

Commissions stifle creativity

Local artist prefers to chose her own subjects

By ENID WILLIAMS
ELLEN MELTON, a native of Toronto, became interested in art at an early age by drawing all the time. Encouraged by teachers from grade 11 on, Mrs. Melton went on to study art in high school and later took night school courses. While studying at Sheridan College, this artist studied life drawing, an interest which lay dormant until her children were older. Now with more time to devote to art, Mrs. Melton has developed life drawing oil and water color style.

The artist's interest in oils was stimulated at night school while living in Bramalea. Now a resident of Georgetown, Mrs. Melton enjoys the quieter atmosphere of this locale and would "love to live right out in the country".

Mrs. Melton has taught a beginners' oil course in Bramalea which she enjoyed but found time-consuming. During one winter, Mrs. Melton taught an oil class for beginners at our local craft

shop, Col-craft. This artist's creative nature needs time to expand mental concepts and she says, "I am possessive of my time in order to devote myself to my own art form". The self-expression exuberated through Mrs. Melton's art work, keeps her a happy, fulfilled personality.

Mrs. Melton has been a member of the Georgetown Palette and Pencil Club for nine years. She enjoys a regular night out with fellow artists, which she feels stimulates her art style. This communication with other artisans is a "worthwhile sharing of knowledge".

GROWTH EXPERIENCE
Frank Black, fellow member in the Palette and Pencil Club and well known artist, is a close friend of Mrs. Melton. The featured artist took lessons from Mr. Black in water color technique for four years. She considers this to have been a meaningful growth experience and very worthwhile as her work is seen

several places in the area.

Along with family responsibility, Mrs. Melton does not have time to take courses now, but does include sketching sojourns with a group of artists. These sketch trips are set up by Laura Dittich from Acton, who arranges these jaunts once a week in the summer and autumn. Sometimes they view old mills, scenic spots near Terra Cotta or a gallery where they view the art show then sketch outdoors. When on holiday, Mrs. Melton rarely sketches, but she takes photographs which she uses later as subject matter for her hobby. As an artist always interested in nature, Mrs. Melton looks forward to the day when she can have a "sketching holiday", to acquire material to work from over the winter months."

Coupled with the artist's flair already mentioned, Mrs. Melton enjoys crocheting while watching "the box". Sculpting is also a new interest which she hopes to develop further. She finds this an exciting new dimension and the membership of Palette and Pencil Club may now avail themselves of the Credit Valley Artisans' kiln, as their club is newly affiliated with Credit Valley Artisans who have the facilities to work in clay.

While the writer visited,

Mrs. Melton showed her portfolio of pen and pencil sketches, water color scenes and flowers and an abstract acrylic nude, the latter a commissioned work. This artist likes to develop her own topic which is "creative and will sell to people if they like it" rather than do commissioned work which brings "pressure that stifles creativity."

ARTISTIC FLAIR
Ellen Melton's artistic flair came from her mother who paints in oils. Her brother as a child drew animals and Mrs. Melton says, "he was the one who nurtured my interest in animal study". This same brother had talent for sculpting which he never pursued.

A sister, Julie, a resident of Georgetown, works in ceramics and has a craft boutique in town. Mrs. Melton's children are interested in the arts as one daughter, Cheryl, is a dancer and specializes in jazz and tap. She studies dance at the Brian Foley Studio in Toronto. A son, Larry, is a singer starting with a group called Blue Steel and he is now vocalist with a group called "Exit", who rehearse at a Milton home. Another daughter, Laura, is a crafts-person who is a sociable young woman and an avid reader. A younger daughter, Kim, has been involved in dramatics at school and her sister Diane is

an avid tap dancer and has aspired to the super-advanced class under Monique Augustini of Bramalea.

Discussion ensued regarding large scenic design in the field of theatre, which Mrs. Melton considers "a completely different art form", one she may explore some time in the future.

Mrs. Melton is an associated member with Halton Hills Arts Council through her membership in Palette and Pencil Club and she hopes, "the Art Gallery will become a reality as part of the Library-Theatre-Gallery complex." Mrs. Melton went on to say, "it would be nice to have one place in town designated to show art from many artists on a rotating basis".

"Money could be made by renting such space out to other artists for art shows," she added. As her enthusiasm built, Mrs. Melton went on to praise the Art Gallery at the Civic Centre in Bramalea. Mrs. Melton would like to see "permanent sculpture as part of the outdoor decor of the proposed Arts complex".

ENCOURAGEMENT
Her views regarding the Arts Council of Halton Hills included great encouragement to those working to bring a stronger awareness of art to this community. Mrs. Melton was very supportive by saying,

"the Arts Council can create a stronger voice among the arts people in Halton Hills and will offer all artisans an umbrella under which they may meet and develop all areas of arts

during the year in this area." An interesting conversationalist, sensitive artist and a community-minded resident, Mrs. Melton made her art form come alive for the writer

and her water colors intrigued me as they are developed with soft muted tones and interesting shading. Watch for this artist's art work wherever you meander in the Hills.



Ellen Melton works at the finishing touches for a water color in the studio of her Moore Park Crescent home. (Herald photo)

Application approved

A Terra Cotta resident's application to raise his house 40 inches and construct a two-car garage has been approved by the Credit Valley Conservation Authority's executive committee. Committee approved the application on the condition that site plans for the house raising and garage construction be submitted to the authority for approval. To raise the house, which is located on the Credit River floodplain, the applicant, Mr. Mark Evans, intends to build a new foundation.

Award winner

Ken Chow of Georgetown, in his third year of civil engineering at the University of Waterloo, has won the James F. MacLaren Ltd. Award, worth \$100 to the recipient. Mr. Chow was one of the 16 students attending the university to receive awards offered by a number of industries and the Sanford Fleming Foundation for the best term reports in Waterloo's co-operative education program.

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