

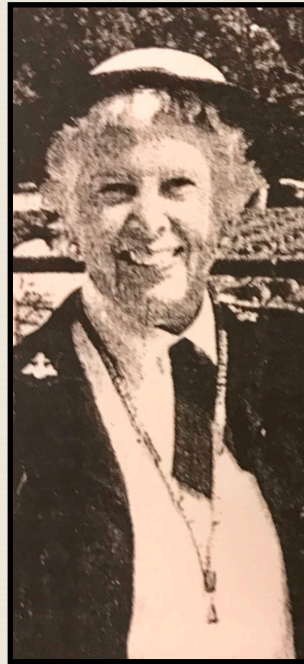
which had been a laundromat, and was remodeled for a library. In 1979, the library was tripled in size thanks to the support from Rahr Malting Foundation funds. The new Shakopee branch of the Scott County Library System is located at 235 S. Lewis Street, and was opened in 2003. The two-story, 26,000-square-foot facility includes meeting rooms, designated areas for children and teens, and computer stations for accessing the Internet and card catalog. Mary Joyce remembered the librarians, including Darlene Kelzer, Penny McDonald, Anna Mae Walsh, and Barbara Hegfors.

Mary Joyce appreciated time spent visiting with friends and liked sipping on white wine. Mary liked to travel, especially to the North Shore, Grand Marais area and her many trips to Italy with her family.

She was honored to be a member of the 'Greatest Generation'.



World War II recruiting poster showcasing the summer uniform



Mary Joyce Pomijie Stocker died on June 28, 2016 at age 91. Her service was on Friday, July 1, 2016, at the Parish of Saints Joachim & Anne in the Church of St. Mary. Mary Joyce was buried at the Catholic Cemetery in Shakopee, next to her husband.



SHAKOPEE HERITAGE SOCIETY
2109 Boulder Pointe, Shakopee, MN 55379

952-693-3865

shakopeeheritage.org



SHAKOPEE HERITAGE SOCIETY



**Mary Joyce Pomijie
Stocker
1924-2016**



Mary Joyce Pomilje was born in Minneapolis, Minnesota on September 3, 1924, the daughter of William and Mary (Costigan) Pomilje. She grew up in Shakopee, and graduated from the University of Minnesota with a Bachelor of Arts degree.

When she was a junior in high school, Pearl Harbor was bombed on December 7, 1941. “I remember it very well,” said Stocker according to an article in the *Shakopee Valley News* by Nicole S. Colson. “A lot of boys left right after they graduated—my friends, kids in my class.”

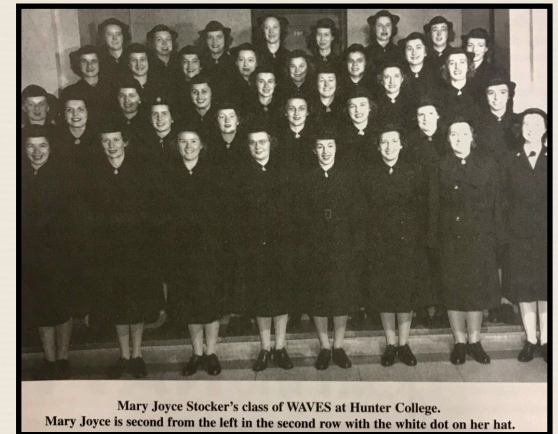
She had to go to boot camp in New York, where Mary Joyce learned to march and how to make a tight bed. Mary Joyce Stocker served stateside from 1944 to 1946, one of the U.S. Navy’s WAVES, or Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service.

According to Tom Melchior in the book **Never Forgotten: Stories by Scott County, Minnesota, WWII Veterans**, Mary Joyce remembered the boot camp. “I remember we did a lot of marching, We had craft identity classes, battleship identity classes, insignia identity classes, and foreign uniform identity.” Then, once she was in San Francisco, she spent six weeks learning all the mail codes, and how to bundle up the mail and send it to the various ships. It was a secret operation. They had to make sure the enemy wasn’t to know where the ships were!



Mary Joyce Pomilje Stocker went to Washington, DC in 2003 to see the WWII monument and show her uniform, which still fits almost 60 years later!

On right is the class of WAVES at Hunter College in New York. She is in the second row, second from left, with a white dot on her hat.



Mary Joyce Stocker's class of WAVES at Hunter College. Mary Joyce is second from the left in the second row with the white dot on her hat.

Mary Joyce remembered that she was just 19 when she was assigned to the Fleet Post Office in San Francisco. Service people sent their mail for free, and the military’s mail service ensured that important packages reached families back home.

She stayed in a converted YMCA in San Francisco. “Service people were treated with respect and kindness everywhere we went. People would meet us in church and invite us home for dinners on Sunday.” Mary Joyce remembered some of “the Shakopee fellas” as they were about to board ships and head into combat, according to Nicole S. Colson in an article called “Women Served Stateside Too” in the *Shakopee Valley News* on November 11, 2004.

The notion of women serving in the Navy was not widely supported in the Congress or by the Navy, even though some of the lawmakers and naval personnel did support the need for uniformed women during World War II. The law that allowed women to serve in the Navy, was due in large measure to the efforts of the Navy’s Women’s Advisory Council, Margaret Chung, and Eleanor Roosevelt, the First Lady of the United States.

To be eligible for officer candidate school, women had to be aged 20 to 49 and possess a college degree or have two years of college and two years of equivalent professional or business experience. Volunteers at the enlisted level had to be aged 20 to 35 and possess a high school or a business diploma, or have equivalent experience.

When she returned from service, Mary Joyce met Lee Stocker, who was a Navy veteran who had been stationed in the South Pacific. Mary Joyce married Leroy Michael (Lee) Stocker on February 14, 1950 in Shakopee. He was born on October 15, 1923 in Jordan, son of Mathias Mathew Stocker and Clara M. Geis. They were the parents of their son, Bill and their daughter, Ann Stocker Gaudette. Lee died January 30, 1993, in Shakopee.

Mary enjoyed spending time volunteering, golfing, playing card games, especially bridge and completing crossword puzzles. She helped start and was a member of a book club.

In fact, Mary Joyce noted “I am probably one of the few people who have witnessed all of Scott County Library history, and I want to tell you how thrilled I am with the progress.” She remembered when the Shakopee library was housed in the old bank by the railroad track. In 1970 the library moved to the Schesso Building,