



Helen Fierro

October 24, 1925 - August 16, 2018

Helen Rombokas Fierro, age 92, passed away peacefully surrounded by family and friends at Big Bend Hospice House in Tallahassee on August 16, 2018.

Miss Helen was born in 1925 in Roanoke, Alabama. She was the oldest child of Speros “Sam” Rombokas, who immigrated from Mazi, Fthiotida, Greece in 1910, and Lucy Johnson Rombokas, whose family settled in eastern Alabama before the American Civil War.

Growing up in Roanoke, Miss Helen spent many a morning or afternoon at the City Café, her father’s restaurant on Main Street in downtown Roanoke. When business was slow, she was allowed to stand on an upside-down Coca-Cola crate and wash dishes at the big kitchen sink. Once when a waiter tripped and poured a pot of hot water on her head, her mother frantically carried her to a local woman who “talked the fire out” of her head. Recalling the incident many decades later, she pulled her hair back from her forehead to show that she had no scars and explained that she had no memory of pain from the hot water.

Miss Helen started working at the City Cafe as a teenager during the labor shortage of WWII. After graduating from Handley High School in 1943, she took a bus to Tuscaloosa to enroll in the School of Engineering at the University of Alabama. When the dean told her the department was under the control of the army until the end of the war, she walked across campus to the School of Home Economics and declared a major in dietetics. After graduation in 1947, Miss Helen worked for a year at Emory Hospital in Atlanta. In 1948, she enrolled at Florida State University in Tallahassee and graduated with a Master of Science degree in hospitality in 1950. When asked by Miss Anna May Tracey, her professor and mentor at FSU, if she would be interested in a job in Albuquerque, New Mexico, she immediately said yes.

As assistant director of dining at the men’s dormitory at the University of New Mexico, Miss Helen met student and WWII US Army veteran Santiago “Jim” Fierro. Shortly after they married, Jim was recalled to active service with the army and Miss Helen began her life as an army wife.

Over the next seventeen years, Miss Helen and their two young sons, Jay and R.D., moved with Jim to each of his posts before Jim finally retired at his last post, Ft. Benning,

Ga.

After Jim's retirement from the army, he and Miss Helen settled in Columbus, Georgia near Ft. Benning, where they continued to be active at the base's Protestant Chapel and in various service organizations. Miss Helen returned to her career as a registered dietician at Cobb Memorial Hospital and the Georgia Department of Health until her retirement in 1989. She ultimately became one of the very rare registered dieticians who was a member of the American Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics for over 50 years. She moved to Tallahassee in 2012 to be near her son, R.D, and daughter-in-law, Victoria. In 2017 she worked with a local family historian to publish her memoirs, *Afternoons with Miss Helen*, which is available on Amazon.com.

Miss Helen is survived by her two children, Jay (Joyce) and R.D (Victoria), her grandchildren, Melanie and Matthew, her great-granddaughter, Kate, and her nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by her husband, Jim Fierro, her parents Sam and Lucy Rombokas, and her two siblings, Pete and Gene Rombokas.

A funeral service is planned for the Bevis Funeral Home on John Knox Road in Tallahassee at 11 AM, Wednesday, August 22, 2018.

In lieu of flowers donations may be sent to the Senior Care Institute, 250 John Knox Road, Suite 2, Tallahassee, FL 30303

Susie Mozolic of Bevis Funeral Home is assisting the Fierro family with their arrangements. (www.bevisfh.com 850-385-2193)

Events

AUG **Funeral Service** 11:00AM

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Bevis Funeral Home

200 John Knox Rd, Tallahassee, FL, US, 32303

Comments



“ So sorry for your loss. I only knew Helen for a few years, however she brought a lot of joy into my life. I was her hairdresser (Brenda) until she became so ill she could not come in. I thought about her often and said prayers for her pain. She will be missed. I enjoyed hearing about her life with all its crooks and turns. Brenda Griner (Suburban Salon)

BRENDA GRINER - August 29, 2018 at 02:16 PM



“ From the Grant, Javanmardi and Holland families. purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Helen Fierro.



From the Grant, Javanmardi and Holland families. - August 19, 2018 at 03:02 PM