

Dear Family and Friends,

Helen's own words come closest to expressing our feelings as we write to you today. She wrote, "Time for departure does come to everyone, bringing relief and sadness."

How true her thoughts were! For her, death came quietly, bringing a welcome relief from failing health and her burden of deafness. Her three children and their spouses will dearly miss Mom, and her seven grandchildren and eight great grandchildren will miss Helen or Gramo as we all deal with our sadness. We'll miss her friendly greetings, her guidance and her generous and loving ways, but as time softens our sorrow, cherished memories will remain as she lives on in our hearts.

According to Helen's wishes she is to be cremated and when spring time warms the earth in Litchfield, Minnesota, her ashes will be placed beside Harry's in the March plot at the Lake Ripley Cemetery. Hugh, Martha and Jane plan to see to her safe arrival there.

Since Helen did not want any formal services planned for her, we have tried to think of how all the people special to her could join us in honoring her memory. And we thought, what better way than to share with you a brief biography of Helen's very special life. When you read the enclosed pages, you'll find she lived a very interesting life in a variety of places, always centering her interests on the people nearest and dearest to her -- enjoying them, helping them and loving them.

We're sure reading about Helen will remind you of the many ways she touched your lives too. To share thoughts, experiences and remembrances of her, we are planning to make a Memory Book. If you would like to share a few words, stories, verses or some pictures, we would love to include them. Please send them to Hugh & Carol March at 13101 La Paloma Rd., Los Altos Hills, CA 94022 or, if you prefer, by email to chmarch@aol.com.

Somewhere, out there, in a glorious place where Helen is again with her beloved Harry and where she can now hear the angels sing, we know God's arms are around her.

With our love to each of you,

Hugh and Carol March
Martha and Tim Bell
Jane and Paul Hansen

THE LIFE OF HELEN STEINKRUGER MARCH

On the 9th of September in 1910, Helen was born in Zacatecas, Mexico, to her German-born father, Frederick Dietrich Steinkruger, and Texas-born mother, Carolyn Jasmer Steinkruger. Her official name as written on the Mexican records was Fried Helen Steinkruger, something she later laughed about as the letter "a" had been omitted from the name Frieda! Her brother, Anthony Frank, was 15 months older than Helen, and they became very close companions. Frank called her, "Mine little sister" and watched over her as they played together.

The family lived in the town of Zacatecas while Helen's father was the American Consular agent there. Just 3 months after her birth, Helen made her first trip to San Antonio, Texas with her mother who needed an operation. While there they lived with Helen's maternal grandparents, Hugo Otto Reinhardt Jasmer (called Chate) and Augusta Caroline Dathe Jasmer (called Muttie). After returning to Mexico, the family moved a little way out of town to Hacienda de Los Angeles and then to Ojuelos where Helen's father operated a flour mill.

In her early years, the languages spoken at home were German and Spanish, though Helen remembered her mother singing little ditties to the children in English as well. Happy memories of her early years included outings to the Alameda and roaming the countryside with her brother and their dog, Chocolate. When Helen was 4 years old, the family returned to San Antonio for a year, then back to Mexico.

In November 1916 Helen's mother became deathly ill with typhus but slowly did recover. At this time there was also a Revolution going on in Mexico. Bandits roamed the countryside, attacking and robbing folks, including "cleaning out" all the family owned at the mill. For these reasons, they decided it was time to go to back to Texas! However, as the family was preparing to leave, masked bandits again attacked them. Helen always remembered the story of the family's ordeal. Reduced to the clothes on their backs, their empty suitcases and the coins Helen's father had managed to hide, the family survived the attack and was finally able to make it to Texas.

By then it was 1917, and Helen was old enough to start school. She was in San Antonio for the first few grades and part of another year at a school in New York. In 1920 Helen, Frank and their mother reunited with Helen's father, this time in Tampico, Mexico. There Helen attended the school run by the American oil companies through the 8th grade and made good friends. She remembered the teacher being intent on making patriotic Americans of the students. They saluted the American flag each day and sang patriotic songs. Helen did admit that one song which included the words, "And peace and union forever more," she often sang, "Peas and onions forever more!"

