



## Mrs. Helen F. Ackroyd

August 27, 1931 - September 17, 2024

Helen F. (Fanning) Ackroyd passed away in her sleep on September 17, 2024 following a battle with dementia and Alzheimer's disease. She was born August 27, 1931 having recently celebrated her 93rd birthday. Helen was born in Cortland, NY the daughter of Louis and Rose H Fanning, and resided in the Homer and Cortland area for most of her life. She attended St. Mary's School and graduated with her friends in the Class of 1949. She attended what is now Broome Community College graduating in 1951, and worked in the medical field for several years at Cortland Memorial Hospital. She then attended and graduated from SUNY Cortland with her Master's degree in Education in 1961. She worked for a short time with the Marathon School district before beginning her long tenure with the Cortland Enlarged City School District, teaching mostly first grade at Randall Elementary, where she was best known as Miss Fanning. She retired from teaching in 1986.

Helen married Theodore Ackroyd on April 7, 1984 after spending many years together. After retirement, Helen and Ted traveled across the country, eventually visiting every state in the union. They enjoyed several cruises to warmer climates, and were very active with the St. Mary's Golden Agers Club, traveling with the group to many exciting locations. Helen was an avid gardener, having large flower and vegetable gardens in her backyard on Port Watson Street. She loved to read, travel, bake, can, and make jelly and was famous for her Dilly Beans. She was an active member of St. Mary's Church,

where she was a member of the Catholic Daughters of America, receiving the CDA of the Year award in 2012. She served a greeter and Eucharistic minister at church, helped with bereavement luncheons, and was a member of the Alter Rosary Society. She especially loved the stained-glass windows at St. Mary's. She participated in several community activities, serving as an RSVP volunteer, serving on the Board of Directors of the SPCA, where her love for cats was exemplified by making several cats a member of her family over the years. She and Ted enjoyed attending performances at Cortland Reparatory Theater, as well as other regional playhouses. Helen was a local and state member of the Retired Teachers Association and the NYSUT Ed 45 Council.

Helen was predeceased by her mother and father, her sisters Marcene(John) Sherman, Mary (James) Riese, and June (Robert) Goehner, and her loving husband Theodore. She is survived by several nieces and nephews, as well as many great nieces and nephews.

A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated on Monday at 11 a.m. in St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church, The Christian Rite of Committal and Burial will follow in St. Mary's Catholic Cemetery.

The family will receive friends on Monday from 9:30-10:30 a.m. in the Chapel of Riccardi Funeral Home  
69 N.Main St. Cortland, NY. [www.riccardifuneralhome.com](http://www.riccardifuneralhome.com)

Donations in Helen's memory may be made to; St. Mary's Stained Glass Window Restoration Fund or Cortland Reparatory Theater.

# Tribute Wall

KW

“ I am so sorry the families loss. She was my teacher when I attended Randall school. RIP Ms. Fanny.



Karen M Williams - December 15, 2024 at 07:38 AM

JG

“ Helen was at Randall School when I joined the faculty in 1976. She helped me tremendously that first year. She was always available to help. She had a great love for children. Rest in peace, Helen. (Janet Stark Griffin)

Janet Griffin - September 23, 2024 at 09:45 AM

CA

“ Our deepest sympathies, so many of us worked with Helen over the years

Cortland Area Retired Teachers' Associat - September 20, 2024 at 04:24 PM

MS

“ Dear Charlie, I was sad to read that Helen had passed away. She was my mom's best friend and my godmother. After my mom passed away we kept in touch with each other at Christmas time and my dad told me that she would stop by his house once in a while just to chat with him. Maureen StackHartley

Maureen StackHartley - September 20, 2024 at 11:14 AM

MD

“ I will miss my friend & long time neighbor. Helen was always of a positive mindset. I especially enjoyed our conversations about her very large and stately oak tree that both her & Ted administered a great amount of TLC...they treated it like a member of the family 🌳



We at St. Mary's will forever be thankful for Helen's generosity & love of the church's beautiful stained glass windows.

May the peace 🕊 of the good Lord grant Helen & Ted eternal rest



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Mike Dexter - September 19, 2024 at 04:01 PM