

Mrs. Jerome O. Ellis

Aid to Children Is Her Forte

Editor's Note: Following is another in a series of personality profiles of the wives of Staten Island's judges.

By VICTORIA FLANDERS

"It's something a lawyer strives for — it's a mark of honor to become a judge," is the way Mary Campbell Ellis feels about her husband, Civil Court Justice Jerome O. Ellis.

"Socially the pace has been stepped up," she said. "I don't find it too different because we've always gone out a great deal and attended a lot of functions," she added.

Tanned, energetic-looking Mrs. Ellis is the mother of two children, Jerome O. Jr., 20, a student at the Bancroft School for Emotionally Disturbed and Retarded Children in Haddonfield, N.J., and a daughter, Lynne, now Mrs. Walter W. Schnorbus of New Dorp, mother of three sons; David, 5, Robert, 4, and Jeffrey, 2.

A WOMAN who spends much of her time with charitable organizations, Mrs. Ellis, a third generation Staten Islander, said, "I think, when we live in a community, it is our duty to become involved in projects for the betterment of that community—we should volunteer our efforts."

Following this philosophy she has devoted a great deal of her time to the Staten Island Community Chest, for which she has been an active volunteer for ten years, one year serving as chairman of the South Shore drive.

Another activity is the Staten Island Aid for Retarded Children of which she was a founder. This group maintains a day school for children aged 5 through their teens where the students learn, in



Mrs. Jerome O. Ellis displays a French crystal vase, one piece of a large collection of English bone china and imported crystal she has assembled in her Dongan Hills home. S.I. Advance Photo by John Schneider

pre-kindergarten conditions, to adjust to a classroom situation.

The goal of the school is ultimately to promote the students to public school attendance. Mrs. Ellis is currently treasurer and a member of the board of directors of that organization.

CURRENTLY, her consuming interest is in Willowbrook

State School, where she is chairman of volunteers under the Ladies of Charity.

She said the situation at Willowbrook, "a city within itself," creates many complex problems, in turn, in trying to alleviate the situation of overcrowding and understaffing.

The challenge of seemingly insurmountable problems there have consumed much of

Mrs. Ellis' efforts in recent months.

TRAVEL and vacation time with her husband and entire family is something she looks forward to each year. This summer, she spent two weeks in Maine with her husband.

In the winter the whole then joined her daughter's family for a month off the Jersey shore on Long Beach Island.

Family together will take several long weekends to the Poconos.

Next year, she and her husband hope to be able to take a long-awaited European vacation.

While on vacation, Mrs. Ellis enjoys swimming and ice skating with her husband, the latter a carry-over from their courting days.

Her "solitary activities" consist of knitting, needlepoint and collecting fine English bone china and rare imported crystal.

MRS. ELLIS has adjusted easily to the rigors of being a judge's wife. She feels it is "the icing on the cake" after the 30 years her husband was in private practice.

Recalling the campaign headquarters set up three years ago in her spacious home at 934 Todt Hill Rd., Dongan Hills, for her husband's campaign she said, "Many of my friends were sorry when it was over—it was so exciting!"

Although new to active politicking, it is clear that Mrs. Ellis who "sent out letters by the bushelful" is something of a natural at the game.

"I simply throw myself into anything I do, which probably isn't so good in some respects. I go all out," is how Mrs. Ellis describes her philosophy of active participation in family and community life.