In 1925 Helen left Mexico for good and moved to San Antonio to live with her grandparents. There she attended high school and was a member of the National Honor Society. She graduated in May of 1928, and her father enrolled her in a Business School. She attended full time for 6 months, then went to school in the morning and worked as secretary at a Men's Cheap Pants Factory -- 1 P.M. to 6 P.M. for \$1.00 a day! After completing her business training, she was employed at the "San Antonio Dept. of Col." as secretary.

During this time a most wonderful thing happened to Helen. Through her uncle she was introduced to a handsome young doctor named Harry March who was on 3 months active duty training at the Army School of Aviation Medicine at Brooks Field in San Antonio. They

immediately were attracted to one another and spent all the time they could together while Harry was in Texas. When he returned to San Francisco, he didn't forget this beautiful young woman, and they continued to keep in touch. By now the country had slipped into a depression and starting out as a new doctor wasn't easy. Harry vowed to himself that as soon as he could "net \$100 a month", he would marry Helen! So in 1931 he sent her a train ticket to travel from New York, where she was visiting her mother, to meet him in Reno, Nevada so they could be married. By now they had had a long courtship by correspondence but had not seen each other in some time. Helen worried that she wouldn't recognize Harry when she got off the train, but, of course, she did!

Harry later wrote about their wedding day. He said, "Helen came out to Reno where we were to be married as California had a 3-day waiting period after the marriage license and before the wedding. I drove to Reno, met the train, took my bride-to-be to the Washoe County Courthouse and bought a license. We then began searching for a Protestant preacher, as I had promised Miss Watson I would do, and ended up in Sparks at the parsonage of Rev. Ritter. The night which Helen arrived I proposed and presented her with a diamond engagement ring, made by Hartungs Jeweler from the gem from my mother's engagement ring and gold which I had washed out in a sluice box on Deer Creek, Mike Kendricks' claim, below Nevada City. I had the wedding ring already made from gold dust from the same sluice box."

Harry continued, "We were a greenhorn pair, arriving at the parsonage in Sparks without witnesses. Rev. Ritter called in two people from the curb in front of his home to act as witnesses. In lining us up in front of the parlor piano, Helen backed up over the piano stool and fell down." (After the ceremony) "We drove towards Oakland and the La Buda's (good friends Bill and Ollie La Buda) later that day, stopping in the Lenhart Hotel for the night. Then back to Grass Valley to my quarters in the Elks Club until we moved into our rented house at 115 Townsend Street to start housekeeping....We were happy!"

Helen loved to retell a funny story about her first week there. She was stopped by the Probation officer on Mill Street. He said, "Little girl, what are you doing shopping? You get back to school NOW." She answered, "I'm Dr. March's wife." A bit skeptical, the officer asked, "How old are you?" Helen said, "I'm 21," and showed him her wedding rings. At that he said, "MY God! Excuse me. You look 16 years old."

In 1932 the newlyweds built six houses on Pleasant Street in Grass Valley, lived in one and rented the others. While living there Hugh Nelson March, their first child, was born in February 1935 and the next year daughter, Martha, was born in June. By 1938 Helen and Harry purchased land at Town Talk, between Grass Valley and Nevada City, and had an adobe home built. They settled into their new home, and in 1941 their third child, Jane, was born. By then it was War time and there was a scarcity of doctors in Nevada County. Harry worked long, long hours, and Helen kept the home fires burning. Additionally she was a member of the School Board and later was a Girl Scout leader.

In the early 1940s Harry built a sailboat with Helen's help. They launched it on Lake Tahoe and with Helen reading an instruction manual aloud to Harry, they learned to sail. When they needed to find a safe place to tie up their boat, they discovered lakeside property in a protected cove in Crystal Bay. It was for sale at a price that in 1944 was right, so it became their "second home." There was an old Indian's cabin on the shore where Helen could cook, and they slept in Army cots in the Fish House on the old dock. Helen and the rest of the family often remembered

those days of "camping out" at Tahoe as some of the most pleasant. They moved rocks from the shoreline to create a patio with a barbecue, moved the Indian Cabin over to make room to walk past it and eventually they dug rocks out of the hillside to build the foundation and walls for a house on the mountainside.

