

Helen's biography:

Born March 31, 1917

Raised in rural Midwest (Illinois)

Graduated from University of Illinois 1938

Moved to West Coast to live with my sister and look for work.

Worked for the Eureka Fisherman's Union 1939 to 1945

Moved to San Francisco.

Worked for the People's Workd 1946 to 1951.

Went to work at Herrick Hospital kitchen 1957

Was Active in loca 250, Hospital Workers' Union.

Main activity: working with a rank and file caucus to make the union more democratic.



1979 retired from hospital work.

1989 moved into Strawberry Creek Lodge

1991, 1992, 1993 – organized Save Section 9.

January 2003 moved out of Strawberry Creek Lodge

Did minimum of work on housing for poor people because Parkinsons made work too difficult.

(written by Helen in 2004)

"I'm 87 years old and the lessons I've learned in this life are that you have to put up a fight for your own rights and to protect yourself.

And we're putting up a fight to protect ourselves now.

Those of us who live on social security as I do have a hard time thinking of anything except Section 8 renting because we couldn't afford to live in it. And so we have to put up a fight for our Section 8 renting And I think this is the way to do it.

We circulate this petition. We ask them (HUD) to restore the cuts which would raise enough money to continue our Section 8 renting for another year, through another budget process. And then we'll have to do that again next year.

I think we must continue to do and not get weary.

So let's stand together and do it and work for each other. If we do that, I know that we'll come through.

Because we have always come through these big crises in this country. If people will stand by each other.

So I'm just asking you to stand together. Stand with me and I'm going to stand with you."

Thank you,

Helen Lima (from an impromptu speech given at Harriett Tubman Terrace in 2002)