

DAILY MESSENGER

Ruth Woodruff Was Not One to Sit Still

by Daniela Amann, Messenger Staff Reporter

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CANANDAIGUA – Ruth W. Woodruff wasn't one to sit idly around the house. For 25 years, she ran the 1812 Country Store on Route 15A just north of Hemlock. In December 1984, she sold the store and headed for Florida, where she spent most winters.

Last Wednesday, Mrs. Woodruff died in St. Petersburg, Fla. She was 79 years old.

“She was a different kind of person, an individualist,” Peggy Wemett, her sister-in-law, said yesterday. “She loved arts and crafts.”

When it opened in 1959, her 1812 Country Store was one of the first of its kind, selling gifts, candles and spices, among other items, Mrs. Wemett said.

One of the store's best-selling products was sharp country cheese, selling 4,000 pounds a season. Besides selling it, Mrs. Woodruff knew how to use it in her kitchen: she was famous for her macaroni and cheese, as Mrs. Wemett recalled.

Not only did she cook well Mrs. Woodruff also enjoyed weaving, painting and collecting. Mrs. Wemett said her sister-in-law spent years roaming the craft shows and garage sales to collect five sets of picture postcards to give to her five grandchildren.

During the summer, Mrs. Woodruff used to come back to Canandaigua to spend time in her Holiday Harbour condominium.

Now and then, she would visit her former store and chat with the New owners, Judy and Harry Rapelje.

“When I bought the store, she helped me a lot ... to learn the ropes,” said Mrs. Rapelje, who was new to the retail business.

“She wanted the store to continue. It meant a lot to her.”

But Mrs. Woodruff obviously enjoyed retirement in sunny Florida. Sooner or later, she would always get itchy to return to Florida, where she had organized a neighborhood recycling program from her garage. Community resident would bring their recyclable materials to Mrs. Woodruff, according to Mrs. Wemett.

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<http://www.wemett.net>

“She knew how to encourage others not to sit around and become stagnant,” Mrs. Wemett said. “She wasn’t going to let that happen to her – and others either.”

At the age of 77, Mrs. Woodruff got herself a job at an art supplies store.

“The reason why they hired me was because I could count one, two, three, and I knew my ABC’s,” Mrs. Woodruff would joke, according to her sister-in-law.

As Mrs. Wemett put it, “idleness was not one of her traits.”

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