

Hilde Wachtel dies in Austria

Bucks County has lost another icon. Hilde Wachtel passed away on Monday, July 9, in Austria. She would have celebrated her 95th birthday on Aug. 5.

Hilde and her daughter, Claudia Funke, were a class act. They were charming hostesses and frequently entertained their many friends in the area. They were loyal and devoted friends and championed those causes they cared about. They were close friends to John Michael Caprio, founder of the Riverside Symphonia, and for many years they both worked tirelessly on the orchestra's behalf. As one friend said, they were the face of the Symphonia and you couldn't say "no" to them.

Hilde came to the United States in 1955 with her husband, Leo Wachtel, and settled in Newark, N.J. Claudia followed a few years later. It was in Newark that they made the acquaintance of John Michael Caprio and a deep friendship developed. After John Michael purchased a weekend home in New Hope, Hilde and Claudia fell in love with the area and made Bucks County their home also. In New Hope, Hilde went to work at the New Hope Gazette, and later joined the staff of the Bucks



County Herald. She was the first one to greet you at the Gazette's front desk, where her charm and accent endeared her to all.

Hilde was larger than life and remained active and involved at an age when others would have "hung up their gloves." She was an inspiration to many of us.

We all have stories to share and hopefully will do so at a later date when we will celebrate her life.

- Elizabeth Griffin