



## Mrs. Helen M. Hoffbeck

November 3, 1931 - November 16, 2023

Mrs. Helen M. Hoffbeck, most recently of Alpharetta, GA, passed away peacefully on November 16th, 2023, at the age of 92. Helen was born in Lime Springs, IA, on November 3rd, 1931, to William and Viola (Schmidt) Shea. She passed peacefully with two of her daughters and a son-in-law by her side, after having been visited by most of her extended family at the end of September.

Helen will be deeply missed by her many surviving family members including her children, Joan (Tom) Dubnicka of Palatine, IL, Mark (Sharon) Hoffbeck of Macomb, IL, Joe (Larina) Hoffbeck of Portland, OR, Amy (Brad) Reynolds of Roswell, GA, and Susan (Joe) Takacs of Naples, FL; her thirteen grandchildren, Emily Dubnicka, Michael (Ashley) Hoffbeck, Laura Dubnicka, Maureen (Cale) Heitmeier, Annie Dubnicka, Carmen Hoffbeck, Nathan Hoffbeck, Katie (Erik) Maday, Mallory Hoffbeck, George Takacs, Megan Reynolds, Charlie Reynolds, and Henry Takacs; her sister, Anne Salter; five great-grandchildren; many nieces and nephews; and numerous friends. She is preceded in passing by her beloved husband, Loren John Hoffbeck; parents, William and Viola (Schmidt) Shea; and brothers, Paul Shea and Tom Shea. A celebration of her life will be held this January, with a funeral mass at St. Thomas Aquinas in Alpharetta, GA, at 1:00 pm on Saturday, January 13th and an interment at Georgia National Cemetery in Canton, GA, at 8:30 am on Monday, January 15th.

Helen, the second child of four and the oldest daughter, grew up on a family farm five miles outside of Lime Springs, IA, during the Great Depression. It was there that she developed the Depression-era necessity of being frugal, as well as a life-long dislike of live chickens.

Education was important to the Shea family, as her father was not able to attend college, and Helen was the first in the family to attend. Helen earned her RN degree from St. Mary's Nursing School in Rochester, MN, and performed her clinical training at the Mayo Clinic hospital. Helen enjoyed telling the story of caring for Anne Sullivan, Helen Keller's tutor.

After graduation, Helen worked as a public health nurse in Madison, WI, before deciding to enroll in University of Wisconsin to earn her BS in Nursing. It was in Madison that Helen met her future husband, John, on a blind date. They married in June of 1960 and remained married for 61 years.

After John finished his PhD program, he and Helen moved to Greeneville, TN, where John began his career and the newlyweds started their beloved family. Three kids and four years later, the family moved to Tipton, IN, where they would settle into their home on Leininger Drive for the next five decades and add two more children to the young family.

Helen spent more than fifty years living in Tipton and used this time to become very involved in the community. For most of those fifty years, Helen could often be found in the choir loft of St. John the Baptist Church, sometimes accompanied by her children, playing the pipe organ for Sunday Mass, weddings, and funerals. Christmas Eve Mass would not be complete without Helen's rousing rendition of Joy to the World as congregants exited after the service. In addition to Helen playing the organ there, St. John was the church where five of her children and grandchildren were baptized, where four of her

children were married, and where John and Helen participated in many of the parish activities. Helen also spent fifteen years caring for students of all ages as the school nurse for the Tipton Community School Corporation, the first to hold the position. She gathered numerous treasured friends throughout her years in Bridge Club, Home Ec. Club, 4H, Quilting Club, the Tipton County Board of Health, Retired Teachers Club, and exercise classes. She spent years as an “on-call” nurse helping friends, family, and neighbors as need arose.

Growing up under Helen’s care meant there was always a hot breakfast for the children to enjoy before school and homemade bread for John. With her daughters, Helen shared her knowledge of sewing, lending a helping hand to rip out any mistake stitches while offering encouragement to keep going. All five of Helen’s children, and several grandchildren, took up piano lessons under her “suggestion.” Although none of them garnered much success, Helen still enthusiastically coached them from the kitchen, helpfully yelling “sharp!” or “flat!” when the song was out of tune.

If you were welcomed into Helen and John’s home, you certainly never left with an empty stomach, but rather were filled to the brim with Helen’s homemade breads, pies, cookies, and her grandchildren’s favorite chocolate cake. Helen was always ready to welcome family into her home, with not one but two fridges stuffed with treats to enjoy. In fact, a cookbook compiled of Helen’s signature recipes is on its third edition among her family readership. Helen was happiest when her house was full of noisy children and grandchildren. She hosted Christmas in Tipton for the families who could attend, serving up pink fluff and gifting matching clothes to her 13 grandchildren. Helen was a matriarch who held the family together, often peace-keeping by uncovering a surprise extra chocolate cake to keep all the grandchildren happy. As a supportive grandmother, Helen proudly attended

numerous graduation ceremonies, from high school through graduate school.

Knowing the end of this era was imminent, Helen's large family traded shifts to visit her for one last time at the end of September.

In lieu of flowers, you may consider a tribute donation in memory of Helen to the Mayo Clinic nursing school scholarship fund at: <https://philanthropy.mayoclinic.org/donatemc>

# Cemetery Details

## Georgia National Cemetery

1080 Scott Hudgens Dr  
Canton, GA 30114  
(770) 479-9300

# Previous Events

## Funeral Service

JAN 13. 1:00 PM (ET)

St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church  
535 Rucker Road  
Alpharetta, GA

## Graveside Service

JAN 15. 8:30 AM (ET)

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