



## Mrs. Helen D. Schmidt

December 30, 1935 - July 18, 2024

Helen Irene D'Artois Schmidt, a Louisiana native who had long called Baltimore her home, passed away on July 18, 2024 after a long illness. She is survived by daughters Marianne McClelland (Greg) and Tracy Swindell (Cotton); grandchildren Patterson McClelland and Tracy McClelland Gilman (Luke), Teddy, Lucy, Meg, Jimmy and Gus Swindell; and three great grandchildren, Josie, Theo and Gabriel Gilman. She was predeceased by her son, Adolph.

The daughter of the late John Patrick D'Artois, General Counsel for the Ohio Oil Company, and the late Marianne Gladney D'Artois, artist, French teacher and homemaker, Helen was one of four, raised in Shreveport, Louisiana. She attended Saint Vincent's Academy, where she was valedictorian of her class. She met her beloved husband, the late Theodore August Schmidt, while on holiday with her LSU college roommate, his sister, at their family home in Pass Christian, Mississippi. It was love at first sight, and they were married in 1955 while Helen was

still a student.

Her love of music and opera was cultivated at an early age, and after moving to New Orleans in the early 1960's, she sang for a time in the chorus of the New Orleans Opera Company while balancing raising three young children and teaching. Theodore's career at The Maryland Casualty Company found them moving to Cleveland, Ohio, and while not a fan of the north, Helen enjoyed the snow and devoted herself to the local theater and opera there, where she held numerous leading roles, and encouraged her children to participate as well, which they did. One final move in 1972 found the family in Baltimore, where Helen continued her involvement in theater and music. She served as President of The Baltimore Music Club, was active in the Three Arts Club, and a regular subscriber to the Baltimore Opera Company and the Baltimore Symphony. Helen, a devoted Catholic, continued her singing with The Cathedral Choir, where she met lifelong friends.

As her children grew and left the nest, Helen found herself with much time and energy and entered law school. At the age of 48, Helen graduated from University of Maryland School of Law the same May that her son graduated from University of Kansas School of Law, a shared accomplishment of which she was particularly proud, as would have been her

father, also a lawyer. She scored well enough on the bar exam to waive into the DC Bar. Though she never practiced law, officially, she found her legal education quite handy while arguing points around the dinner table and at cocktail parties.

Her southern accent always intact, Helen was proud of her heritage, and she took great joy in researching her family's genealogy. She was a member of the Daughters of the American Revolution and the Colonial Dames. Family vacations often included a detour to some town or city where a not too distant relative's gravesite could be confirmed - not always a popular detour but her children's knowledge of their forebears was improved, nonetheless. Helen was always happy to note that she was related to royalty, having traced her lineage to Charles D'Artois, one of the last Bourbon kings of France. She shared her mother's affection for all things French, enjoying travels to France numerous times during her life, keeping her French language skills sharp. Royal heritage or not, the lasting impression that Helen has left is one well described by her nephew, John Schmidt, who shared that "I'll always remember her social grace, caring ways, constant happiness and the devotion she put into singing at my wedding."

# Previous Events

## Memorial Mass

AUG 2. 10:30 AM (ET)

Shrine of Sacred Heart  
5800 Smith Ave  
Baltimore, MD 21209  
<http://www.theshrine.org/>

# Tribute Wall

EL

“ I have met Helen Schmidt at St Mary of the Assumption Church. Helen quickly recognized my french accent. We continued speaking french, and became friends. My husband and I invited Helen and her grand daughter Tracy to enjoy a beautiful summer time in our house in the Loire Valley, France.

Later in our lives, I have had the priviledge and grace to be at Helen's side during her long and painful sickness. Helen has been an example of life for me. Her patient and optimistic and deep nature always were present even when times were difficult. She did not complain, but found ways, simple ways to concentrate on goodness, on life. Prayer has been the great support of her Faith. I was blessed to contribute to it.

Richard and I want to extend to each of Helen Schmidt's family our loving and prayerful symplathy.

Richard and Elisabeth Lombardi

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**Elisabeth** - July 23, 2024 at 10:46 AM

KN

I was thinking of Cousin Helen today, and looked her up to find her obituary. I'm so sorry for your loss. Helen had shared in family events here in Shreveport and she was a pleasure to know. Also, her contributions to our (Wakeman) family genealogy were substantial. Please accept my sincerest sympathy.

Keith Norwood, Shreveport, LA

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**Keith E Norwood** - August 23, 2024 at 11:33 AM