

Renting Keeps Mothers and Daughters Together



By Jane Herman

It's wonderful if circumstances enable us to live close to our parents (or children) as it fosters close ties between the generations and helps to build strong families.

Being both a mother as well as a daughter, I recognize how important is the kind of caring presence I can offer my mother, especially in her later years. Now that we are both older the opportunities we have just to share everyday moments, even if only a causal visit, are increasingly precious.

Recently, I had the good fortune to meet with two mothers and their daughters who have chosen to live in the Schickedanz community of apartment buildings located at Bayview south of Steeles. I was duly impressed by the daughters' desire to see their mothers often, while ensuring that they enjoyed a significant measure of independence and comfort.

Audrey Parsonage and her daughter, Elizabeth Louli, live one floor apart from each other. Ms. Parsonage has lived in the building for 2 years. Her husband passed away suddenly and the empty feeling in her house led her to seek out a new home. 50 Ruddington meets the needs of residents of all generations. Both Ms. Parsonage and her daughter find the neighbourhood's many conveniences to be an asset: Audrey walks to the bank, grocery store, drugstore, her doctor and dentist in the nearby plaza, and particularly enjoys socializing with friends at local seniors' Monday night euchre games or in the buildings social room. "It's lots of fun being in the building together," says Elizabeth, who has been living in a spacious three bedroom apartment in the building for 19 years. "My mom and I are fortunate to have a great relationship and our proximity to one another only enhances it."

At 70 Ruddington Sybil Laughton and her daughter, financial planner Joan

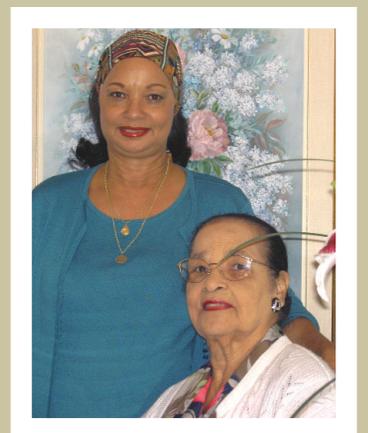
Young, live right next door to each other. Ms. Young, a former homeowner, came home one snowy winter's day, only to find that her shovel was locked in the garage, and inaccessible because of the amount of snow that had accumulated in the driveway "The next day, I called a real estate agent," said Ms. Young. "I had reached the point where I just didn't want to own a home any more."

Location was an important criterion for where the women would live and 70 Ruddington really fit the bill. "It was under construction when we saw it," said Ms. Young. Originally her mother moved in with her, however, when the apartment next door became available, Ms. Laughton moved in there. "I love nature and all the park space around us, and especially being close to work," said Ms. Young (her office is located in Bayview Village). Most importantly, she adds, "I knew when we moved in that my mother was going to age, and I wanted to be able to see her every day. Living here gives me that peace of mind."

In the Schickedanz community, Ms. Laughton and her daughter Ms. Young have, on some level, re-created the kind of multi-generational traditional family model they once had in their native Jamaica as Ms. Young's daughter, Ingrid lives next door in 60 Ruddington, also owned and managed by Schickedanz Brothers. "Living like this, we have achieved a healthy measure of closeness, as well as independence," says Joan, with obvious satisfaction.



Audrey Parsonage and her daughter, Elizabeth Louli



Sybil Laughton and her daughter, Joan Young