

Joyce Ghee, Woman of the Year 1987



From *The Branch*, September 1987:

It is indeed a pleasure to announce Joyce Ghee as the AAUW Poughkeepsie Branch Women of the Year.

A life-long resident of Dutchess County and graduate of Vassar College, Joyce is an accomplished professional writer, art illustrator, professional musician, music teacher, performer and lecturer.

As our Dutchess County historian, she co-produced the award-winning documentary, "Hyde Park" and co-produced, wrote and directed the environmental education slide program, "People and Places/ The Human Factor." Joyce was the Director of the Dutchess County Tercentenary and the Dutchess County Eleanor Roosevelt Centennial. Largely due to her efforts, the Eleanor Roosevelt Center at Val-Kill is recognized as a National Historic Site.

As head of the Dutchess County Department of History, Joyce has made learning about our local history both interesting and available to all. Thanks to the tireless efforts of Joyce and many other local historians, the history of Dutchess County is being preserved and the future is being enriched by a rebirth of interest in history, the arts and tourism.

Joyce credits her active participation on the YMCA board with developing the many skills she uses in her present position.

Joyce, we salute you and hope that your future will be filled with happiness and continued success.

Joyce C. Ghee 2018

Joyce was the valedictorian of Franklin D. Roosevelt High School's class of 1948, and she graduated Vassar College in 1952, with a bachelor's degree in French.

In an era where few women maintained both careers and motherhood, Joyce succeeded at both. Joyce began her professional career as a public school teacher, and later became the adult program director for the YWCA of Dutchess County. She did all that and more while raising her four children. And despite the best efforts of the two youngest, they all have thrived - because of her, but mostly because of her love.

Joyce was also both skilled and varied in her artistic endeavors. As a musician and singer, she played and sang in multiple church and independent choral groups. Joyce also authored and co-authored numerous history and children's books.

Despite her passing, Joyce's spirit lives on throughout Dutchess County. In the early 1970's Joyce was a founding member of the Hyde Park Visual Environment Committee, where she worked tirelessly to preserve many of the town's historical landmarks. She then served from 1981 to 1991, as Dutchess County Historian. Devoted to her community and its history, Joyce was instrumental in having Eleanor Roosevelt's Val-kill designated a National Historic Site - the first such to honor a First Lady of the United States. In appreciation of her commitment to public service, Joyce was awarded the Eleanor Roosevelt Val-kill Medal in 2003, and in 2004 she received a public service Certificate of Special Congressional Recognition. Joyce also received the President's Award from Marist College in 1991, and she was named the American Association of University Women Woman of the Year of 1987.