

Helen Shook Hammer was born April 10, 1928 in Alexander County and died October 13, 2010. At the end of her high school senior year at Taylorsville High, her principal Carl Matheson was asked by three local business men to pick three top quality students to fill positions. Helen was hired by local attorney J. Ray Jennings. Her selection began an era of legalese in her life and she never looked back. Helen retired after 57 full years - June of 1945 through June 2002. That first job with Republican leader Ray Jennings was the start of a lifetime of a passion for Republican politics.

Helen credited Jennings as being an excellent teacher - not only of the legal profession but also of Republican politics. Helen was doing the secretarial duties for him as the mayor of Taylorsville and held the position of Secretary to the North Carolina State Republican Party when Jennings served as Chairman. She worked for other attorneys and was considered one of them in many ways. She has been described as walking g encyclopedia of all land parcels in Alexander County and she could quickly tell you who was a Republican, Democrat or otherwise and worked tirelessly over the years to "convert" anyone she came in contact with who was not Republican. She did this in a quiet unassuming way and lived her life helping those she came in contact with.

Helen served in many roles for Alexander County Republican Party. She began her Board of Elections service in 1979 and served until 1989. Helen ran for Clerk of Court in 1978. Helen never missed voting in an election and worked the polls tirelessly. She spent countless hours at home going over registration lists, making her call lists and getting out the vote. On Election Day she worked the polls outside - rain or snow - talking to people, driving people or whatever was needed.

Helen was a true Humanitarian and was honored with the Key to Alexander County and the Key to the Town of Taylorsville.

Helen was a "behind the scenes" Republican not serving in many leadership positions, but a great many successful Republican leaders will credit her with getting them where they are today and also many local successful businessmen give her credit for helping them. She was a Christian in the way we should all aspire to - not the kind that have to be in church every Sunday but by helping people we come into contact with in our day to day lives.