

Ninety-year-old Lois Jeavons pens fictional book about Cleveland

by Kathryn Riddle

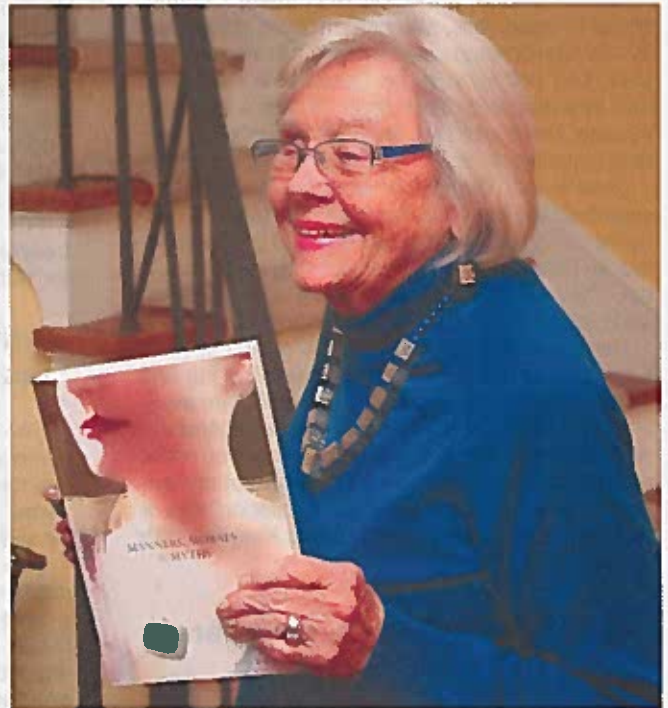
Lois Jeavons' 90th birthday party turned out to be a real surprise for her as the evening marked the official launch of her book, "Manners, Morals & Myths," a fictionalized novel about Cleveland, its suburbs and society, beginning in the late 1920s.

Organizing the event for family and friends was Mrs. Jeavons' granddaughter Brady Dindia who had kept the secret from her grandmother that the book was finally done. Its creation, however, was long in the works, said Mrs. Jeavons who moved to Cleveland as a child and was graduated from Hathaway Brown School in 1942. Following her marriage and raising her children here, Mrs. Jeavons and her late husband William, once retired, moved to Virginia in 1985. There she enrolled in a writing class taught by Don McCaig, who encouraged her to expand a short story into a novel. Mrs. Jeavons subsequently moved to California and once the book was finished, she approached her friend Hal Miller, then CEO of Houghton Mifflin, who gave her names of agents.

"No one was interested then in a book about Cleveland," said Mrs. Jeavons, who ultimately decided to self-publish her novel "with a lot of help from Brady. She told me that her friends are fascinated with a bygone era they will never know and of such things as wearing white gloves covering the elbows for evening, for instance."

While there are obvious references to places in Cleveland, Mrs. Jeavons' characters and their tumultuous lives are "total fiction, an amalgamation of people I have known or imagined. The summer home in my book is modeled after a home my family had in Conneaut Lake, Pennsylvania. I was born in Pittsburgh, where my mother was from, and many people summered at Conneaut Lake."

A great-grandmother of two children, Mrs. Jeavons is



(Photograph by Kathryn Riddle)

Lois Jeavons holds a copy of her novel, "Manners, Morals & Myths."

now working on a children's book, based on illustrations created by her daughter Judy. It may turn out to be written in rhyme, as suggested by Brady, said Mrs. Jeavons who still has much to add to her own rhythm of life.

CLASS of '42

Currents

3.20.14