



Helen Lloyd Hawkins

February 9, 1925 - July 18, 2021

Helen Hawkins of the Harmony Community, near Williams Junction, Perry County, Arkansas died 18 July 2021 from complications of a debilitating stroke. She was preceded in death by her parents Floyd and Gertrude Lloyd and her husband of almost 70 years, Clarence D. Hawkins. She is survived by her Sister Edith Doughty, Children Harriett H. Miller (Robert) and Keith D. Hawkins (Rayma Jean), three Grandsons and three Great Grandsons. Helen was born 9 February 1925 at home in the Bonnerdale Community near Hot Springs. She spent the bulk of her formative years living in temporary logging camps with her parents in the Maumelle River Valley. In 1937 the family settled permanently at their beloved 'Pin-Oak Flats' homestead in Harmony. After the move to Harmony Helen attended and graduated from Perryville High School. She played on the basketball team and maintained a keen interest in the sport most of her life.

She was a member of the "Greatest Generation". Wishing to contribute to the war effort she pushed aside fears of the unknown, sought employment at the Jacksonville Munitions Plant and moved to Little Rock. She lived on Scott Street in a boarding house with 3 other young ladies who were also employed at the Munitions Plant. The lessons she learned about self-reliance and the ways of the world were invaluable.

On 8 November 1945 Helen married Clarence D. Hawkins who had just returned from the Pacific Theater serving his country in the U.S. Navy as a Seabee. They initially traveled around the state working highway and bridge

construction projects but wanted to settle down and start a family. They bought 120 acres of timberland in Harmony that abutted her parent's Pin Oak Flats and started construction of a permanent home. The native rock house, principally built by Clarence's father James F. Hawkins, was Helen's pride and joy. She worked hard at making her treasured Big Branch Farm a joyful place filled with flowers, shade trees and birds.

Helen preferred life on the farm but managed to travel to far-away places only because she wanted to visit her children in their homes. She traveled to Guam in the Western Pacific, England, Alaska, California and numerous other states. Helen was the last surviving founding member of the Perryville First Assembly of God Church. She was extremely proud that the timber to build the original church came from her Farm. She devoted most of her adult life to the success of the church. She was also a fierce advocate for a representative, two political party system for her county and the state. She bravely fought the powers of the one party machine that ruled Perry County and took great joy and pride in the eventual victory.

Harriett and Keith would like to extend a special thanks to Jareta Doughty Barton of the Blue Jay Community for the love and attention she gave their Mom. They call Jareta their Sister and an Angel. With Jareta's devotion Helen was able to live largely independent in her home to near the end.

"Ms. Helen", her Country Lady wisdom and fearlessness will be sorely missed. A graveside service and internment at the Harmony Baptist Cemetery will be a private family event at a later date. In lieu of flowers donations in Helen's honor may be made to the Perryville Senior Adult Center, 107 N. Magnolia St. Perryville, Arkansas 72126.

Eulogy Below:

I am Phil Wise, Aunt Helen's Nephew. Keith asked me to read this eulogy of sorts. It will be a rough snap shot of Aunt Helen's life interspersed with memories and accolades.

Helen W. Lloyd Hawkins was born on the 9th of February 1925 in a period that is popularly known as the roaring 20's. Even a casual student of history knows about this period of rapid economic expansion, loosened social constraints and exhilaration. America had just finished a major contribution to world peace by offering a staggering number of young men to fight in a war to end all wars. Thousands upon thousands of these young men did not return. This same student of history knows this contribution was fruitless. As history tells us the 'roaring twenties' was a prelude to the "Great Depression" of the 1930's— Mom's formative years, This 'Great Depression' was followed by the second great war that spawned the "Greatest Generation".

Helen was born at home in the settlement of Bonnerdale near Hot Springs. In later years she would confuse Bonnerdale with Crossroads which was a community that was located under what we now know as Lake Maumelle. I do not know for sure but I think the family moved to the Cross roads area when Mom was a small child. The Crossroads area was not kind to the residents. It was low ground, swampy and strange diseases were common. It was even more unkindly as you moved west up the Maumelle River.

