Artist follows in father's footsteps

WOT FOR CIRCULATION

By JANICE BRADBEER

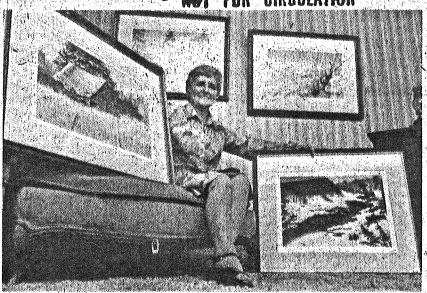
Mississauga artist Gwen Oakes admired her father's work so much that she followed in his footsteps. But, she first took time out to raise a family before venturing on the fulfilling but often precarious challenge that besets an artist.

The daughter of wellknown Toronto commercial artist Leonard Bi Self, Oakes used to enjoy her father's work. He was responsible for the marquees at the Loew's Theatre, opposite the Eaton Centre. Self would airbrush and paint pictures of the famous stars and signs for upcoming attractions. He also started the Self Studio in Toronto.

"He always thought that I took after him, but I didn't take it seriously until after I had brought up four children," says Oakes of her father, who died in 1951.

Her decision was made five years ago when she introduced herself to the oil medium. She found oils easy, "because you can put a light color on dark," but progressed to watercolors three years later because she found them delicate and more of a challenge. She also enjoyed the clean effect they produced.

paints now She primarily in watercolors



Artist Gwen Oakes shows some of the watercolors which are on display this month at the Toronto Dominion Centre. Her success with her showing there last year has resulted in her devoting more time to her art.

and prefers the freedom Mississauga-Etobicoke border.

of landscapes to portrait painting. "I can paint as much as I wish to paint. I scapes have been imuse more imagination pressive. Currently a and there is more flex member of the

home from sketches, notes and sometimes Toronto Outdoor Art Exphotographs she has hibition at Toronto City taken. Past paintings in Hall (where she will exthis area have included hibit July 9-11) and the appletree and Toronto Dominion Cenher old appletree and peonies in the hot, broil-ing sun of her back yard home and the shores of

The results of her landand there is more flexibility," she explains of Mississauga artists'
her subject matter; workshop, Oakes has exwhich consists primarily hibited at, among other
of country scenes, like places, the Lakeview
old farmhouses.

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home from sketches,
notes and sometimes

Toronto Outdoor Art Exbas hibition at Toronto City

· Oakes exhibited at the TD Centre in March 1980, Lake Ontario at Marie May 1981 and again this Curtis park on the month, which will be all

watercolor. Last year her showing of 30 pain-tings of mixed sizes of oil and watercolor was quite successful. "I sold seven paintings to an executive last year," she recalls, adding, "four to another man who wanted to know when I'd have more. I was quite overwhelmed last year."

(Staff photo by Tim Chevrier)

Because of positive turn of events, Oakes intends to paint more steadily this year.
"I'm retired from going to work. The painting isn't a living and it started out as a hobby, but I'm doing well at it," she explains.