Besides time spent at Tahoe, Helen and Harry, and sometimes the rest of the family, were able to enjoy travel to some far away places. They made trips to Mexico on several occasions, and in 1947 Helen and Harry accompanied Harry's Aunt Mayme to Costa Rica. However, it had always been Harry's dream to sail to the South Pacific, and, after several aborted plans, the family had the chance to make Harry's dream come true. In 1952 they boarded the ship, the *Eloise*, as passenger/crew and set sail. However, some miles outside the Golden Gate, a storm came up, and the ship proved to be unseaworthy. Radio messages got through to the Coast Guard and after many tense hours, they were towed into Half Moon Bay much to the delight of the news media and relief of family members and friends ashore. The *Eloise* was put into dry dock for repair and new arrangements were made for the family to sail. On the next attempt they left from San Pedro, sailing into the blue Pacific. All went well until Harry discovered the Captain wasn't keeping an accurate log. After much discussion, they turned around and returned to California. So ended their hopes of getting to Tahiti by sailing there.

By the fall of 1954 Hugh and Martha were in college, and good friends, Muriel and Joe Tellam, offered to have Jane stay with them. Helen and Harry were finally able to make their long anticipated trip. They departed on a Norwegian freighter, *Thorsisle*, for a 10-day cruise to Papeete, Tahiti. There they debarked and enjoyed 3 months in the tropics. Helen wrote glowing accounts of the flowers and beauties of the Society Islands and of the friends they were making - the Kellums, Lola Hall, Princess Turia and many others. The *Thorsisle* returned to Tahiti in January, and Helen and Harry again went aboard to continue their South Seas adventures in Samoa, Figi, the New Hebrides, New Caledonia and New Guinea, before returning to San Francisco in March 1955.

While in Tahiti Helen and Harry had met Dr. John Kessel from UCLA who was doing research with French doctors to eradicate Filariasis and its complication Elephantiasis. He contacted Harry soon after they returned to the U.S. and asked if he would join the medical research team in Tahiti. After much soul searching and a family conference, Helen and Harry decided to close their home in Grass Valley and move to Tahiti. Harry went to UCLA for courses in tropical medicine. Helen masterminded and organized readying their home for rent AND with the help of Hugh, Martha, Jane and many friends completed the building of their house on their Tahoe property which had been started several years before.

Harry departed for Tahiti in April 1956 to serve as Associate Parasitologist and Field Director of L'Institute de Recherches Medicales in French Polynesia. Helen, Jane and Martha followed in September, again traveling on the *Thorsisle*. It was a whole new life for the family, living 16 kilometers out from the town of Papeete. There were bananas and breadfruit right on the trees where they lived. Tahitian children came to play and show Martha and Jane how to find shells and catch fish. Helen made their new quarters a real home, and she wrote reams and reams of letters back to the U.S. to friends and family, sharing all of their exciting times, their frustrations in understanding new ways and their adventures in the lagoon and to outer islands.

Martha returned to the U.S. to finish college and to meet her future husband, Tim Bell. Hugh stayed in the U.S. to graduate from Stanford and marry his college sweetheart, Carol Hodge. Jane

stayed with Helen and Harry in Tahiti, took correspondence courses and adapted to Tahitian ways of life. Helen missed her family back home, but she also loved being with Harry and Jane in the gentle breezes of Polynesia, making lifelong friends with the many people they met there and arranging for folks from the States to visit them. She particularly regretted missing Hugh and Carol's wedding in June 1957, but when Hugh completed his Army training the next year, the newlyweds were given the gift of a trip to Tahiti as a second honeymoon. Helen's mother, Carolyn, was already visiting in Tahiti, and Martha and a friend traveled by Matson ship with Hugh and Carol that June. Helen greeted all of us on the dock at Papeete with a mile-wide smile and armloads of flower and shell leis! What a glorious reunion it was for Helen with her whole family around her!

In 1959 Helen and Harry briefly returned to the U.S. They were on hand when their first grandchild, Karen March, was born and to take part in Martha and Tim's wedding. By March 1960 they were back on the *Thorsisle* headed to Tahiti to stay another year, during which time Harry retired from medical research. After that they were able to make periodic return trips, setting a pattern of their lives for the next 23 years -- 6 months in Tahiti and 6 months stateside, mostly at their home at Crystal Bay, Lake Tahoe.

