

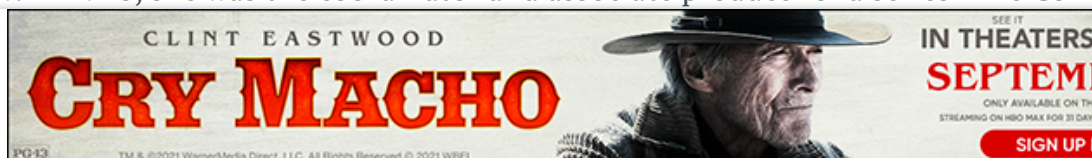


# Hester Shapiro

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**S**hapiro, Hester SCHENECTADY Hester Blatt Shapiro, of Schenectady, civic leader, free lance writer, educator, and performer of solo dramatic works, died at 94 on Saturday, February 10, 2007 at the Jewish Rehabilitation Center of the North Shore in Swamp-scott, Mass. surrounded by her loving family members. She was the beloved wife of Dr. Morris A. Shapiro, with whom she shared 58 years of marriage until his passing in 2000. Mrs. Shapiro was born in Boston and graduated from Radcliffe College with a B.A., cum laude, in chemistry. She did research in biochemistry at Harvard Medical School, co-authoring papers for scientific journals. She moved to Schenectady in the 1940s with her husband Morris, after he returned from serving overseas in the Army during World War II. In 1973, she earned an M.A. degree in American Studies, with distinction, from Union College. Hester Shapiro was devoted to helping others through involvement in civic activities and community organizations. She served as president of the American Association of University Women, Schenectady Branch, and as a vice-president of the state division. During her presidency, when the Civil Rights Bill was up for approval, AAUW brought "In White America" to Schenectady from Broadway. It played to standing room only and the profits permitted AAUW to give scholarship funds to African American youth. Shapiro was the initiator, in 1965, of the School Enrichment Project, sponsored by the American Association of University Women and taught in the Schenectady Public Schools. For this project, she wrote and taught a unit "Language Arts Through Poetry," to at-risk fourth and fifth graders from 1965 to 1984. She pioneered in education television in the mid-50s, producing WGBH's TV Schooltime, "Exploring the Arts" and "Literature Classics for Junior High," both award winning series sponsored by AAUW. In 1978, she was the coordinator and associate producer of a series "The Collectors," on the PBS x



Chapter of Hadassah and, for many years, a member of the Upper New York State Region of Hadassah, serving as region chairman of programs and publicity. She was a life member of Hadassah. A member of Congregation Gates of Heaven Board of Trustees for 24 years, she was at the same time chairman of the adult education committee and played a major role in planning the Annual Temple Celebrity Lecture Series. She was also president of Congregation Gates of Heaven Sisterhood and was vice president of the Congregation Gates of Heaven for seven years. She was on the Centennial Committee of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations and a number of her prayers, original Sabbaths, and Confirmation Programs have been published. For more than 15 years, she wrote a topical column on books, "Book Bound," for the Schenectady Gazette. In 1973, Shapiro was the first woman in the area to receive the B'nai Brith Distinguished Service Award for Community Service. In 1999, she was the first recipient of the Congregation Gates of Heaven Distinguished Service Award. Mrs. Hester Blatt Shapiro was a loving, caring mother, grandmother and wife, and enjoyed time with her family, especially her grandchildren. She is survived by a daughter, Susan Bayard and her husband Edward of Swampscott, Mass.; a son, Bill Shapiro and his wife Rochelle of Schenectady, N.Y.; and her grandchildren, Jeffrey Bayard and his wife Kate of Medford, Mass., Lucy Bayard of Brookline, Mass., and Sarah Shapiro of Brighton, Mass. Services at Congregation Gates of Heaven, 852 Ashmore Avenue, Schenectady on Monday, February 12, 2007 at 1:00 p.m. Interment will follow in the Gates of Heaven Cemetery on Watt Street in Schenectady. The Period of Mourning will be observed at the home of Bill and Rochelle Shapiro, 2127 Alexis Ave., Niskayuna, N.Y. on Monday and Tuesday evening at 7:00 p.m. Memorial contributions may be made to Congregation Gates of Haven Sisterhood, 872 Ashmore Ave., Schenectady, NY 12309 or the Dr. Morris A. Shapiro Scholarship Fund at Union College, College Relations, Abbe Hall, 807 Union St., Schenectady, NY 12308.



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