



Helen W. Lawrence  
1923-2016  
A Life Well Lived

Dear Friend,

I have come to realize that when a person passes we often find out so much more about them than we knew while they were living. This is because we each experience a portion of the person's life as it intersects with our own. For me, Helen Lawrence was Jack's wife. She attended a few of our fundraisers and I would see her mostly from afar as Jack and I had our annual "osprey report sessions."

An osprey reporting session with the Lawrences goes something like this: my husband Peter and myself visit the platform across from the Lawrences' property on the Maurice. By time we are done Jack has

noticed our ladder and banding activity at the nesting site. He is waiting at his dock for a "full live report." This practice is not simply reserved for the Lawrences, since many of the river residents take their stewardship seriously and we are indebted to their vigilance. The watchful nature of osprey stewards has saved a great many birds. So at the Lawrences' we come down the ladder, cast off from the shore opposite Jack and Helen's, and make our way across the channel for "the report."

Jack: "Well?"

Jane: "Three healthy chicks."

Jack: "I thought so! I'll tell Helen."

Often we were also hailed by a wave from the living room window from Helen herself.

Then we would reminisce about how Jack asked to have the nesting platform erected across from his house. He supplied the materials and we towed it behind his boat some 30 years ago. In that nest some mighty unusual things took place. One year we found that an adult mother had choked to death and her body was lying on one dead chick and two live ones. The miracle was that the male raised those other two chicks by himself and they successfully fledged!

Osprey continued to define our relationship right up until this past May. It seemed an osprey was parked on the Lawrence dock long enough that they had begun to worry if it was injured. So off to Lawrences' I went, only to find that a young osprey was simply taking a long rest after what I assumed was one of its first flights. Seeing me approach gave it enough of an adrenaline boost to take to the skies, for which we were all grateful.

I went into the house to visit with Jack and Helen. Helen was by now confined to bed-rest but she had the best seat in the house, for it overlooked the river. It struck me that I have had this same kind of visit a number of times before with other River residents, who so loved the River that their final beds were placed where they could watch it during their final days. And so it seemed with Helen, for instead of being at their house in Woodbury, they wished to spend this time in view of the beauty of the river from which all life comes. And Helen, as badly as she must have felt, was a sweet hostess, with her

words of interest inquiring about what we at Citizens United to Protect the Maurice River and Its Tributaries, Inc. were up to. What a dear.

After seventy-three years of marriage, at that point you rather define each other, I suppose. And so it appeared to me - that Jack and Helen were one. He always spoke of her lovingly and seemed very proud to have made such a catch. I encourage you to read her obituary to gain greater insight into Helen's life.

We would like to thank the Lawrence Family for thinking of CU in their memorials. Our heartfelt condolences to Jack and his daughters Joan and Nancy and their families.

May sweet memories sustain Helen's spirit.

Sincerely,

Jane Morton Galetto  
Board President

Helen Lawrence  
1923 - 2016

Helen W. Lawrence (nee Walton), age 93 passed away on December 26, 2016. Helen was born on St. Patrick's Day, March 17, 1923, one of eleven children in Cape May, NJ. She met her husband, Jack in Cape May during World War II when he was stationed at the Cape May Naval Base (now Coast Guard). At the end of WWII they initially lived in Westville NJ and then resided in Woodbury for many years. Upon Jack's retirement Helen enjoyed spending her summers at their home in Port Elizabeth NJ and winters in

Naples, FL. She was a long time member of both Woodbury and Wildwood Country Clubs. Helen loved to play and watch sports. She was an avid golfer, champion bowler, member of a girls travel basketball league in high school and enjoyed playing bridge. Helen volunteered for many years at Underwood Memorial Hospital where she was a member of the Ladies Auxiliary. She was also involved with the Mauricetown Historical Society and C.U. to Protect the Maurice River and Its Tributaries.

Survived by her husband of 73 years, John "Jack" D. Jr, sister Ann Collins, daughters Joan Lawrence-Rhoads (Stephen), Nancy Burgese (Pasquale) and grandchildren Sarah and Alexander Rhoads and Katherine "Katie" Henry and many nieces and nephews.

Friends may greet the family on Saturday January 7 in the Budd Funeral Home, 522 Salem Ave. (Kings Hwy), Woodbury NJ beginning at 11 am. A brief memorial service will held at 12 noon. In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to: Citizens United to Protect the Maurice River and Its Tributaries, Inc., P.O. Box 474, Millville, NJ 08332 or to the Mauricetown Historical Society, P. O. Box 1, Mauricetown, NJ 08329.

**CU on the River!**

<http://www.cumauriceriver.org>

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