Those were idyllic years for Helen as her family grew. She was present when grandsons Peter Bell and George March were born, loving to hold them in her arms and help with their care. In 1965 she and Harry were in the U.S. for the wedding of Jane to Paul Hansen. Then, much to Helen's delight, in 1966 Martha and Tim and family went to Tahiti to live while Tim did research for his Ph.D. thesis. Their son, Peter, was just a toddler and daughter, Kira, an infant. Helen delighted in having them just next door. In March 1967 she was the attending "nurse" when Harry delivered Chris Bell, right in their spare room! He was grandchild number 5.

Years hurried by with trips back and forth across the Pacific, by then much quicker as airline service to Tahiti had been established. Helen and Harry often visited with their good friends Glad and Med Kellum on the Island of Moorea. Helen once wrote that Moorea was her "very favorite place on earth." But Helen's first love was always her husband and family. Back "home," in February 1971 she was on hand for the birth of Jane and Paul's daughter, Michelle Hansen, and four years later, in June 1976, was there when their son, Mark Hansen, arrived. He was grandchild number 7 for Helen -- how happy she was!

Harry, being 10 years Helen's senior, began to slow down towards the end of the 1970's so they began to spend more time at Tahoe and less in Tahiti. Finally in 1982 they decided to sell their home in Paea, Tahiti, and retire to their Crystal Bay home during the warm months. Martha and Tim had built a nice apartment on their property in Sebastopol and made it available to Helen and Harry to live in when they weren't at Tahoe. Helen was a master at making her homes warm and inviting places for everyone to come. She often baked delicious pasties (learned from the Cornish in their Grass Valley days), or wonderful chocolate cakes for birthdays. She loved to keep her furniture freshly painted, to invent ways to organize her surroundings, to keep a clean and tidy house and to read about the latest in homes, gardens, nature, science and medicine.

Mainly, though, Helen was the perfect wife and helpmate for Harry. They celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary at a party in Grass Valley in September 1981 with many friends and family on hand. For better or worse, the years following that were challenging for Helen as Harry was diagnosed with Parkinson's Disease. She was his ever attendant helper through his declining years -- keeping track of his medicines and special food needs, his physical care and

his social contacts. She recorded everything in meticulous records, always hoping that what she was contributing would make Harry better or would find a miracle cure. But sadly that was not to be. Harry died in March 1991, leaving a huge void in Helen's life.

Ever courageous, Helen quietly dealt with missing Harry and ways to fill the empty hours. She moved to Chateau Cupertino, a retirement home not far from Jane and Paul's home. There she enjoyed her apartment with its outdoor patio where she could feed the hummingbirds, and she spent countless days reorganizing her life's records (which made this biography possible!). In the summer time she was able to live in her Lake Tahoe home where children, grandchildren and friends joined her. There she carried on Harry's ways of watering the hillside to keep it green and always welcoming visitors with good food and hospitality. As they grew, grandchildren's friends were welcomed too -- come to Tahoe to explore the shoreline, make sand castles on the beach, to swim, to boat, to dream!

Most disappointing to Helen in her later years was gradually losing her hearing until finally she could only hear sounds but could not distinguish spoken words. She tried valiantly to find new hearing aids that would help her and always looked for new medical breakthroughs that might restore her word recognition. Unfortunately, none of those attempts were successful. However, well into her 80s when folks her age said they just couldn't comprehend a computer, she learned to use one. The Mac allowed her to correspond with family and friends by email and brought her much enjoyment.

In the last year of her life Helen lived at the Sunrise Assisted Living facility in Sunnyvale where the staff could help her with health problems and the chores of everyday living. Ever brave and always the helper, she kept notes on her own condition, kept track of what she ate and tried to learn about the people who came and went to help her. Most of all she looked forward to the cards, letters and pictures from family and friends and delighted in frequent visits of family members, especially Michelle and her 3 girls who were like little rays of sunshine in her life.

As mentioned in our letter, Helen wrote at the death of her brother, Frank, "Time for departure does come to everyone." Early in the morning of March 6, 2007 Helen slipped away quietly with Jane and Michelle by her side. During her last months, she had often told Hugh, Martha and Jane that she was ready to join Harry, so her departure really was the relief she was seeking. She is survived by her all of her children, grandchildren and great grandchildren who plan to gather on Mother's Day to honor the memory of a wonderful wife, mother, grandmother and great Gram!

