

**BESS KLASSEN-LANDIS, Vermont  
Daughter of Helen Bohn Klassen,  
murdered in Indiana in 1969**

Bess Klassen-Landis's mother, Helen Bohn Klassen, was murdered in the family's rural Indiana home in 1969, when Bess was 13. The person responsible for the murder has never been found and the murder remains unsolved.

Bess has testified against the death penalty in New Hampshire and has participated in speaking tours with The Journey of Hope ... from Violence to Healing in Texas, Virginia, and Montana, and with Pennsylvania's "Voices of Experience and Reconciliation" tour. In addition, Bess spent one year away from her job as an art teacher, traveling and speaking at universities, high schools and churches across California, Oregon, Missouri, Indiana, and Ohio. She serves as a board member for the Journey of Hope.

"When a horrible crime is committed, society is left with two big jobs: First, to find a way to help lessen the pain, fear, and loss of the victim family members, to help them regain a sense of safety, normalcy and peace in their lives. To provide counseling, support groups, financial support, whatever it is that they need. And second, to figure out what to do with the murderer/how to keep society safe. Our society errs when we try to address both of these issues with one action, namely, the death penalty. I don't think the death penalty serves victims. How can you heal by filling the absence murder creates in your heart with vengeance and hate?"



*Bess Klassen-Landis*



*Helen Bohn Klassen*

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