



Helen Brugger

October 8, 1918 - April 21, 2014

Helen Grace Brugger, 95, passed away peacefully at home Monday, April 21, 2014. She was born Oct. 8, 1918, in Mancelona to parents, Oscar and Minnie Johnson.

After graduating from Mancelona High School in 1936 she attended Central Michigan University on a scholarship for one year.

Helen worked and lived in Detroit as well as Seattle, Wash., for a time before settling back in Mancelona in 1950. There she met and married Milton C. "Toby" Grace before moving to a cherry farm near Elk Rapids. Toby preceded her in death in 1991.

In the next phase of her life Helen married longtime family friend, Bob Brugger, and they were happily married together for 23 years until the present.

Among her many accomplishments, Helen studied art and drawing from many artists around northern Michigan area and became herself a renowned artist in the Grand Traverse Bay region, practicing her craft until just a few years ago when her eyesight started to fail.

Besides raising a family she enjoyed picking sweet cherries on the farm and selling them in her gift shop on Elk Lake Road. She also enjoyed playing the organ at the Elk Rapids Methodist Church for 47 years until they closed the church just a few years ago.

Helen had a zest for life that was unmatched, always seeing the bright side of people and situations with her constant big smile. She was most proud of her family, many loving friends and her faith in God. She will be greatly missed by all who knew her.

Besides her parents, she was preceded in death by first husband, Burt Fralick; second husband, Toby Grace; son, Bruce Fralick; sisters, Dorothy Flodin and Margaret Rutter; and nephew, Scott Johnson.

Surviving are husband, Bob Brugger, of Traverse City; daughter, Linda Mackey (Wayne), of Grawn; son, Chuck Grace (Leslie), of Trinidad, Colo.; brother, Don Johnson (Ruth), of Mancelona; grandsons, Marty Sprague, of Kingsley, and Ben Fralick, of Bethlehem, Pa.; granddaughters, Denise Roush, of Traverse City, and Elizabeth Winters, of Upland, Ind.; great-grandchildren, Kayla Sprague, Emile Winters, Alyssa Roush, Matthew Roush and Jeremy Roush; in addition to several nieces and nephews.

She was a loving and compassionate mother to all of Bob's children, their families, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

She will be remembered for so many things, her cherry pie, her funny Halloween costumes, her Jell-O, her ability to play a tough game of cribbage, her skill at crossword puzzles, coming up with funny “clean” jokes and teaching and encouraging many to pursue their dreams. On April 17, 2014, she said to Denise, “Memories are the best thing we could ever have and we have lots of those.”

A celebration of life service will be held Friday, May 2, 2014, at 2 p.m., at the Williamsburg Methodist Church, Williamsburg.

In lieu of flowers, charitable donations may be made in Helen’s name to Hospice of Michigan, 10850 E. Traverse Hwy., Suite 1155, Traverse City, MI 49684; or Tendercare Health Center-Birchwood, 2950 Lafranier Road, Traverse City, MI 49686.

Arrangements were made by Wolfe-O’Neill Funeral Home, our family serving yours.

Tribute Wall



“ *Helen Brugger*

January 30, 2023 at 04:02 AM



“ *Helen Brugger*

January 30, 2023 at 01:03 AM