

Some people begin to slow down at her age, but local author and Pine Island resident Martha Lou Perritti is just getting started.

“I’ve been told that I’m a great storyteller,” says Perritti cheerfully. “My books are a part of me that I’ve chosen to share with my readers.”

Perritti was 60 years old when she discovered her Cherokee ancestry and decided to write a book based on the family research she had done. Her first novel, *Crossing in the Rain*, was released in 1996 and followed the life of her father, who lived to be 101. “Others have been denied the knowing of their heritage,” Perritti comments. “I’m proud of mine and want others to feel the pride I feel.”

In her most recent historical novel, *Standing against the Wind*, Perritti explores her heritage through the personal stories of three great-grandmothers. She has tracked their lives and the context in which they lived by weaving historical facts into her writing.

The story of *Standing against the Wind* begins in 1813, when Perritti’s great, great, great-grandmother Polly was born in Cumberland Gap in the Appalachian Mountains.

“The hardest part about writing this book was going through the emotional experiences related to the events that took place at that time,” says Perritti. “When I write, it’s often an emotional roller coaster.” One woman even called her in the middle of the night crying when she read about Polly’s death.

When she’s not researching or writing, Perritti enjoys being out in public and promoting her books. She attends book signings, gives lectures on historical research to genealogy groups, and participates in book readings across the country. In March 2004, *Standing against the Wind* was even featured at the London Book Fair in England.

Standing against the Wind is available on Amazon.com, at several bookshops on Sanibel and Pine Island, or by visiting www.marthalouperritti.com.

– Debbie Hanson

A Story to Tell

Martha Lou Perritti



PHOTO BY RHONDA MANDEL

Martha Lou Perritti’s heritage provides inspiration for her books.