

# Managers say no apartment shortage downtown

By CLIFF BASSMAN  
Daily Collegian Staff Writer

Although enrollment is at a peak and an excess of students applied for this year's dormitory space, there seems to be no shortage of off-campus housing for students at University Park.

In fact, a quite different situation has been recognized by managers of several State College apartment complexes.

Art Campbell, property management director of Heim, Heckendorn and Bruce realtors, said there has been less of a demand for his firm's units this year than in previous years.

"Where we have vacancies now, we had none before," Campbell said.

A similar condition was noticed by Carmen Dabiero, general manager of A.W. & Son Inc., another of State College's larger realty firms.

The influx of tenants never reached the anticipated amount, Dabiero said.

Parkway Plaza, which was filled last year, has several vacancies, he said.

Scott Anderson, manager of Laurel Glen Apartments, said he thinks many students come to school without definite living arrangements and are then absorbed into larger apartments as extra roommates.

Students have been showing a preference for two and three-bedroom apartments instead of smaller units, as was the trend in recent years, Anderson said.

Pearl Weiner, general manager for Lions Gate Apartments, said she has noticed an increase in demand for one-bedroom and efficiency apartments.

Lions Gate has very few vacancies, she said.

Weiner said many complexes are faced with vacant units because some owners fail to understand that students live on limited incomes.

There is no housing shortage in State

College, but there is a shortage of affordable apartments, she said.

Campbell said increased apartment sharing could account for the decrease in demand for individual units.

"Where there were one or two people renting a one-bedroom apartment before, there are now two or three," he said.

"If one additional roommate is put in one-tenth of the apartments off-campus," Campbell said, "1,000 people can be absorbed."

Phil Grosnick, assistant director of Residential Life programs, said total enrollment has been increasing by a few hundred students each year. Although conclusive figures are not yet prepared, enrollment this term should follow the trend, he said.

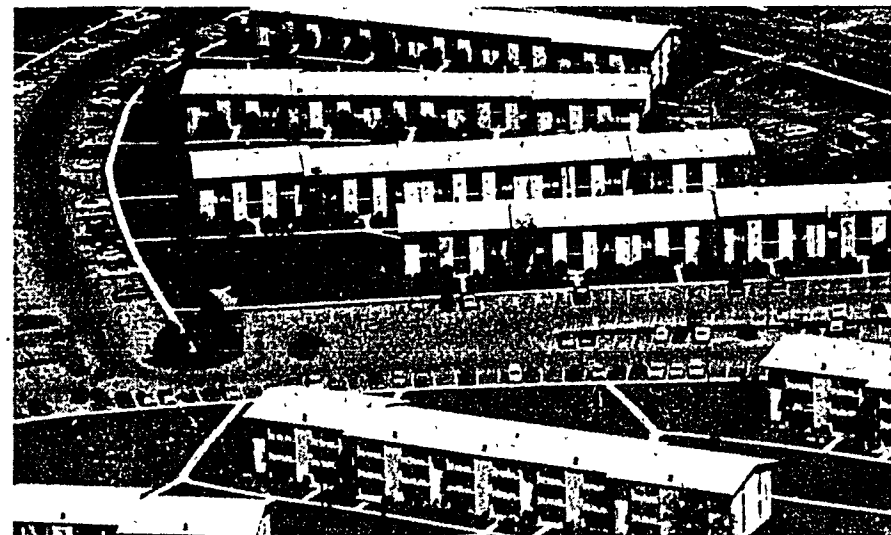
Demand for dormitory housing also increased this year and 1,200 applicants for dorm contracts were rejected by the University, Grosnick said.

Mike Leeper, vice president of the Organization for Town Independent Students, said the number of requests for apartment information his group received from students who were denied dorm contracts was twice last year's figure.

Grosnick said the increased apartment sharing and the greater demand for dorm rooms are responses to economic conditions. When increases in the cost of living and schooling itself are compounded by rent hikes, financing an education can become difficult for many students, he said.

For this reason, many students who wished to transfer to University Park from a branch campus but were not admitted to the dorms, may have remained at the branch for another term, Grosnick said.

Currently there are about 18,000 students living off-campus, compared to 12,700 in the dorms, Leeper said.



University enrollment may be at its peak, but there appears to be no shortage of off-campus housing for students, according to several State College apartment managers.

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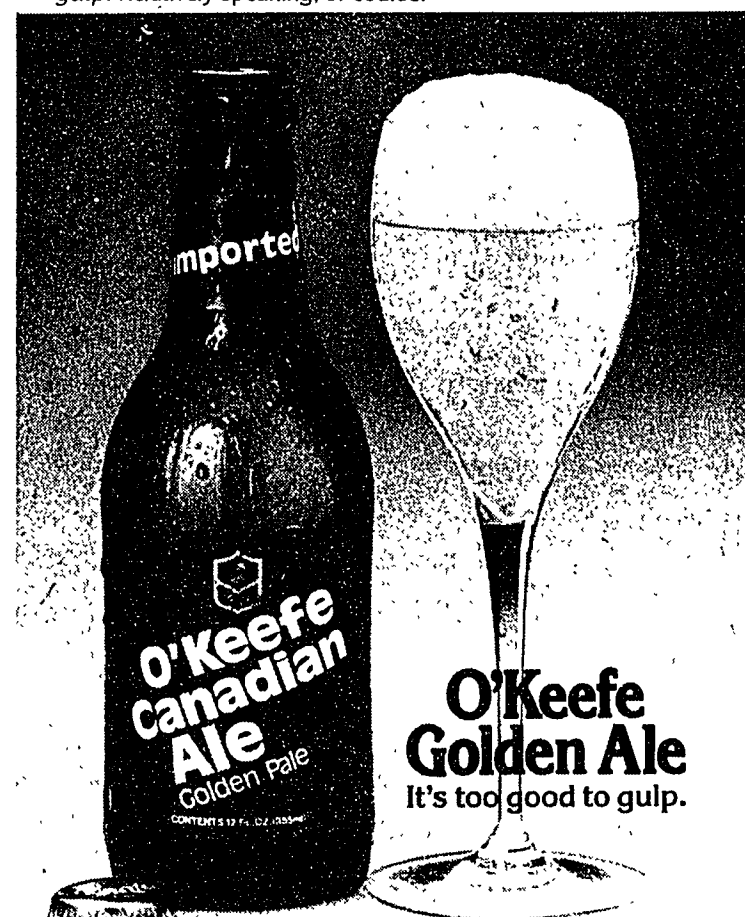
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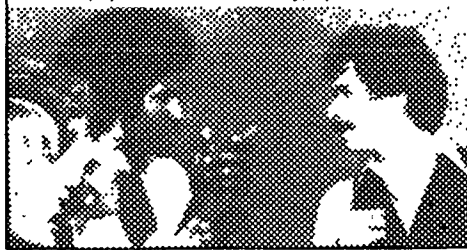
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