

## **Helen Donovan Grayson obituary**

10/23/1934 - 06/09/2026

Helen Donovan Grayson, 91, of Alexandria, Virginia, passed away peacefully at home on June 9, 2026. Born October 23, 1934, in Bayonne, New Jersey, Helen lived a remarkable life filled with service, adventure, and dedication to her family and community.

She earned a degree in history from the College of New Rochelle in 1956 and attended the Georgetown School of Foreign Service. Helen served as a Foreign Service Officer with assignments in the State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research and Paris, France. After leaving the Foreign Service in 1960, she pursued a diverse career, including teaching in Hong Kong, working for USAID in Panama, serving as an economist for the Department of Commerce, and leading as Executive Director of the American Restaurant China Council.

Helen was a devoted member of Good Shepherd Catholic Church in Alexandria. She found joy in traveling, playing bridge, cooking, volunteering, and spending time with her family.

She is survived by her daughter, Winifred Grayson; nieces Honore Wagner and Marcella Walker; and nephew Daniel Patrick Donovan III. She was predeceased by her husband of 59 years, Benson "Bill" Lee Grayson; her son, Richard Andrew Grayson; her parents, Dr. Daniel Patrick Donovan and Helen Lankford Donovan; and her siblings, Daniel Patrick Donovan and Anne Donovan Whalen.

Helen's memory will be cherished by all who knew her. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the [American Cancer Society](#) or Good Shepherd Catholic Church in Alexandria, Virginia. Services will be announced at a later date.

To plant trees in memory, please visit the [Sympathy Store](#).

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