

Newton Tab June 8, 2009

Helen Alvina (Pielemeier) Heyn of Newton Highlands died Friday, June 5, 2009, at her home. She was 89.

Mrs. Heyn was born in Freelandville, Knox County, Indiana in the same house in which her mother was born in 1888. She moved with her parents to Ann Arbor, Mich., in 1920, to Acala, Fla., in 1923, and back to Ann Arbor in 1924.

She graduated from Ann Arbor High School in 1937 and from the University of Michigan in 1941, with a bachelor of arts degree in history. She married in 1942 and continued to work at the University of Michigan School of Public Health as a technical assistant in the Bureau of Public Health Economics.

In 1945, Mrs. Heyn moved to Philadelphia, where her husband was working for the Sun Oil Co. In 1947, the Heyns moved to their last home in Newton Highlands, where their three children were born.

Mrs. Heyn joined the Newton Highlands Congregational Church in 1947, remaining an active member throughout her life. She served as a Sunday School teacher and member of the Dorcas Guild.

Mrs. Heyn had been a member of the League of Women Voters of Newton since 1961.

She was a tireless advocate of environmental preservation and a determined conservationist. She volunteered as secretary of the Oak Hill District Improvement Association and served as secretary and founding member of the Newton Conservators Board of Directors in June 1961. She served as vice president of the board from 1971 to 1973, and was elected honorary life member of the Newton Conservators in 1979 for her long-standing contribution to Massachusetts and the city of Newton. She also served as secretary of the Charles River Watershed Association when it was founded in 1965.

In 1967, City of Newton Mayor Monte G. Basbas appointed Mrs. Heyn to the seven-member Conservation Commission on which she served as secretary until 1979. In 1968, she helped acquire Houghton Garden for the city of Newton. For all her efforts, she was awarded the Most Valuable Contribution to Conservation through Volunteer Activity Award for 1979 by the Massachusetts Conservation Council. In the same year, Mayor Theodore D. Mann appointed her executive secretary for the Conservation Commission, a position in which she served until her

retirement in 1991.

On Mrs. Heyn's watch, the city took title to 15 critical conservation areas: Baldpate Meadow, Frank Barney Pond, Dolan Pond, Flowed Meadow, Goddard-Christina, Kennard, Martin, Charles River Pathway at William Street, Charles Cohen, Oakdale Woods, Saw Mill Brook, Varick Hill, Hunnewell Woods, Norumbega Park and Wilson Conservation Areas. Mrs. Heyn played a significant role in preserving these green spaces for the city of Newton, some of which also provide a margin of safety against future disaster flooding. In 1984, Mrs. Heyn received the Environmentalist of the Year Award from the Newton Conservators. Her lifetime devotion to conservation was also acknowledged by the city of Newton with naming the conservation area at Wells Avenue and Nahanton Street as the Helen Heyn Riverway.

At the time of her death, Mrs. Heyn was an associate member of the Conservation Commission, attending every meeting as her health allowed.

Wife of the late Arno H.A. Heyn, she leaves her children, Evan Heyn of Newton Highlands, Margaret Heyn of Louisville, Ky., and Robert Heyn and his wife, Janice Meisenhelder-Heyn of Wellesley; her brother, John Pilemier and his wife, Mary, of St. Joseph, Mich.; and her granddaughter, Jenna Meisenhelder of Wellesley.

Her memorial service will be held Saturday, June 20, at 2 p.m., in the Newton Highlands Congregational Church, 54 Lincoln St., Newton Highlands.

Memorial contributions may be made to Newton Highlands Congregational Church, 54 Lincoln St., Newton Highlands, MA 02461; or to Newton Conservators Inc., P.O. Box 590011, Newton Centre, MA 02459.

Blackington, Conroy & Hayes Funeral Home in Newton assisted the family with arrangements.