Hugh and Carol March
Karen March
George, Trinkka, Zachary and Erika March

Martha and Tim Bell
Peter and Carolyn Bell
Kira, Andy and Granville Allison
Chris, Shelen, Simon and McKenna Bell

Jane and Paul Hansen
Michelle, Ben, Meg, Kate and Natalie Polson
Mark and Shelley Hansen

*The beauty of a life well-lived
continues to embrace and inspire us*



*Helen Steinkruger March
September 9, 1910 - March 6, 2007*

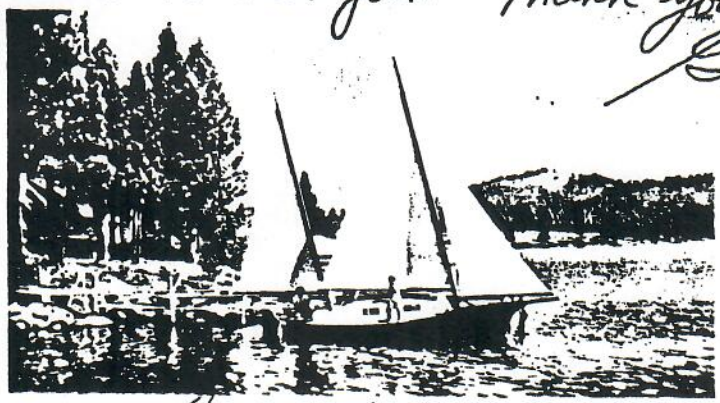
MAY 23, 2007 "WORDS IN LOVING MEMORY" OF HELEN
(WHO IS NOW AGAIN WITH HARRY) NOVEMBER 4, 1991

ON MAY 13, 2007 OUR OLDEST SON GEORGE CHRISTIAN
GRADUATED WITH HIS MD FROM JOHN BURNS MEDICAL SCHOOL.

Written. I'm 48 years old now, and it was over 27 years ago
11/4/91 that Linda and I -- newly married and boldly dashing out
into the world -- first saw and met Harry and Helen. Right
now it seems like only yesterday! I've come to believe that
there are "pivotal" moments in one's life. Brief periods
in space and time where things happen that forever
change the course of what we do in our lifetimes here on
earth. Although Linda and I didn't realize it at the
time, that "chance" meeting of Harry and Helen along the
roadside in the paradise of Tahiti, and the kindness and
fellowship shown to us by them, forever changed for the
better the path that Linda and I have followed. Where
we live, how we live, and the memories we hold dear. Also
the model of love, trust, and friendship between husband and
wife in a marriage that Harry and Helen gave to us.
During the months in Tahiti following our faithful meeting.

For many years, I foolishly believed that it was
Tahiti herself that had changed our lives in this
wonderful way. It was only after I returned to Tahiti,
just a few weeks ago, for the first time in all those
27 years, that I realized it was Harry and Helen
that had this influence. Without Harry and Helen, Tahiti
is only a nice island. But the island alone is not
responsible for the cherished memories over the course
of our lifetime. This was due to you, Helen and Harry. The
moment we met you. Thank you, with love,

George and Linda Bolya
Honolulu, Hawaii
(our home for
26 years)



We can think of NOTHING MORE TO SAY EXCEPT
WHAT WE WROTE WHEN HARRY PASSED. WE SEND OUR LOVE
AND SYMPATHIES. WE CELEBRATE IN THE MEMORIES OF THEIR LIVES.

Dear Friends,

With sadness and an emptiness that is just beginning to be felt, we must tell you that Harry March died on March 11, 1991. He will be truly missed by all of us -- family and friends. Harry would not want us grieving as that was not his way, but the void needs to be filled somehow. One way is by sharing the memories that live on in the minds and hearts of those who remain behind awhile longer. So to honor Harry March, we are compiling a memory book for Helen, and we hope you will help us.

Enclosed is a page for the memory book. Please use it to contribute some of your favorite recollections of Harry -- anecdotes, pictures, verses and favorite stories -- then send it along to Helen. She will be staying at Palo Alto Commons and this summer will return to her home at Lake Tahoe where we know she would welcome a visit from you.

Sincerely,



Hugh and Carol March
Martha and Tim Bell
Jane and Paul Hansen

Helen's address and phone at Palo Alto Commons:
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(415) 856-7680

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