Helen's father Floyd Lloyd was a timber man. He worked the woods for many years as a 'Mule-Skinner'. His reputation for working horses and mules 'off-rein' was legendary. Helen's mother Gertrude Small Lloyd was a logging camp cook. This is to say that Mom grew up in a constantly moving logging camp. A significant number of her nights, her early years, were spent living in a tent. As she aged she was conscripted as a cook's assistant. In other words she did a lot of dish washing and other chores that are required to keep a camp full of hard working men and animals fed and happy.

During this time she attended school in a number of locations. A stint in

Jessieville, Paron, and Joe T. Robinson to name a few.

Finally in the late 1930's, when Mom was a teenager, the family was able to settle down into a permanent home in Harmony. They called the place Pin Oak Flats and it was soooooo nice to finally settle into a permanent place. Life during the Great Depression was tough. Store bought supplies were difficult to come-by but Mom told me that she never went hungry. This was due in large part to her Mom Gertrude's skill in raising anything edible in a massive garden and her hard work 'putting-up', that is canning or preserving, things from that garden. Wild berries from the forest were preserved as well. Blackberries, Huckleberries, Mulberries, Muscatine were plentiful if you were willing to get out and pick them. This leaves unmentioned the meats of the nuts of the surrounding forest.

Helen was always an outdoor girl. Given the choice she would always be outside. She loved to wander the woods picking wildflower bouquets or berries, watching wildlife or simply reviling in the wonders of nature. She would accompany her Dad Floyd on his trips into the woods at every opportunity. Her knowledge of plants of the forest and fields was impressive.

During the winter months, after the move to Pin Oak Flats, Mom and her Sister Edith attended school in Perryville. They would hear the school bus coming grinding its way eastbound on the highway, at the time it was mostly a dirt track. It would pass Lloyd Lane on the way to pick up children beyond William's Junction. When it passed their lane eastbound they knew it was time for that last sip of coffee. A rapid ¼ mile walk up the lane to catch the bus as it came back west started their day.

Mom played basketball in high school and loved the game. Before her eyesight started failing she could spend hours, especially during March, watching basketball on the television. Like most sports fans she would get in a

funk if her team was not doing well.

Living the good life in Pin Oak Flats, attending school, working the garden with her Mom and wandering the woods would all come to an end as the Second World War started. Her boyfriend Clarence left school early and seemed to be gone most of the time working construction and making good money—enough to support his family and have a car. But as soon as he was old enough he volunteered for the Navy and was soon off to help win the war. There is a bundle of letters that will be fun to go through now that they are both gone and beyond embarrassment.

Mom graduated High School and was anxious to explore life outside. Aunt Allie Wise helped her find a boarding house in Little Rock and soon Mom was employed as Bomb Fuse assembly girl at the Jacksonville Munitions Plant. She did not make that much money. But it was enough to pay her room and board plus have a little left over for little pleasures like movies, a little shopping and the expense of town life. She became very familiar with the ways of the world. How to move about, areas and hazards to avoid, how to manage money. This was a tremendous benefit to her and later to her and Clarence as they started life together.

Dad when questioned would readily admit or point proudly that Helen was the principal reason they were most always comfortable financially. She was a brilliant, an always thinking to the future manager. One of her wisdoms that I recall was “buy quality and you will only have to buy once”. She was not a fan of cheap. Buying anything on ‘credit’ was not her style. If you want or need something then save and buy. Do not ever be beholden to a lender.

Some might say Mom was frugal or even tight. Both fit except in one area. When it came to supporting the church, an evangelist, a friend in need or what she judged as a good cause, her pockets were always open. Even toward the

end she had 'stashes' set aside for one benevolent purpose or another. There are reams of St. Jude's address return labels with her name printed on them that still remain on her dining table.

But the most important things in her life were her family and their welfare. Of course a little pride was evident in her undertakings. Things like not allowing Clarence to go to town in a dirty shirt or in tattered work clothes. Hour upon hour of her time was spent ironing creases in my jeans for school.

Fashion too was important. She was a student of what was in fashion and what looked good in public. She would council Dad's young brothers on what to wear and what not to wear. That is in addition to lessons on how to carry themselves, how to treat ladies and how act like gentlemen.

