

Janice Riddler, the oldest member of Temple B'nai Israel, has died at age 95

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During almost seven decades as a resident of Jackson, Janice Axelrad Rosenbloom Riddler played prominent roles in the city's cultural, social and religious life. Riddler, who died during cardiology surgery at the Vanderbilt Medical Center in Nashville on Thursday, was 95. The oldest member of Temple B'nai Israel, the Jewish congregation in Jackson, she had served on its board of directors since 1999.

She was a 23-year-old New Yorker in 1942 when she married Joseph L. Rosenbloom, Jr. and moved to his native city of Jackson.

Afterward, except for a few years during World War II while Joseph Rosenbloom, Jr. served in the Army Air Corps, she lived only in Jackson.

"Despite the initial culture shock, she adjusted gracefully and immersed herself in the activities of her community," said her son, Joseph Rosenbloom III, of Newton, Massachusetts.

"Outgoing, genial and mentally acute, she made friends easily," said her daughter, Mari Livingston, of Portland, Oregon. "To her extended family, she was known as the one who rarely forgot a birthday or anniversary."

On her 95th birthday, Riddler hosted a party in Jackson for 150 people, 35 of them relatives from as far away as Seattle and Houston.

Joseph Rosenbloom Jr., whom she met through a family connection, was the president of the family-owned department store known as Rosenbloom's in downtown Jackson. From 1950 to 1969, Janice Rosenbloom ran the children's and gift's departments at the store.

Joseph Rosenbloom, Jr. died in 1967. In 1969, Janice Rosenbloom married Dr. John G. Riddler, who was a general surgeon at the Jackson Clinic. He died in 1997.

Janice Riddler was born on Oct. 13, 1918, in Salt Lake City. Her parents, George and Rebecca Axelrad, had immigrated to the United States around the turn of the last century from what was then the Austria-Hungary Empire. They moved to New York soon after Janice was born, and to Jackson in the mid-1940s.

Janice Riddler was a graduate of Hunter College of the City University of New York. She received a master's degree in nutrition and education from Columbia University. During World War II, she taught nutrition for the American Red Cross as a volunteer. She was a former board member of the Jackson-Madison County Library. She worked as a volunteer in its reference section and was a member of the Friends of the Library for many years. She was a former president of the Ladies Golf Association at the Jackson Country Club and a former president of Quid Nunc, a current events discussion group. A voracious reader, she was also a member of the Davis-Kidd Notable Book Club.

As a member of the advisory board of the Lambuth College Jewish Studies Group, she was a frequent participant in interfaith events in Jackson. She worked with the Rev. Gene Davenport, a former Lambuth religion and philosophy professor, to prepare the Jackson Jewish Legacy Exhibit in the college library.

Besides her daughter and son, survivors include eight grandchildren, Diana Livingston of Portland; Alex Livingston of Boston; Annie Livingston of Seattle, Washington; Seth Rosenbloom of Brooklyn, New York.; Alexa Rosenbloom of Somerville, Massachusetts.; and Rachel, Robert and Elizabeth Lichenstein, all of Birmingham, Alabama; and five great-grandchildren.

Funeral services will be at 10 a.m. Aug. 13 at Temple B'nai Israel in Jackson. Private burial will follow at the Temple B'nai Israel Cemetery. In lieu of flowers the family requests donations to the temple.

Janice Axelrad Rosenbloom Riddler
(October 13, 1918 - July 31, 2014)

Zichrona Livracha
May her memory be for blessing.

