

TUCKER, HELEN

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Mississauga's first lady of peace — better known around the globe as World Citizen No. 20727 — has died.

Helen Tucker, who belonged to a myriad of peace groups and tirelessly promoted world citizenship and world government in a number of forms throughout her life, died at age 93 Friday at Sheridan Villa in Clarkson.

The flamboyant Tucker, a one-woman force of nature on behalf of innumerable peace causes, will be best remembered for her energetic devotion to urging Canadians to "think globally and act locally."

"If a book is every written about her life — and I'm looking for a co-author — it's theme will be that she was a pathfinder," says long-time friend Dorothea Sheasby, who is continuing Tucker's work with the International Registry of World Citizens. "She was an idealist."

Another stalwart of the local peace movement, Janis Alton, calls Tucker "irrepressible."

"She was a woman really ahead of her time," says Alton. "She used to leave us all shaking our heads."

Helen was talking about a people's assembly at the UN when the rest of us were just talking about trying to get the doors of the UN opened to Non-Governmental Organizations."

The UN has just announced that a popular assembly will be started in the year 2000. "Helen was talking about that 35 years ago and it paid off," Alton says.

"She was in on the ground floor of the peace movement," says Alton who remembers Tucker hopping up on stage at Massey Hall in July 1960 to make one of her famous impromptu speeches. That helped lead to the formation of Voice of Women, of which Tucker was the first president.

The former B'rith Woman of the Year was instrumental in a wide variety of projects including promoting the international language of Esperanto; co-ordinating the signing of a friendship treaty with the Mississauga Indians at the local Rainbow festival in 1979; bringing several Irish children to Canada to live in her home to provide temporary refuge from the conflict there; ratifying the constitution of the federation of Earth; promoting the earth flag; development of a world capital to be known as Utopia; acting as a "Grandmother for Peace" to visit several cities in the Soviet Union in 1989 to promote peace.

At her 90th birthday party in 1994, Tucker told *The News* "the planet isn't different countries, it's a congregation of people. And congregation means coming together. We've got to appreciate ourselves as people and not as heroes who require a gun."

Born in Fort Worth, Texas, Tucker moved to Mississauga in 1941 to a home on Douglas Dr. that was eventually to become the local World Citizen's Centre. Her husband died in 1988.

The World Citizens Registry has established the Helen Tucker Memorial Fund which it hopes to use to erect a lakefront peace statue on the banks of the Credit River. Donations can be made at any Royal Bank to Account 5044144 (Transit No. 03102). Sheasby also hopes to establish a scholarship in Tucker's honor for graduating high school students interested in peace studies.

A memorial service will be held at the Unitarian Church of South Peel, 84 South Service Rd., on June 13 at 2 p.m.



TUCKER



Helen Tucker (right) shared a goal of world peace with many women around the world, including former U.S. first lady Eleanor Roosevelt.

Helen Tucker brought us to the world