

# She loved babies

# Family life very rewarding



Louise Brill has five grown children, but still receives hand-made cards from them. This one for her birthday April 15 was made by daughter Lisa.

By NANCY HOSKIN

When Louise Brill married at age 19 there was no question that she and her husband Jack wouldn't begin having a family right away. They had four of their five children in the first six years of marriage, an uncommon practice today.

Mrs. Brill, the oldest of nine children, said that there was always a new baby on the scene. She never felt pressured by her own mother to do anything, but was always given choices, for example, "Would you like to feed your baby sister or help set the table?" Louise always choose caring for her younger siblings.

"When asked what I wanted to be when I grew up I never answered a nurse or teacher, but always a mommy," said Mrs. Brill.

The Brill children are all grown and gone, starting families of their own, but on a smaller scale! John, 31, is married with one son and lives in Regina. He is a sales manager with General Motors.

Loretta, 30, is married and a special education consultant, living in Calgary. Her thesis, completed at the University of Calgary, was dedicated to her parents.

Larry, 29, lives in Calgary with his wife Leah and after

earning a degree in Economics decided to venture into business for himself and is owner of a Texaco station.

Kevin, 27, is a clinical evaluator. He and his wife are expecting their first child in June.

Last, but not least, is the caboose of the family, Lisa, 21. She is completing her second year at the University of Windsor with a double major in Communication Studies and Dramatic Arts.

Louise, Jack and their first three children lived in a one bedroom apartment. When the fourth child was on the way they had saved enough for a new three bedroom bungalow, which Louise recalls was a "mansion."

One might wonder how she coped?

"I always felt fortunate. I really wanted and loved these children. I was truly lucky. I had and have a wonderful husband and healthy, adorable children," said Mrs. Brill.

"There wasn't any question that I wouldn't stay at home with the children. We could always make ends meet, no matter how tough things got. And sometimes I wondered how we'd do it. But, I knew I wanted my children to grow

up with my ideals and my philosophies," she said.

According to the April, 1986 issue of Toronto Life more than 50 per cent of the married women in Canada work outside the home, and by 1990 an estimated 75 per cent will be away from their families.

"Of all careers I may have been able to choose from, I feel that there isn't one anymore important than being a mother. I was responsible for moulding my children and bringing them up to the best of my ability. They're all a credit to society and are functioning adults. I wouldn't be able to blame anyone for failure. I tried my best," said Mrs. Brill.

"In what other career (motherhood) are you responsible for training another human being? Having them be the type of adult this world is proud of is a good feeling."

"My greatest love is learning," she said. "It doesn't matter if you're nine or 90, the day you stop learning is the day you grow old. Learning comes in all forms. When the children were in school all day I felt I had to be challenged, so I became involved with various volunteer projects. When my youngest daughter was starting in Scouts, I became a Brownie leader. As the children approached the teen scene I felt it was extremely important to maintain the good communication we already had established, so as they got older I became involved with activities that related to their age groups," Mrs. Brill said.

Her energy was diverted in many directions. She was an initial participant in forming the Catholic Youth Organization. A group that set up meeting places at local church parishes where teens could gather.

"Teens are the best group of people in our society. Often they're not given the credit they deserve. I gave a lot when I worked with them, but they gave me far more in return."

In 1976 Mrs. Brill worked with Markham Youth Advocacy, a group similar to the Big Brother's, where by teens (advocates), 14-21, provided friendship and guidance to younger children (proteges). Unfortunately, the program ended in 1980 due to lack of funding.

Mrs. Brill's community involvement didn't end with children and teens. For the past 10 years she has served on the Markham Library Board, and was recently named chairperson. She has spent hundreds of hours working with various elections, including the most recent for Mayor Carole Bell and York Centre MPP Don Cousens.

She has also served on the board of the Markham Family Life Centre and is currently a member of the Economist and Sun's Community Advisory Board.

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