Yes family and especially her family was her heart. She always wanted to know where everyone was at any given time and what they were up too—what was going on in their lives and especially if there was any danger beyond the horizon. When we were on the road she always insisted on a call to report in safely at our destination. She payed attention to the news of where we might be at the time. Plane crashes, storms the lot always troubled her. There is no telling how many times Harriett or I would get a call to make sure we were okay.

She had a sixth sense, an almost spooky knack, for figuring out things far beyond the obvious.

One story comes to mind on the almost paranormal sense she possessed. I was in College and during the summer between my Freshman and Sophomore year I was encouraged to seek a job in Forestry. The job I landed was as a Recreation Aide in the Angeles National Forest near Los Angeles, California. One of my ancillary duties was to serve as a 'Hot Shot' or a fire

fighter if required. I made it through much of the summer not having to respond or be called out for this ancillary duty. But as fate would have it, about a week before I was to load up and return home and Collage I was called out. It was one of those grab you kit and go right now kind of orders. The urgency left me with no time to make the collect call home to let Mom and Dad know what was going on.

About 4 days into the assignment and only a day before I was scheduled to depart I was stuck on the side of a hill overlooking the L.A. Basin. It was late at night and the scene was surreal. The lights of L.A. were to my back and the backfire we had lit was off to my left. I knew Mom was worried sick because a weekend had come and gone and I had not called home as was my habit and her expectation. So, with this deep in my heart I turned to the East and Home and I quietly mouthed the words: "Mom do not worry about me. I am fine and I will be home soon". I then shook my worries and went back to work swallowing my emotions.

A few days later I was released from fighting the 'Big Bear Fire'. I made my way back to the barracks, threw my stuff in my old 57 Dodge Station Wagon and drove non-stop from L.A. home—a 27 hour journey.

When I got home Mom already had my clothes packed and ready for the start of school—I was late for registration. I slept for a couple three hours and was anxious to be off. However, Mom stopped me, sat down on the end of the bed and said "I just have to talk to you." She went on: "About a week ago I had the strangest overwhelming experience. I was in bed fast asleep and suddenly you were talking to me—it was like you were standing at the foot of my bed. I sat bolt upright as you said "Mom do not worry about me. I am fine and I will be home soon" So Son, what was going on? Were you in serious danger? It shook me really bad because it was so real. I knew you were talking to me directly so I started praying for your safety. "

As I drove on to Monticello and school I started running the numbers. I compared the day and the time in California when I had turned to the East and started talking to Mom with the time of the night she mentioned that she had sat bolt upright with me talking to her. Accounting for the time zone differences it was without a doubt a perfect match. To this day I get chills up and down my spine! I do believe there is a magical even supernatural bond between Mother and Son.

Mom was also clever beyond belief. If she wanted to know something, it could be almost anything because she was also extremely curious----she would work the puzzle in pieces. This was especially so if she sensed Harriett or I did not want to be forthcoming. She would ask an innocuous sideways question not making a big deal of the answer. Sometime later, maybe even the next day or two, she would ask another sideways question, sometimes not even voiced as a question. Very soon she would have enough of the puzzle to put together. Later in life when we finally figured out what was going on Harriett and I would laugh and chuckle at her clever ways.

One of Mom's greatest talents and joy was to correspond with family and friends. She would spend hours carefully crafting a perfect letter, a thank you note, a recipe card or poem. Sometimes there would be a small pile of discarded drafts next to her spot. She just loved this activity! You likely were the recipient of such a note. Sadly as her macular degeneration took hold and she could no longer see to write she would lament the loss of this joy.

Of course you all know Mom lived for flowers. I have heard her say that she did not need food if she had a flower. Evidence of that passion is all over her farm. Flowering shrubs, bulbs, bushes all over the place. Harriett would find a patch of Naked Ladies up on a hillside or a new patch of daffodils in a strange location and know yup, Mom has been here!

Small gestures, simple pleasures and tokens of love or appreciation were her life's blood. Things like Cousin Paul painting her a picture of a Red-headed Woodpecker that had after a number of years returned to the farm in glory. Or like Cousin Deanna making her a special wood piece or bringing her a "Happy Gift". And Uncle Jimmy building her precious 'boy-dog' a fence so that he would not wander out to the highway and get killed like so many pets had done before. Uncle Clay building her a platform bird feeder among other things, little gifts like Cousin Debbie bringing her a special top or a piece of costume jewelry would be raved about for days. Cousin John III (God rest his soul) and Cousin Phil earned countless heartfelt praises when they would come straighten out her TV. The list goes on and on of the kindness and love she received from all of you. She was blessed by all of you and was grateful.

