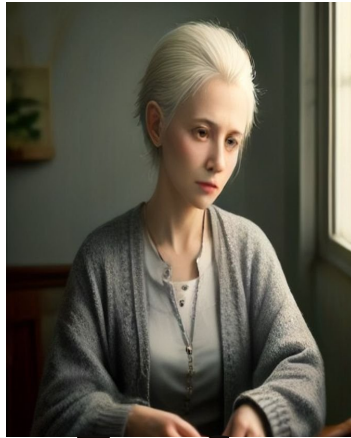




Halina Ewa Szymanski

July 9, 1948 - September 2, 2026

Utica, New York

Halina Ewa Szymanski died in Utica on September 2, 2026. She was seventy-eight. Born there on July 9, 1948, to parents who had come from Kraków by way of a long patience, she grew up in a city that still had mills at the edges and offices in the middle. She learned English at school and a second set of manners at the table. She never treated either language as a costume.

She spent twenty-seven years as a sewing-machine operator, then a decade as the woman who trained new hands that a rejected seam is not a verdict on a life. She kept a drawer of extra needles and a privately updated list of which lots actually satisfied which inspector. When the office put in a machine that was supposed to replace a person, she learned the machine and then taught it manners.

She married Stanislaw Szymanski in 1969. They raised a son and a daughter in a two-family that needed storm windows. Stanislaw drove a city truck. Halina packed lunches and considered a Sunday roast a civic obligation. After he died in 2013 she still sat with neighbors who had to renew something and did not know where to start.

Friends remember a woman who would stay seven minutes past closing for a person who had taken two buses, who hated a messy stamp pad, and who said you're fine in a way that actually meant the work would get done. She died in Utica, in the brick city she refused to apologize for. The line is someone else's now. The patience she practiced there is harder to replace than a needle.

Services

A funeral Mass in Utica, then a hall with coffee. A gift to a mill-workers' fund or a literacy program is welcome.

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