

Bramley's Molly

Nature Is Her Specialty

It sounds corny, Molly Bramley says, but she does what she does to express herself.

What she does, expertly, is take pictures.

No amateur shutter-snapper, Mrs. Bramley left behind a nearly 20-year-old commercial studio 10 years ago to devote herself to the kind of photography she loves.

"I take pictures when I get a feeling as I'm looking through the lens; when something speaks to me.

"And what I usually get a feeling about is a tall tree with the sun coming through."

Landscapes and nature studies are her specialties and this summer as last, Mrs. Bramley will leave behind her Bleeker Street home and husband Stan and three children for the Maritimes studio of Freeman Patterson, the country's foremost landscape photographer. There she'll study and learn with guidance, an advantage she didn't have 30 years ago when she began working in photography.

"In those days there weren't any schools of photography in Canada and in the States they were just filled up with veterans returning from the war," she says. "So I got a job in a photo supply store in Toronto Luckily, they put me on the

professional counter."

There she says she was in touch with the city's best photographers who were "very kind and very critical" which helped.

After a year, she left to open a studio in her native Bala, Muskoka, Ontario.

Weddings, portrait work, police work, newspaper photography were all part of the business for the young photographer who even made postcards for resort area tourists.

"Sometimes I was in that darkroom until 4 a.m. trying to get a batch of postcards ready for the next day."

It was these postcards that brought Molly and her husband together.

Stan Bramley, a tourist in the area, went into the studio to buy a few postcards. A photographer himself, he and Molly began talking shop and the classic photographer's argument between 35mm fans and 2 1/4 inch film advocates began.

"We started arguing about their relative merits on the day we met and we're still arguing about it."

Molly uses a 2 1/4 Hasselblad; Stan still prefers a 35 mm camera.

When the family — which now includes Susan, Mary and John — moved to Belleville in 1963, Mrs. Bramley gave

up commercial photography work to work in the fields that interest her: landscape and nature work.

One of her transparencies, a photograph of a tree on the lawn of Glanmore House, will be exhibited this year at Toronto's Canadian National Exhibition in the National Association for Photographic Art display.

While for the most part she's devoting her time to "building up my files" Mrs. Bramley sells photographs for magazine covers like the Presbyterian Record or for calendars.

She says she always knows when she's got a "winner" as she calls them.

"You look through the viewfinder and you get a special feeling; it's almost like a religious experience when it happens."

To come up with winners, Mrs. Bramley admits she spends a lot of time looking through the viewfinder, an effort made possible by an "incredible" family.

"When the first snowflake falls and I take off, they understand and the house just keeps right on going along."

The family's empathy may stem from the fact that every member is something of a photographer. In fact, in the recreation room, two slide projectors — one 2 1/4 and 35 mm — are permanently mounted for an evening's view of latest efforts.



The Other Side of the Lens

Molly Bramley, veteran photographer, sits on the other side of the lens for a change. Once a commer-

cial photography studio operator, she now devotes herself to landscape and nature photography.