Our Mom, your Sister in Law, your Aunt Helen was one awesome Country Lady. She had a wonderful life, she was much loved and appreciated. Memories will fade so savor them with me while they remain.

Cemetery Details

Harmony Cemetery

3195 Highway 10 E.
Perryville, AR 72126

Tribute Wall



“ *Helen Lloyd Hawkins*

January 30, 2023 at 02:08 AM



“ *Sorry for your loss and know Ms Helen is in a wonderful place now. My prayers and thoughts are with you and your family.*

Kay Richardson - July 21, 2021 at 09:30 PM



“ *Such a beautifully written obituary. Sincere sympathy to Harriett and Keith and much respect for the care and devotion to your mom over the years. Gratitude to Jereta for being a trusted caregiver and friend to Ms. Helen. We know she will be missed.*

Cecilia and Billy Riggins - July 21, 2021 at 11:08 AM



“ *Oh so sorry to hear of Mrs. Helen's passing. I always enjoyed our visits but the last few years we had not crossed paths as often. Keith I visited with you and your wife when you all came to Porters Steakhouse for dinner and caught up on Mrs.Helen's health. I don't believe I had visited with her since my husband Larry passed away. Such a dear wonderful lady. Prayers and Hugs for all of you.*

Carrie Porter - July 21, 2021 at 03:34 AM



“ *What a beautiful picture of such a sweet person. She will be missed by all who knew her. Gary and I send prayers for her family. She is home.*

Kathy Rankin - July 21, 2021 at 12:01 AM

SP

“ I missed seeing Mrs. Helen. We both cried when I was transferred to Roland Post Office! I enjoyed every minute I was able to spend with her. She was a Christian lady, loved her family immensely, and had a wonderful heart! She loved me, and I loved and cherished her!



Sandy Wise Priddy - July 20, 2021 at 04:33 PM

RS

“ I have so many good memories when I was a child going to the Assembly of God church in Perryville of Brother and Sister Hawkins they were the kindness of people. We continued to keep in touch thru all the years . Always enjoyed visiting with them both over the years . So sorry Keith and Harriet, Sister Hawkins lived a long and good life until the very end. Always Ruby Fowler Shackleford

Ruby Fowler Shackleford - July 20, 2021 at 11:52 AM

NM

“ I did not know Mrs. Hawkins but send condolences on her passing. My mother (1914-2012) also worked at the ordinance plant in Jacksonville and lived in Little Rock after being widowed and moving with four children from the farm in England. Strong women to try to follow.

nancy moix - July 20, 2021 at 09:42 AM

SC

“ Loved Ms. Helen so much, her and Mr. Clarence always trusted me so much when they came to the polls to vote, she always called me when she needed her goat soap, will love and miss her so much, haven't talked to her lately have been going back and forth to Mississippi because my sister was sick and passed and then back and forth and lost my brother just 3 weeks ago, I am so sorry, this lady lived a long wonderful life, she will be missed dearly, prayers to all her family, Love Sherry Cook

sherry cok - July 19, 2021 at 03:44 PM

DC


“ So sorry Harriet and Keith for your loss. She was such a good, kind person. Loved her very much. Love Bob and Diedra Corder

Diedra Corder - July 19, 2021 at 03:12 PM

JD

Love, hugs and prayers for both of you. Harriet was a classmate but mostly a dear friend.

Jayne Dooley - July 19, 2021 at 07:16 PM

 Donald Dooley

Love, hugs and prayers for you both. Harriett was a classmate but mostly a dear friend. Love, Jayne Dooley

Donald Dooley - July 19, 2021 at 07:19 PM

BK

MY thoughts an prayers with both of you. love an hugs thought the world of you mom

Bonita Weaver Kelly - July 20, 2021 at 05:19 PM

HP

I did not have the privilege of personally knowing Ms. Helen, but I have heard many good things about her from Keith Hawkins, my cousin Rayma's husband of many years. I will keep Helen and her family in my thoughts and prayers.

H. Brad Parker - July 22, 2021 at 07:14 PM