

Memoir brings spotlight late in life

By **H.M. Cauley**
For the AJC

For some, fame comes early. For Eva Friedlander, it's taken 90 years. Although she's marking her 90th birthday Wednesday and already has had a life filled with significant moments, it was the publication of her first book in August that catapulted the Buckhead resident into the public eye.

"I've suddenly become a mini-celebrity, and I don't mind it, I must say," Friedlander said with a smile.

The Hungary native already has marked two milestones: surviving the persecution of Jews in her homeland during World War II and a stormy marriage with George Friedlander, a brilliant scientist who worked on the Nobel Prize-winning team that developed a way to mass produce penicillin. The two escaped the war, married in Italy and worked until 1950 to get to the United States. They arrived first in New Orleans and then settled in Atlanta, where her husband worked at Emory University before starting his own business.

But despite having two children and much professional success, the marriage was, in Friedlander's words, "tumultuous." Her book, "Nine Lives of a Marriage: A Cu-



Eva Friedlander, 90, still manages an antique shop in Roswell, gardens on her patio and gives talks to community and civic groups about her life as a Holocaust survivor. H.M. Cauley Special

rious Journey," is a memoir of those years co-written with Atlanta writer Mickey Goodman.

"I consider my life a journey in a geographic sense and also in the way that life is a journey," she said. "The book covers our romance, our marriage, our professional lives and all the tumultuous experiences we had."

For years, Friedland-

er's friends and two children told her she should write a book, but her first love isn't writing; it is antiques and art. With a background that includes studying at a fine arts academy in Rome, Friedlander has had shops in various locations around town, and her current store in Roswell features her favorite things: European porcelain, paint-

ings and prints. Her love of family and art is also evident in her apartment, where photos, portraits, antique oil works and tea cups are more than antiques; they're family mementos.

Along with tending her collection, Friedlander is a dedicated gardener who has transformed a spacious patio into a haven of flowering plants and

shrubs.

"My patio is almost bigger than an apartment," she said. "It's a wonderful substitute for a garden. I'm looking forward to growing tomatoes and some vegetables this year."

But it's the memoir that has brought Friedlander into the spotlight late in her life. Despite failing eyesight, she makes regu-

lar visits to talk with book clubs, senior groups, churches and synagogues about her experiences as a survivor and immigrant.

"It's been very rewarding," she said. "I'm usually deluged with a lot of interesting questions - how did I deal with this issue, how did the family react to it. I'm always pleased and honored they ask me."

Last week, Friedlander's son, an Atlanta surgeon, and her daughter, a veterinarian in Denver, were in town with the four grandchildren for the big birthday that Friedlander marked as "another huge landmark in my life." But it was far from a retirement party.

"I honestly don't feel that many years behind me," she said. "I have young friends. I'm interested in what's happening in the world. I'm very with it."

"Milestones" covers significant events and times in the lives of metro Atlantans. Big or small, well-known or not - tell us of a milestone we should write about. Send information to hm_cauley@yahoo.com or 404-514-6162; or mail to Milestones, c/o Jamila Robinson, The Atlanta Journal-Constitution, 223 Perimeter Center Parkway N.E., Atlanta, GA 30346.