



Helen Joyce Thibodaux Skolfield

AUG 3, 1934 - OCT 13, 2025



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Table of Contents

Obituary	Page 3
Tribute Wall	Page 6



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Helen Skolfield, age 91, of Mandeville, LA passed away peacefully at home in her sleep while holding the hand of her favorite caregiver, Tiffany. She is survived by her husband of 70 years, John and their three children, Kay Skolfield, twins Julie Bleichner (Barry) and Stacy Lee (Ron). She is also survived by her two grandchildren, John Lee (Ariana) and Samantha Lee (fiancée Jacob), her closest cousin, Rosemary Jouet and other cousins and friends. She was an only child and was preceded in death by her parents, Everett Cerix (Bob) Thibodaux and Sylvia Agnes LeBoeuf Thibodaux.

Helen was born at Hotel Dieu hospital in New Orleans, but spent her early childhood in Morgan City, LA growing up with her many cousins, in particular, Earl Eues. By the time she began school, her father was a surveyor and party chief for a Shell Oil Company seismic crew which required the family to move frequently around Louisiana, Mississippi and Texas. Helen had to enroll in a new school nearly every year but that included time at Ursuline Academy in New Orleans. She ultimately graduated from J. Ray High School in Corpus Cristi, TX. Upon graduation, she enrolled at LSU in Baton Rouge, where she joined Alpha Omicron Pi sorority. John was attending LSU and was a member of Alpha Tau Omega fraternity, which hosted a party for the AOPi ladies. John was taken with the seated girl in the bright red dress and asked his house manager to introduce her to him. They dated, became engaged, and enjoyed a 70 year long marriage together. Helen majored in Education and graduated from LSU with a Bachelors Degree at the age of 20 in December 1954. The following month, she and John were married at Our Lady of the Rosary church in New Orleans. John had majored in Petroleum Engineering and Military Science and was a member of ROTC. He graduated from LSU prior to Helen and immediately enlisted in the US Army Corps of Engineers. After their marriage, Helen joined John in Lampasas, TX near Fort Hood, where he was stationed. Helen began her teaching career shortly after. Following his discharge, John began his career with Superior Oil Company which required John and Helen to move several times. However, Helen continued her career as a teacher with each move. In 1959, Helen and John lived in Carmi, IL where their first child, Kay was born. Helen paused her career to be a full time housewife and mother. Julie and Stacy were born in 1961 and Helen chose to



Obituary

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restart her career after they were old enough to be enrolled in Kindergarten. She continued teaching in Carmi, St. Martinville, LA and Slidell, LA until her retirement in 1994. Helen and her doctor were not aware that she would deliver twins and two days prior to their birth, John was notified that he had been transferred to Casper, Wyoming. John had to move there almost immediately and Helen arrived later on a plane with two newborns and two and a half year old Kay. John recounts that when she emerged from the door of the airplane and the cold wind hit her face the tears were flowing. Helen was faced with the prospect of living in an unfamiliar place with no friends or family close by, but being the strong woman that she was she accepted the challenge and thrived. When John was transferred to New Orleans in 1987, he and Helen built their house in old Mandeville, next door to the house that his parents had moved to in 1960 upon their retirement. During the time that Helen was teaching and raising her daughters, she focused on enriching the lives of her daughters by enrolling them in all types of lessons and organizations, including Girl Scouts (where she also volunteered as a leader), piano, band, dancing, Catechism, diving, horse back riding, baton, and 4-H. She always strove to immerse her daughters in the art of proper etiquette and good manners. While involving herself with the activities of her daughters, teaching and preparing three home cooked meals a day, she also found time for herself, playing in bridge clubs, tending to gardens (Zinnias and Irises were her favorites) and most of all, she enjoyed listening to her collection of classical music and opera albums. Helen was also a voracious reader, with her favorite genre being fictional murder mysteries. During the summers, John and Helen packed their daughters into their yellow, wood paneled station wagon and traveled all over the country together to teach and show them all of the wonders of this great country. The family saw nearly all 50 states with John at the wheel and Helen directing him from one Holiday Inn to the next, armed with nothing except a directory – prior to the time of cell phones and the internet. After moving to Mandeville, Helen enjoyed going for walks on the Lake Pontchartrain lakefront. She and John loved opera and for several years had season tickets for the New Orleans Opera Association. After retirement, John and Helen continued traveling together but much more frequently. They wanted to explore more of America but they also began to travel extensively in Europe. During some of these trips, they generously included their daughters, sons-in-law and grandchildren. Their generosity was also extended to many other people in many different ways. Helen loved everything having to do with English history and literature. She was determined to visit London and in 2005 she made her first trip there, spending several days there touring the city completely on her own before Kay joined her for another few days. In 1979 she enrolled in a six week French immersion program in Quebec Canada. Being the curious and intrepid traveler that she was, she completed the program all on her own. Another of Helen's favorite places to travel to was Aspen, CO where she greatly enjoyed the summertime Aspen Music Festival, which features classical music. One year she was convinced to try a rafting trip and



Obituary

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she said that she enjoyed the experience but once was enough! Helen was also devoted to her parents and spent a great deal of time and energy, even while she was still teaching, to care for them and to ensure that they were well cared for in their final years. Helen was very smart and will always be remembered for being selfless, generous and above all, for being a gentle, true southern lady.

A private Funeral Mass was held for Helen and her family on October 25, 2025 at St. Charles Borromeo church in Destrehan, LA, where she will also be laid to rest in the cemetery there. The family would like to acknowledge the support provided by St. Tammany Hospice and the gentle care she received at home from her private caregivers, and those provided by Home Instead and Amada Senior Care.

E.J. Fielding Funeral Home has been entrusted with funeral arrangements. The Skolfield family invites you to share thoughts, fondest memories, and condolences online at E. J. Fielding Funeral Home Guest Book at <https://www.ejfieldingfh.com>.



Tribute Wall

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Brianna Lang posted:

It was for probably 3 weekends in a row I got to be with Mrs. Helen, as a caregiver in her home. I was very blessed to be able to meet her and be with her the time i did. Thank you. 😊 Brianna Lang

October 31 at 2:56 PM



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Helen by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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