



## Helen Ethel Fitzgerald

October 17, 1922 - January 30, 2022

Helen Ethel Fitzgerald, beloved mother and grandmother, died peacefully in her sleep on January 30, 2022, at the age of 99, in Bend, Oregon, still in possession of her wits and considerable wit. She was a consummate matriarch-always generous and kind to all-and she devoted her life to her family. Helen was cared for at home by her daughter, Cynthia, and son-in-law, Gary, and was surrounded by loving family until the end.

Born in Bridgeport, Connecticut, on October 17, 1922, Helen was the daughter of John Paul Stefurak and Ethel Poltz Stefurak, both Americans of Hungarian descent. John Paul was born in New York and Ethel immigrated to Connecticut from Hungary in 1905, at the age of nine. They had two children: Helen and Raymond.

As a young girl, Helen's ambition was to become a librarian. Her father died when she was 15 and she left school to help support the family, working as a nurse's aide at Bridgeport Hospital.

From 1942-1944, Helen worked as an accounting clerk at the Sikorsky Aircraft Corporation in Stratford, Connecticut, during the time when Sikorsky was manufacturing helicopters for the war effort.

In 1944, Helen married a Navy seaman named Henry (Russ) Lines and they

had one daughter, Alana. Russ reenlisted in the Navy and he and Helen separated and later divorced, and Helen moved to Queens, New York. There, she raised her daughter as a single mother until she met and married the love of her life, Maurice (Fitz) Fitzgerald, in 1957. They had one daughter, Cynthia, and moved from Queens to Long Island, New York, where they lived for many years.

After being a stay-at-home mom for several years, Helen began a career working as a medical secretary and transcriptionist, a job she performed until she retired from Kaiser Permanente in California at the age of 69.

Helen found meaning in volunteering for various causes. As a lifelong Democrat, casting her first vote for Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Helen was a member of the League of Women Voters, and worked for many years staffing the polls during all major elections. She was a Brownie and Girl Scout troupe leader for her youngest daughter and, years later, volunteered for Habitat for Humanity in Redmond, Oregon, where she served as the treasurer and a member of the board of directors for many years.

Helen was an avid reader and a natural storyteller, with a phenomenal memory for historical details. In 1980 she began journaling daily, recording her memories as well as events of the day, a practice she continued until she was 98 years old.

She was also a gifted artist and craftswoman, skills she passed on to her children and grandchildren. One of her primary artistic passions was china painting, and she left a legacy of many beautiful pieces to her family and friends.

There is so much more that can be said about Helen and the long and fascinating life she lived, but we wish to close with her own words, written as

advice to pass along to her grandchildren.

"The Best Advice To Give To My Grandchildren," by Helen Fitzgerald:

1. Guard your reputation. Don't let anyone ruin it. Then you lose your dignity.
2. Don't brag about your accomplishments. If you do your very best, sooner or later people will remember you.
3. Whenever good luck comes your way give something to someone anonymously with no thought of reward.
4. Be a good listener. You can learn so much that way. Besides, people like to talk about themselves.
5. If someone tells you a secret or shares a confidence don't tell anyone. Then it is no longer a secret. Besides, you've betrayed a confidence.
6. When someone hurts you don't give them the satisfaction by getting angry. That's the reaction they want. Try sarcasm-it works better.
7. Deal with your priorities when you have a busy schedule and can't do it all. Do what you can and see it through. It's better to have one thing accomplished than several half finished ones.
8. When tragedy or trouble strikes and your back is against the wall pray hard and tell God you are helpless, ask him to help you, ask him what to do.
9. Meditate. Attune yourself with God. Prayers are like talking to God. Meditation is like listening to God.

10. Be very careful what you wish for; you might get it and be very unhappy. Will it be worth it? Try to include other people's happiness along with your own. Ask yourself, "Will my wish benefit others or only me?" If your wish helps others as well as yourself, it's a good wish.

Helen Fitzgerald is survived by her daughters, Alana Lines and Cynthia Timar (husband, Gary); her grandchildren, Richard La Rosa, Monica La Rosa (husband, Brad), and Matthew Franz; and her great-granddaughter, Sophia La Rosa

# Tribute Wall



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**Niswonger Reynolds Funeral Home & Greenwood Cemetery** - May 18, 2023 at 03:06 PM

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“ We are deeply sorry for your loss ~ *Niswonger-Reynolds Funeral Home*

**A Memorial Tree was planted for Helen Ethel Fitzgerald** - March 02, 2022 at 12:00 AM

BH

“ *Helen Ethel Fitzgerald*

**Bend Funeral Homes** - March 02, 2022 at 12:00 AM