



## Ms. Eleanor Burke

July 13, 2015

Apr 7, 1922- Jul 13, 2015

Eleanor died gracefully of an aggressive brain tumour, glioblastoma, that first became apparent in mid-May. As she was remarkably active and mentally agile up until then, her sudden illness was a shock to all who knew her. She remained lucid until the end, for which we are all grateful. She is survived by her daughter, Evelyn, her son, Paul and his partner, Naomi and her grandchildren, Matthew, and Amy and her partner, Juan. She will be sorely missed by her many friends. Eleanor (nee Speyer), daughter of Bernhardt and Greta, was a survivor who rarely looked back. Born in Germany in 1922, she came to England in 1939 by herself. She adapted to wartime life in London and married Eric Burke, also a refugee from Germany, in 1944. They immigrated to Canada in 1953 and moved to Toronto in 1956. Once she was settled in, she became active in the community and with the Association of Women Electors, becoming their President in 1971-73. In her last 25 years, her focus was on later life learning at the University of Toronto. She was a founder of the Academy for Lifelong Learning, the coordinator of the Knox College Summer Program of lectures, and a proud recipient of the Arbor Award for her work in this area. In these last few years, while working at Knox, her priority was on figuring out how to foster reconciliation with the aboriginal people of Canada. She moved into Belmont House in 2012, where she experienced a sense of independence that she had rarely known. Congrats to the staff at Belmont House for running such an excellent seniors residence.

Her expressed wish was that her life should not be unnecessarily prolonged by invasive or artificial means. We are grateful to Dr. Catherine Maurice, whose clear advice helped us to respect these wishes. Also to Dr. Russell Goldman and his palliative care team. In her final weeks, the care provided by the women from Home Instead was exceptional. If you wish to honour her memory with a donation, she would like it to be to the Belmont House Foundation.