undertake a personal study and to meet with people from all sixteen graduate programs concerned. It is not the intention here to produce too negative a statement; nevertheless, certain interesting findings have resulted from discussions held over the past several weeks. The growing problems of funding and employment of graduate students (notably, of those in the traditional academic sectors) are already known and do receive some attention. However, another all-too-frequent observation and yet little-known concern, is the lack of any common area, which gives rise to the aforementioned state of affairs. Of course, this situation will continue where problems are seen to pertain more to the individual rather than being shared by a common grouping. Thus, in this instance, conditions of graduate study student life on this campus. In both conception and operation, DAGS anticipates that the

new graduate centre will provide the right antidote.

In spite of these constraints, DAGS has managed to organize itself, at last, to the extent of providing permanent premises. In this, a well-reasoned and well-researched approach played an important part. Also clearly demonstrated was the importance of organizing for oneself, rather than waiting for things to be provided from external sources. While both the University and the Student Union were sympathetic, and, in many areas offered generous support, graduate initiative was crucial in the final analysis.

Finally, mention must be made of the building itself: in location and physical structure, the new graduate centre can serve graduate student social life on the Dalhousie campus. It is the first time that graduate students here have had the opportunity to use a full-time graduate facility designed for their purposes. The house consists of three floors. The ground level houses the main bar and lounge area. Two other lounge areas are located above this, and, all together, can accommodate approximately 120 people. There is also a games room on the first floor where such

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Want a Cheap Thrill?

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Friday: 10:00 - 1:00

Do you have a place to live ?

by J. Murray Angus

- Do you feel that your rent is too high, given the quality of your accommodation?

- Are you dissatisfied with the location of your room or apartment?

- Are you afraid to make complaints for fear of being evicted?

- Is your landlord taking advantage of the current housing shortage by renting you a place that does not even meet minimum standards as prescribed by law?

- Are you sticking with your present accommodation because your freedom to choose alternatives is severely limited by the present shortage in rental accommodation?

THE FACTS:

"Vacancy rate" represents the percentage of existing housing that is available for purchase or rent. CHMC has suggested that any vacancy rate below 5% indicates a housing crisis.

In Halifax, the latest

figures indicate that the vacancy rate is now down to .5%. The truth is that Halifax has not had a vacancy rate of 5% since 1965. And the situation continues to get worse (housing starts were down 50% between the first half of 1973 and the first half of 1974.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO STUDENTS?

It means that it is a landlord's market and that rents are set as high as the market will bear. It means that landlords don't have to keep their buildings maintained to make them competitive. (Halifax does have a good minimum standards code, in effect since 1969, which demands that all premises be inspected and issued an Occupancy Permit if standards are met. In 1970, however, the city gave away, without inspection, occupancy permits for all buildings built before 1969.) The way it stands now, with such a critical shortage of available units,

any costs that the landlord assumes, even to bring a building up to minimum standards, can easily be passed on to the tenant.

WHAT CAN BE DONE

There is a committee in Halifax, made up of individuals (including students) who are interested in seeing the situation change. After studying the problem, they have called upon the city to set up a Rental Authority which would have the power to determine what is a "fair and reasonable rent" and to require annual inspection of all rented premises. The city has responded by setting up a Task Force, which is holding public hearings in various parts of the city to hear the people's problems. The next meeting is in our end of town, at Morris Street, Public School, on Monday, February 24 at 8:00 p.m. Be there and tell them what you've experienced and what you think ought to be done.

BITCH BITCH BITCH

That's all some people at Dal ever accomplish when they have problems with professors, courses, or administration. Your Student Union **COURSE MONITORING COMMITTEE** has a 100% success record in resolving conflicts to students' satisfaction. To take advantage of this service, simply fill out **COURSE MONITORING COMMITTEE** form at the SUB Enquiry desk