

Elda Strahm Schiesser

New Glarus lost a longtime resident on November 26, 2017. Elda Strahm Schiesser was a prominent local historian who was born in the Town of York, WI, to Adolph and Ella (Schiesser) Strahm on February 3, 1918.

She graduated from local schools and attended the University of Wisconsin-Madison. On December 11, 1938, she married Frank J. Schiesser and they spent the next 63 1/2 years together.

It's not possible to summarize a life of nearly 100 years, but her life has been interesting. Elda has contributed to many books and news articles during her lifetime. She has co-authored "Swiss Cookery" and "The Swiss Endure: Year by Year-Chronological History" with her only child, Linda. (Who survives her).

She may have been better known in her later years as a Swiss paper cutter from New Glarus. In 1985, saw it as a way to help promote her hometown. Through her many adventures and opportunities she continued to learn about others and their history.

Her interest in local history began at an early age and was enhanced when she was asked to serve on the Board of Directors of the Swiss Historical Society, Inc. During her 21 years with the she was able to illustrate history in many ways: as a guide, as a display designer, and as an archivist. For a bicentennial project she served as the researcher for "The History of the New Glarus Historical Society, Inc." as well as the musical version of "Heidi".

She was well known in New Glarus as an active member of the New Glarus community. She has been a 4-H leader, a Green County Extension Homemaker's officer, a president of the Postville Ladies Aid, and a member of the Swiss United Church of Christ's consistory. She has participated in the Wilhelm Tell organization for 55 years, and been a member and officer in the New Glarus Chapter of the Order of Eastern Star. Learning about new things was a life long way for Elda. Being a member of the Trails and Treasures Questers allowed her to study many things.

Her organizational skills were illustrated when the first cooperative advertisement was executed by four New Glarus groups in 1977. This effort lead to the formation of NEWTAP, the New Glarus Chamber of Commerce's advertising branch, served as this group's first voluntary President from 1978-1985.

She will be remembered at 2 p.m. on Thursday, November 30, 2017 with services at the Zentner-Beal Funeral Home, 29 Sixth Ave., New Glarus, WI. Visitation will precede the service from 1 p.m. to 2 p.m. at the Zentner-Beal Funeral Home. A private burial will be held.

Giving back was what did her entire life. This was illustrated by the Community Foundation of Southern WI with one of the 2014 Spirit of Philanthropy Award.

As a strong financial supporter of various community projects and her Swiss heritage, Elda's wish was to have memorials sent in care of the of Endowment Fund: Elda Schiesser Strahm Fund. Please send to CFSW, 26 S. Jackson St., Janesville, WI 53548.

Linda wishes to thank those people who have lovingly cared for her mom during the last days of her life, and to those who have supported her by words, actions, and deeds.

