

# *Helen I. Butswinkus Nash*

Helen Isabel Butswinkus Nash, a native of Frackville, a vivacious woman of great strength, had an incredible and varied life. Her passing occurred on Friday at Morehead Memorial Hospital, Eden, N.C.

She was born Feb. 10, 1910, of Lithuanian descent to John and Anna Pultanavage Butswinkus and was one of eight children.

Although she never wanted to have her age published in her obituary, it is important that people know up until her stroke she had more stamina than those half her age. With only two years left to reach 100, she enriched many lives, providing a great listening ear and sage advice. Her stories mesmerized and enthralled all those who had the opportunity to know her.

Daily baking fulfilled her passion to give to others. Lucky recipients received pies and cakes in many varieties. She loved learning and music and very late in life even took lessons on the organ and accordion. Traveling was one of her favorite past times. Hawaii, Las Vegas, cruises to the Caribbean, Florida, Old Orchard Beach and Atlantic City were some of her favorite spots.

Helen loved to shop. People were always amazed at the bargains she found. Each outfit she wore reflected the most current style and included matching shoes and jewelry.

She was proud of the fact that during World War II, she worked for the Atlantic Oil Refinery (the only woman) and could change tires as fast as the men.

She and her husband were owners of Al's Diner and then the Robin Hood Diner, Robbinsville, N.J., and always had a regular crowd of truck drivers who would make these their favorite stop while enroute. After 25 years in the restaurant business, both she and her husband, Bill retired to Frackville, her birthplace. She worked in the kitchen of the Elks providing great meals for the members. Oh, the crab cakes were heavenly.

After retiring from the Elks, a wonderful senior citizen program afforded her the opportunity to work part-time in the Vocational Technical School photocopying, filing and doing work to support the teachers. She finally retired at age 89.

In 1999, she left Frackville for Maine to live with her granddaughter, Karen and her husband, Pat and their son, Mike. Her days were filled with crocheting, sewing projects for gifts, a daily crossword puzzle (to keep her mind sharp), visiting with friends, and as a lover of all animals, she enjoyed Max the family's golden retriever. Additionally, her energy allowed her to volunteer at Eliza Libby School, Buxton, one day a week in kindergarten and first grade in Judy Lewis classrooms. Children gravitated toward her and loved reading with her. She was able to draw out the best in everyone. Two special young people who touched her life were Tom and Emily. In 2002, the Maine State Legislature recognized her as one of Maine's Important Senior Volunteers making a difference in children's lives. Each year she attended Bonny Eagle's Senior Citizen Dinner and donated a gorgeous handmade afghan as a door prize.

After her stroke in 2005, she moved to North Carolina to stay with granddaughter, Erin, her husband Jack, and their son, John.

Erin's positive nature and excellent care bolstered Gram's spirits and gave her the opportunity to watch the beautiful sunsets from their living room high atop the mountain for almost two years. Each day Erin would sing and tell jokes continually making her smile. As the end drew near, Erin never left her side reassuring her and continuing to support her.

She was preceded in death by her husband, William B. Nash; brothers, John, Joseph and Albert Butswinkus; sisters, Sue Stadelnick, Isabel Butswinkus, Adela Robeson and Anna Dower.

Surviving are a sister, Bertha Androvich, Warren, Mich.; a daughter, Gerry Courtney, Lewes, Del.; four granddaughters and a grandson, Karen and her husband, Patrick Burke, Gorham, Maine, Geraldine Janssen, Atco, N.J., Erin and her husband, John Esposito, Eden, N.C., Kelly and her husband, John Hillyer, Alpharetta, Ga., and Michael and his wife, Lisa Courtney, Lewes, Del.; seven great-grandchildren, Mike Burke, Donald Janssen, John Esposito, Nicole Rafferty, Courtney Dieterle, Keegan Dieterle and Mason Courtney.

A graveside service will be held at 11 a.m. Thursday at Annunciation BVM Cemetery, Frackville. A celebration of life will take place on Dec. 26 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Gorham Municipal Center, Gorham. Conroy-Tully Crawford Funeral Homes, 172 State St., Portland, Maine, is in charge of arrangements. Online condolences may be expressed at [www.ctcrawford.com](http://www.ctcrawford.com).