

JAMAICA'S NEXT 'FIRST LADY'

By Cynthia Williams

IN PREPARATION for its next family, Kings House is undergoing minor renovations. And in Mona, Mrs. Florizel Glasspole, the wife of Jamaica's next Governor General, prepares for her new role.

"Right now I am working on things for Sara Lou and myself", Mrs. Glasspole pointed out as we passed through her sewing room.

Seventeen year old Sara Lou, the Glasspole's only child, is a sixth-former at St. Andrew High School.

"I am looking forward to Kings House, to the quiet life. Mark you I enjoyed every minute of the hectic political life my husband led but there comes a time when one has to take things a little easier", she said as we settled on the verandah.

"I love this place. It's so cool! but the garden has me worried. It has never looked like this. The drought has killed it." (Gardening is Mrs. Glasspole's main hobby.)

A noted dressmaker, Mrs. Glasspole's "patience ends at cutting". Her two assistants do the actual sewing.

"The dressmaking helped out during the lean years but now I sew only for relatives and close friends".

SOCIAL WORKER

As the Governor General's wife, Mrs. Glasspole says she will have more time to devote to voluntary social work. Mrs. Glasspole is a professional social worker. She did a course in social welfare in England while her husband studied at Oxford University.

She has made major contributions to her husband's East Kingston and Port Royal constituency. She was instrumental in the establishment of the East Kingston Creche and led a team of ladies which assisted the Ministry of Labour in selecting household helpers for recruitment to Canada, while her husband was Minister of Labour.

As Ina Josephine Finlocke, herself and Mr. Glasspole attended the Coke Methodist Church but were unaware of each other for years.

"It was so funny the way we met," she blushed. "I was on the train to Annotto Bay and there were these two young men who kept peeping into my coach. They were going on badly but I sat there ignoring them. Can you imagine my shock when I got off the train to see my sister embracing him.

"It turned out that our sisters were very good friends. We were introduced and it has been a hot thing ever since."

His friend on the train was Eric Coverley.

"Being married to a politician can be lonely at times. I remember the days of Federation talks when my husband was so often out of the island. But I soon learnt to stand on my own feet".

Mrs. Glasspole feels the time is perfect for her husband's exit from politics. "He always wanted to leave while his stocks were high".

Prime Minister Michael Manley has aptly described Mrs. Glasspole as "a symbol of grace and charm who has stood with her husband through the years of lean and plenty".



Mrs. Glasspole tends a ginger lily.



Mrs. Glasspole strolls across the lawn with her pet dog Mitch.

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Mother and daughter relax on their verandah



Mrs. Glasspole displays her expertise with the scissors.



Preparing dinner, while an anxious Sara Lou looks on