

**JONES MEMORIAL LIBRARY
2311 MEMORIAL AVENUE
LYNCHBURG, VIRGINIA 24501**

HELEN PESCI WOOD (1911-1964) COLLECTION

The collection includes newspaper clippings, programs, correspondence, and recordings tracing the career of Helen Pesci Wood. Also includes correspondence and other information regarding the establishment of an historical marker for Wood in Lynchburg, Va., as well as the dedication ceremonies in 2017.

- BOX 1**
- 1-1 Helen Pesci Wood (1912-1964)
 - 1-2 Life of Helen Wood (by Robert C. Wood III – 17 Nov 2010)
 - 1-3 Photographs (Helen Wood)
 - 1-4 Photographs (Family, Woman’s Club)
 - 1-5 Photographs (Performance)
 - 1-6 Grass Roots Opera Company
 - 1-7 *Night of Opera* (Lynchburg College) (1946-1962)
 - 1-8 Dedication (Highway Marker) (2017)
 - 1-9 Dedication (Speeches) (2017)
 - 1-10 Dedication (e-mail correspondence) (2017)

- BOX 2**
- 2-1 Newspaper clippings (1936-1949)
 - 2-2 Newspaper clippings (1950-1964)
 - 2-3 Newspaper clippings (Undated)
 - 2-4 Correspondence (1939-1945)
 - 2-5 Correspondence (1946-1949)
 - 2-6 Correspondence (1950-1961 + undated)
 - 2-7 Programs – Little Theater/Fine Arts Center (1938-1963)
 - 2-8 Programs – Lynchburg College (1943-1956)
 - 2-9 Programs (1942-1950)
 - 2-10 Programs (1951-1964 + undated)

- BOX 3** Miscellaneous recordings (24 copies of *Songs of the Eighteenth Century*, two compact discs, and 20 miscellaneous recordings)

(Note: The programs, clippings and correspondence were collected in scrapbooks by Mrs. Wood. The scrapbooks were disassembled for the marker dedication and several items were incorrectly removed from the scrapbook pages before the material was presented to Jones Memorial Library.)

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HELEN PESCI WOOD (1911-1964)

Helen Pesci Wood, the daughter of A. Joseph Pesci and Lillian Viola, was born in Chicago, Illinois, on 27 October 1911. She attended Muskegon High School, Muskegon, Michigan, and was a graduate of the University of Illinois. She studied with Harrison Christian, Giuseppe Boghetti, Enrico Rosati, Desire Defrere and Cesare Sodero. She also studied staging and *mise-en-scene* with Boris Goldovsky. She was well-known in the United States and Canada as a dramatic soprano and well-known for her concert interpretations and operatic talents. She made her debut recital in Kimball Hall, Chicago, Illinois, and made her operatic debut in New York, in April 1950, at the Brooklyn Academy of Music. She sang in Chicago, New York, Washington, Norfolk, Newport News and Williamsburg.

During her career, she was an instructor in advertising and fashion merchandising at Southern Seminary, Buena Vista, VA, 1939-1941. She became instructor in speech and dramatics as well as radio speech at Lynchburg College (now Univ. of Lynchburg) in 1941, becoming full-time music instructor in 1956 and assistant professor of music and voice in 1957. She was director of speech correction clinic at Sweet Briar College, in Amherst, VA in 1942. She organized and directed the Virginia Grass Roots Opera Theater in 1952. She also sang in candlelight concerts in the Governor's Palace at Williamsburg beginning in 1950. Helen acted and served as director in numerous productions of the Lynchburg Little Theater and the Lynchburg Fine Arts Center

Helen Pesci Wood died 8 August 1964. She was buried in Spring Hill Cemetery, Lynchburg.