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# Bob Shryock: Marjorie Lentz loved Wenonah and its rich history



By **Bob Shryock | For NJ.com**

[Email the author](#)

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Wenonah lost one of its proud Fourth of July “Legend” honorees the other day when Marjorie Lentz, a resident for more than 60 years, died at the age of 98. Few knew as much about the history of the quaint town as this busy, vivacious lady.

When former Mayor Jack Sheppard Sr. visited her at Pitman Manor, he asked for personal information he could use in the Historical Society newsletter. She recently gave him a copy of a 1997 story written by former Times reporter Bill Guhl. That story summed up her myriad interests.

Topping the list is the book she wrote about the history of Wenonah and the awards she won for essay writing. She also was an avid traveler and a dependable volunteer who served on the Gloucester County Human Relations Commission and helped coordinate a worldwide day of prayer.

Born in Mullica Hill, Marjorie worked as a librarian at the University of Pennsylvania and Thomas Jefferson University Hospital during World War II. Later, after raising her two sons, she worked as a librarian at Glassboro State College (Rowan).

In the early 1970s, Sheppard learned of Marjorie’s keen interest in Wenonah history and asked her to produce a centennial account. She complied and finished the exhaustive history in 1976.

“It’s a very unique place and should be recorded,” she said of Wenonah in Guhl’s story. She spent three summers writing and researching the manuscript and interviewing residents and accessing data from minutes from meetings and newspaper clippings. “It’s a very colorful history.”

Additionally, she authored two first-place entries in the state’s Women’s Club essay contest. One was for her husband Bob’s World War II years as an Army medic and return to the Holland town where he served, “The Soldier Who Came Back.”

The second was for a lonely woman who had no possessions in her room she called, “Sheep Don’t Count.”

Said Marjorie, “I was telling her that when I can’t sleep I count sheep. She said, ‘Don’t count sheep, count your blessings.’”

She also won first place in a Times-sponsored contest with the essay, “Why I’m Proud to Be An American.”

But as much as she accomplished, Marjorie lamented that she was unsuccessful fulfilling one life’s goal: Climbing each of the 4,000-foot mountains in New Hampshire. She was able to scale only about half. When her children were young and the Lentzes took family vacations to New Hampshire, she would go mountain climbing.

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For 25 years, Marjorie belonged to the Philadelphia Trail Club, which sponsored trips to hiking trails. It was another of her passions: "You just walk, talk, and meet all kinds of interesting people."

Her many travels took her to China, Yugoslavia, Turkey and Italy. Oddly, she enjoyed the trips as long as she and Bob could avoid being part of a tour group.

Although her health has been in decline, Marjorie's spirits were elevated on the occasion of her 98th birthday on Nov. 22 when many friends from Wenonah visited her at Pitman Manor.

"She was in great spirits," Sheppard says. "Marjorie loved Wenonah and was a good friend. She will be greatly missed."

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