



## Helmi E. (Honkala) (Tukianen) Linnus

June 13, 1931 - July 1, 2024

ASHBY- Helmi E. (Honkala) (Tukianen) Linnus, 93, a lifelong resident of Ashby, passed away peacefully on Monday, July 1, 2024 in her home.

Helmi was born in Ashby on June 13, 1931, a daughter of the late, Matti and Maria (Toivonen) Honkala.

She graduated from the former Ashby High School in 1949 in a class of 11 students, where she played basketball and enjoyed drama. She stayed close with her classmates throughout her life. After graduating from high school she worked at a Fitchburg bank and found she then had new friends to do things with! Helmi married Richard (Dick/Tuki) Tukianen, a lifelong neighbor, and they started their family.

Helmi worked part time as bookkeeper for her father and brothers' Honkala Construction Company, and later worked in the office of Dr Lavigne in Fitchburg. Mondays were Helmi's day off when working for her brothers. Monday mornings were always dedicated to visiting with her mother, four sisters and their children. Honkala reunions on Christmas Eve and at other times were looked forward to and a way to stay in touch. Even recently she spoke of wishing she could go and live with her nieces in the South.

Helmi and Dick loved to travel and took their children on many road trips. Most

Sundays, the family headed out for a drive somewhere. Favorite vacations included Lake Champlain, Plum Island and Myrtle Beach. Camping became a fun activity for themselves, their children and often friends who would meet them in a campground with their families. When their children were grown, Helmi and Dick took two trips to see Finland and visit with first cousins there. The two of them also made a cross country road trip to see the national parks. Skiing was an activity they enjoyed with her children and then later on with friends.

Helmi's husband, Dick/Tuki, died in 1991, and her network of friends, family and church became even more important. She began volunteering at a soup kitchen; she worked for a vending company where she gained some dear friends; with her sister, Ellie, she joined the church choir and was busy with the Womans Guild at church. But her favorite job was when she became the "official" babysitter for two of her grandsons. Each day, she had fun plans and excursions planned.

Helmi truly enjoyed being a grandmother, and her grandchildren remember her as being active and fun to be with. She was a "cool" grandmother who had her own Nintendo game system and became a Tetris master, and she was always eager for a trip to get ice cream or to stop at a yard sale or flea market.

When Helmi wasn't out with friends or spending time with grandchildren, she tapped into her creative side with crocheting, knitting, or doing other crafts. Helmi was still working on puzzles and coloring into her 90's. She loved card games and was always eager to play, especially versions of Canasta, with anyone who came in the door. She loved to stay busy and have people over for a visit because having company was always a good excuse to have one more dessert in the house.

Around 2004, an old family friend and widower, Ray Linnus from Westminster

came a-courting. They married in 2005. She got to spend quality time with her new beloved extended family of step-children and in-laws. Helmi and Ray loved being together and traveled to many different parts of the USA until he passed in 2011.

Since then, she continued to watch her beloved grandchildren and great grandchildren continue to grow, graduate from school and to begin families of their own. Her family will always be grateful to her as she provided the “home base” where everyone could get together. From family get togethers to showing up when life threw curveballs, it was always home. There were decades of memories made in her home.

Helmi knew that life wasn't always easy or perfect. In more recent years, she was fond of saying “It is what it is.” Faith was an important part of Helmi's life and in being a ray of sunshine to even the strangers she meets. She had the ability to make everyone feel important when they spent time with her. She never rushed a visit and one always felt welcomed in her home.

She leaves her son, David Tukianen and his wife Gail of Ashby; two daughters, Elaine Somero of Rindge, NH and Judy Jensen and her husband Chris of Blairsville, GA; ten grandchildren, seven great-grandchildren, numerous nephews and nieces, stepchildren and many in-laws.

Helmi is predeceased by her first husband, Richard Tukianen, her second husband, Raymond Linnus; a daughter, JoAnn Hardy; a great-grandson, David Whitney; and her nine siblings, Leo Honkala, Edwin Honkala, Donald Honkala, Rauni Honkala, Ellen Gove, Edith Somero, Kalevi Honkala, Elsie Piispanen and Raili Aho.

Her funeral service will be held on Saturday, July 13, at 11AM in the Messiah

Lutheran Church, Rindge Rd., Fitchburg followed by a luncheon at the church. A private burial will be on a later date at the Glenwood Cemetery in Ashby. There are no calling hours. The T.J. Anderson & Son Funeral Home, 250 Main St., Townsend is assisting the family with the funeral arrangements. [www.andersonfuneral.com](http://www.andersonfuneral.com)

In lieu of flowers memorial contributions may be made to Messiah Lutheran Church in Fitchburg, MA

# Cemetery Details

## **Glenwood Cemetery**

763 Main Street  
Ashby, MA 01431

# Tribute Wall

TK

“ *The Arenius 'Boys', Steven, Dana & Kevin purchased the Basket of Memories for the family of Helmi E. (Honkala) (Tukianen) Linnus.*



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**The Arenius 'Boys', Steven, Dana & Kevin** - July 10, 2024 at 12:27 PM

TK

“ *The Arenius 'Boys', Steven, Dana & Kevin planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Helmi E. (Honkala) (Tukianen) Linnus.*

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**The Arenius 'Boys', Steven, Dana & Kevin** - July 10, 2024 at 12:27 PM