

It bothered Helen that she had no immediate family. She had a cousin in California, whom she only saw twice. But Helen formed close relationships with people in her church life. She saw them as her extended family.

She had a dry sense of humor. She liked jokes with a play on words and a little naughtiness. Helen had everything that she needed in those later years, but friends knew that taking her a new joke would always be appreciated. She had many stories and told the ones she thought funny. Helen was a baseball fan, following the Orioles on TV and radio. She was good at the statistics. She also followed ice skating and football.

She liked a little nip. She liked her martinis with toothpicks in the olives. She sipped sangria at her 80th birthday party (actually Helen was in a rehab nursing home at the time and we slipped her sangria in a fruit juice bottle). At this party, a surprise given by her Unitarian friends, someone looked in at the gathering and commented that Helen had a lot of family -- all of us.

In her 80's, Helen's health began to decline. She developed arthritis and lung cancer. She had a hip replacement and a minor stroke. Many of us visited her regularly and some would take her out to eat when she was able.

By the time our group began services at the Little Falls Meeting of Friends, Helen was unable to attend due to her failing health. But she always asked any of us when we visited her how the group was doing and did we think we could make a go of it. She was happy she was asked to be the first one to sign our membership book.

She died February 6, 1996.

We were then told that she left us something in her will. We thought it might be a modest sum that could help us raise enough money to rent a larger space of our own. She actually left us over \$500,000. We have completed this building with no debt and have established a modest memorial fund.

Adapted from the Reverend Ken Reeves' eulogy at Helen Coon's Memorial Service in March 1996.