

Helen Marie Knudson

October 10, 1931 ~ May 5, 2025

Helen “Cunie” McCune Knudson passed away peacefully in her beloved Thaynes Canyon home in Park City, Utah on May 5, 2025. She lived a wonderful and original life, spending 93 years raising three daughters, working as a nurse, doing church work, traveling, and opening her home to everyone, including her cherished ducks on her little pond. Her list of favorite things included black licorice, garlic, onions (extra), and See’s Candies Lollypops. Helen was unconditional in her love. She and her humor will be missed dearly.

Helen was born on October 10th, 1931, in Warren, Pennsylvania, to Dr. Quay Alfonso McCune and Martha Johanna Peterson. Being born just prior to World War II, Helen had memories of darning socks for the US soldiers and hearing the hum of warplanes overhead. Her father served as a Naval Surgeon over several aircraft carriers in WWII, one of which was hit by a kamikaze aircraft. Helen said that her Father was never the same upon returning from war. Helen spent her early years in the home of her Danish Grandparents while her father was in medical school in Philadelphia. Coincidentally, her Grandparents owned the largest axe handle manufacturing company in the United States, supplying all of the axe handles for the U.S. military during the War. Her Mother Martha loved books, reading, and was the Warren, Pennsylvania Public Librarian.

During her High School years, Helen was a very involved student, becoming the Senior Class Secretary for her cohort at Warren High School, going on to miss very few of her 75 class reunions. She would later graduate from the University of Rochester in New York with a degree in nursing. Upon graduating from nursing school, Helen and a few classmates moved west for an adventure and accepted nursing positions in Colorado Springs. While attending a social at the Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, she met the love of her life, Gary Lee Knudson. Gary was serving in the Army at that time. They were married on June 18, 1960, in Colorado Springs, later solemnized in the Salt Lake Temple of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Their love story of 63 years was a lifetime of partnership, adventure, and unwavering devotion to one another.

In 1961, Helen and Gary moved to Park City, Utah, in their Beige Volkswagen Beetle with their first daughter and dog Kellie. Helen became the Summit County Public Health Nurse. She also supported Gary through his many ventures and was the steady heart behind the scenes of their entrepreneurial journey, including the founding of The Latch & Acorn Chalet Ski Lodges.

She is survived by her three devoted daughters Kimberly Esplin (Wade), Amy Knudson, and Susan Knudson. She is also survived by 10 grandchildren (Ryan Bradley, Charlie Bradley, Taylor Bradley, Benjamin Bradley, Ian Gillette, Marti Marsh, Dylan Gillette, Kathleen Whitely, Derek Esplin, Kathrina Esplin) and 18 great-grandchildren (Chandler, Tanner, Mia, Macie, McKenna, Johnny, Millie, William, Tommy, Norah, Annie, Henry, Madelyn, Jude, Wells, Graham, Pierce, Finn and new arrival Babyboy Esplin), her brother and sister-in-law Thomas and Judy McCune,

and sister-in-law Lyn White (Richard deceased), and sister and brother-in-law Jana and Ted Brinton.

Helen was preceded in death by her beloved husband Gary Lee Knudson, parents Quay Alfonso McCune and Martha Johanna Peterson, infant brother Charles McCune, and her brothers and sisters-in law Kent and ReNae Kudson, and Kay and Betty Knudson.

The Knudson family would like to personally thank Applegate Hospice Care and Danville Home Services for their dedicated love and care for Helen, including the longstanding care given by Lorelei Combs.

There will be a graveside service at the Park City Cemetery (1300 Kearns Blvd, Park City, UT 84060) for all friends and family on Friday, May 16th at 11 AM.

In lieu of flowers, share a moment of quiet service, lend a listening ear, perform a small act of compassion, or feed a duck in Helen's memory. The Knudson family would be honored to receive your stories or memories of Helen at acornchalet@gmail.com or by mail at PO Box 511, Park City, UT 84060